Colorado Department of Education SMART Act Supplemental Materials

January 20, 2022

1. Department Performance Plan
2. Department Regulatory Agenda
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    a. Schedule 10 Summary of Requests
    b. R-01, State Share of Total Program Increase
    c. R-02, Categorical Programs Inflation Increase
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STRATEGIC PLAN

2017-2022

STRONG FOUNDATIONS

ALL MEANS ALL

QUALITY SCHOOLS

MORE OPTIONS

EDUCATORS MATTER

UPDATE JANUARY 2022

COLORADO
Department of Education

CDE

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

CONTENT

KEY INITIATIVES
OVERVIEW

STRONG FOUNDATIONS

GOAL:

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

Support High Quality Early Learning and Literacy for All Students

ALL MEANS ALL

GOAL:

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

Expand Access and Opportunity for Historically Underserved Students

QUALITY SCHOOLS

GOAL:

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

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

MORE OPTIONS

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

EDUCATORS MATTER

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

EXCELLENCE

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 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

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Responding to the COVID-19 Crisis

The challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic have required a new focus on understanding and supporting the health and safety of our education communities, while also shifting how we support a quality education for all students. With decreased in-person learning and increased transitions between learning modes starting in March 2020 and continuing throughout much of the 2020-21 school year for many Colorado students, students faced new risks related to loss of learning opportunities, social and emotional health, and access to social supports like nutrition and childcare. Throughout this time, CDE invested significant time and resources to ensure schools had access to the relief funding, meals, expanded broadband and other basic needs necessary to support their students while also providing policy guidance and appropriate adjustments to support student instruction, health and wellness, student engagement, and equity for vulnerable populations.

Now with the historic funding made available through the American Rescue Plan Act's Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER III) Fund, CDE is working to address the needs created from or exacerbated by the pandemic by (1) supporting academic acceleration; (2) expanding learning opportunities to strengthen student engagement; and (3) strengthening state capacity to support the state's districts and schools -- both now and in the future. These new efforts strengthen CDE's long-term initiatives and goals and bring focus and precision to strategies and implementation priorities based on the newly emerging needs.

The absence of 2019-20 data connected to state assessments, the READ Act, and the preschool program child outcome system (Results Matter) also means that CDE is missing data needed to fully evaluate progress on some measures over time. These measures continue to be included in the strategic plan, as CDE intends to continue using the data even if there are some gaps during the pandemic.

Based on the realities of education during the pandemic, there has been a decrease in performance on many of the department's metrics, where data is available. In spring 2021, English language arts assessments were required in grades 3, 5 and 7 and CMAS math assessments were required in grades 4, 6 and 8. The remaining CMAS English language arts and math assessments were optional. Statewide assessment results declined significantly for most required grade levels and subjects in 2020-21. For CMAS English language arts, the percent of students who met or exceeded expectations fell between 1 and 4 percentage points since 2019. For CMAS math, the percent of students who met or exceeded expectations fell between 5 and 7 percentage points. Declines in the percent of students meeting the math college readiness benchmark were also evident for PSAT 9 (6.6% decrease) and SAT (2.6% decrease). As our understanding of learning opportunity losses continues, the department may need to add new strategies and adjust targets to best support acceleration of student learning in the future.

STRONG FOUNDATIONS

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 to meet the evidence-based training requirement in SB19-199, including providing no-cost options
- Support local education providers in implementing quality inclusive preschool and assist them in developing strategies across a variety of providers
- Collaborate with the Colorado Department of Higher Education and institutions of higher education to review and support 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
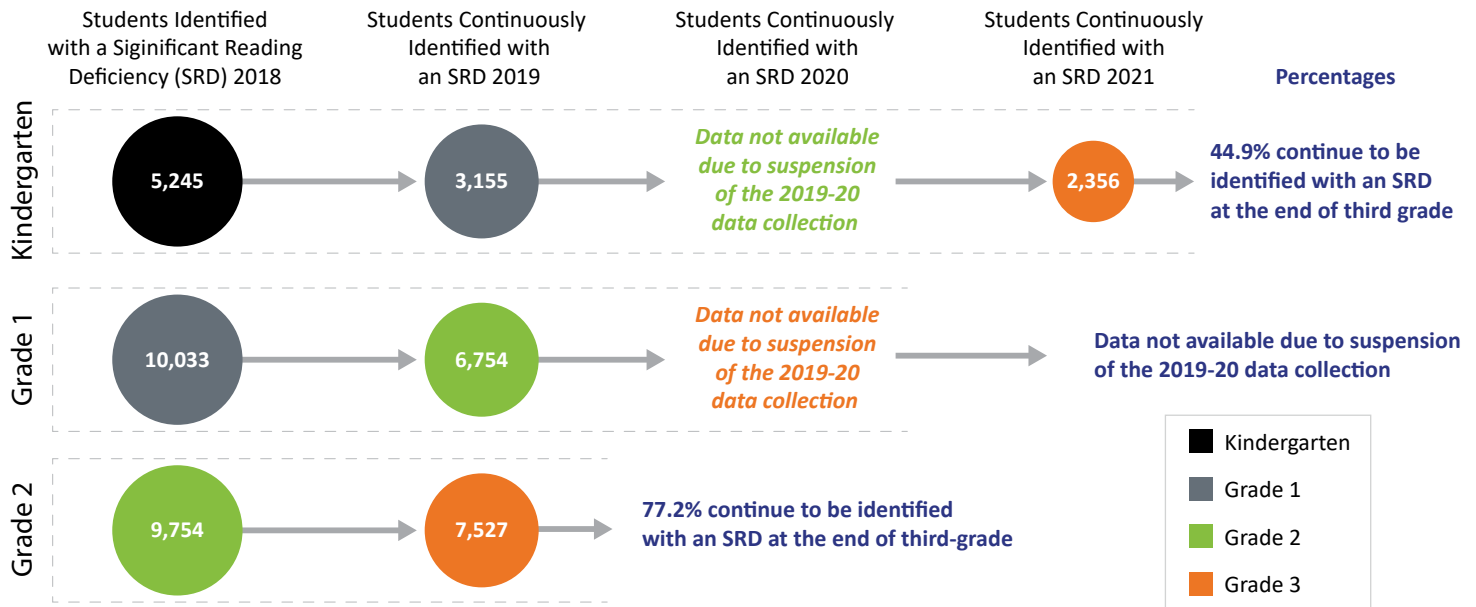
We will strengthen partnerships with the Colorado Department of Human Services as well as other state and local agencies, communities and libraries to support early learning and literacy in preschool through third grade.

- 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
- Focus Family, School and Community Partnering program on early literacy goals

We will 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

Early Intervention Produces Results for Struggling Readers

| Students Identified with a Siginificant Reading Deficiency (SRD) 2018 | Students Continuously Identified with an SRD 2019 | Students Continuously Identified with an SRD 2020 | Students Continuously Identified with an SRD 2021 | Percentages |

Kindergarten: 5,245 → 3,155 → *Data not available due to suspension of the 2019-20 data collection* → 2,356 → **44.9% continue to be identified with an SRD at the end of third grade**

Grade 1: 10,033 → 6,754 → *Data not available due to suspension of the 2019-20 data collection* → **Data not available due to suspension of the 2019-20 data collection**

Grade 2: 9,754 → 7,527 → **77.2% continue to be identified with an SRD at the end of third-grade**

Legend:
- ⬛ Kindergarten
- ⬛ Grade 1
- 🟩 Grade 2
- 🟧 Grade 3

Early identification of reading challenges is critical to supporting struggling readers. The chart above demonstrates how students who are identified and supported in early grades are more likely to resolve their reading deficiencies by third grade. READ Act data were not available in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

What Progress Looks Like

- By spring 2023, reduce significant reading deficiency rates in kindergarten through third grade from 23% in 2021 to pre-pandemic (16%) or lower levels.

- Students on READ plans who meet or exceed expectations on the third grade CMAS English language arts assessment will return to or exceed pre-pandemic levels (3.2%) by spring 2023.

- Use newly updated Kindergarten School Readiness Assessment data collection to set a new baseline for kindergarten school readiness by 2022-23.

- Four-year-olds funded through the Colorado Preschool Program who meet age expectations will increase from 89% in 2020-2021 to 92% in 2023-24 in literacy, and from 81% in 2020-2021 to 83% in 2023-24 in math.

- 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 2023. In spring 2021, 76% of third graders participated in the CMAS English language arts assessment, with 39.1% of those tested meeting or exceeding standards. This may be an overestimate of the true percentage of enrolled third graders who met Colorado Academic Standards expectations due to participation rates.

- Children and young adult attendance (both in-person and virtual) at public library programs will increase by 2% from 2,362,418 in 2018 to 2,409,666 in 2022. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the cancellation of programming or library closures, attendance decreased to 1,412,077 in 2020. With the addition of virtual programming, CDE hopes to still meet its pre-pandemic goal in 2022.

ALL MEANS ALL

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 ESSER 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, instructional and curricula 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

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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.
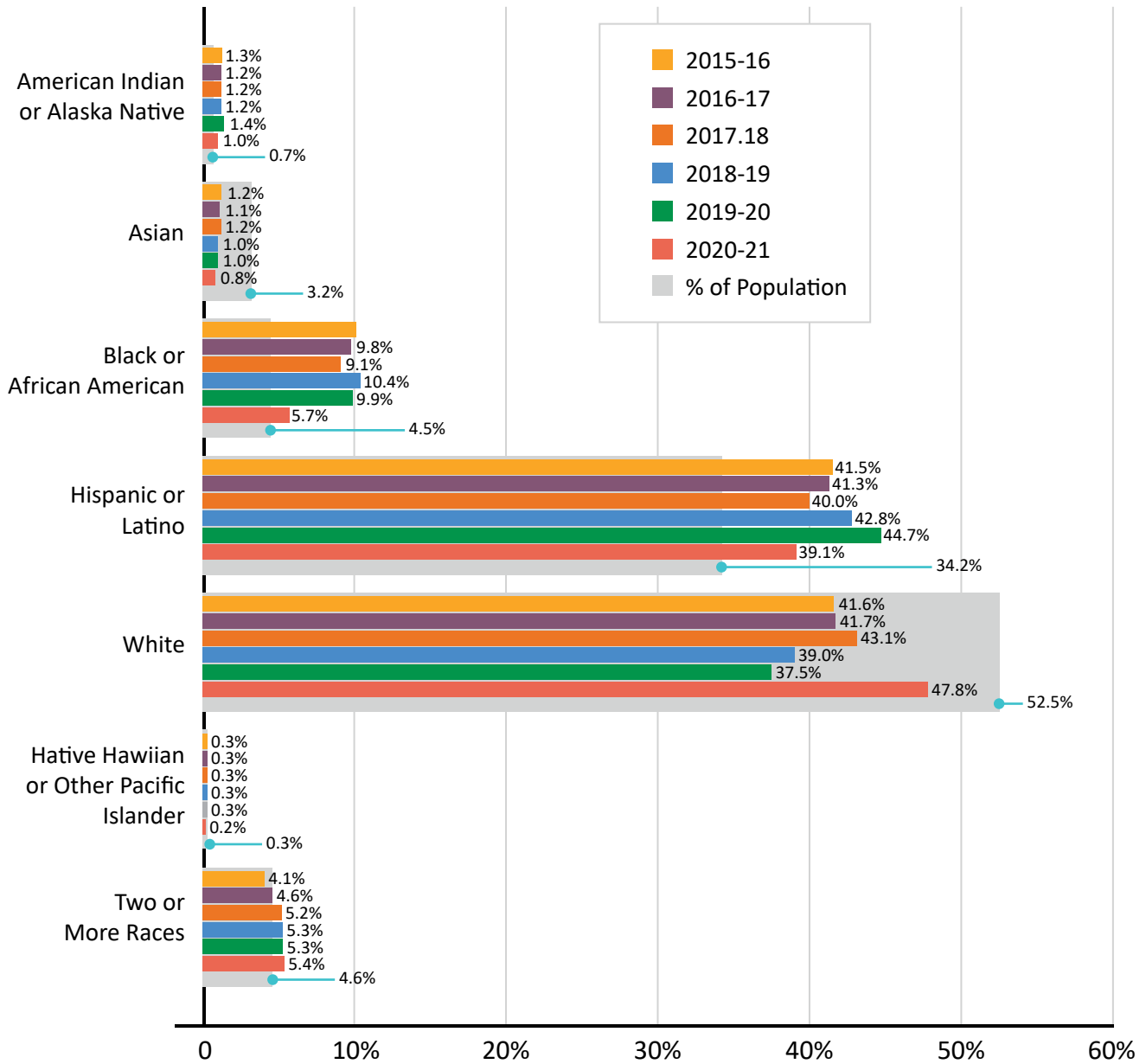
- Organize and communicate about the various resources focused on school climate and student well-being as part of an effort to decrease suspensions and expulsions involving historically underserved students

- Implement the learning and strategies gained through the Coherence Lab Fellowship offered by the Council of Chief State School Officers focused on coordination of training and grant programs related to school climate work and better directing 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

- Conduct a state process to focus the efforts of CDE – through both existing and new ESSER programs – to transparently address the most pressing needs of Colorado's students

- 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 during the COVID-19 pandemic and support communities in addressing potential learning gaps and student needs that were caused or exacerbated by the pandemic

Percent of Suspensions and Expulsions by Race/Ethnicity Over Time

Legend:
- 2015-16
- 2016-17
- 2017.18
- 2018-19
- 2019-20
- 2020-21
- % of Population

American Indian or Alaska Native
- 1.3%
- 1.2%
- 1.2%
- 1.2%
- 1.4%
- 1.0%
- 0.7%

Asian
- 1.2%
- 1.1%
- 1.2%
- 1.0%
- 1.0%
- 0.8%
- 3.2%

Black or African American
- 9.8%
- 9.1%
- 10.4%
- 9.9%
- 5.7%
- 4.5%

Hispanic or Latino
- 41.5%
- 41.3%
- 40.0%
- 42.8%
- 44.7%
- 39.1%
- 34.2%

White
- 41.6%
- 41.7%
- 43.1%
- 39.0%
- 37.5%
- 47.8%
- 52.5%

Native Hawiian or Other Pacific Islander
- 0.3%
- 0.3%
- 0.3%
- 0.3%
- 0.3%
- 0.2%
- 0.3%

Two or More Races
- 4.1%
- 4.6%
- 5.2%
- 5.3%
- 5.3%
- 5.4%
- 4.6%

Students cannot learn if they are not in class. Reducing suspensions and expulsions from class by providing students with positive behavior supports and ensuring all students are safe increases learning opportunities for all.

These charts use the data reported to CDE to represent the percent of exclusionary disciplinary incidents by race compared to the overall population of members in that group. These data reveal that students who are American Indian, Black, Latino or are of two or more races receive exclusionary discipline at higher rates disproportionate to their population in Colorado public schools.

What Progress Looks Like

- State-reported suspensions and expulsions involving historically underserved students will decrease from 61% in 2019 to 58% in 2022.

- Students with IEPs who spend the majority of their time in general education settings and show high growth on the state assessment will increase from 29% in English language arts and 30% in math in 2019 to 35% in 2022.

- The total number of AP/IB exams completed and courses that lead to college credit attempted by underserved high school students will increase from approximately 38,000 in 2020 to approximately 44,000 in 2022.

- The percentage of districts with high-poverty schools identified as having medium and large gaps in equitable access to experienced educators and teachers teaching in-field will decrease from 38 percent in the 2020-21 school year to 37 percent in the 2021-22 school year. Note that these data are only available for districts eligible for equitable distribution of teachers analyses (small districts are exempt). They also exclude effectiveness analyses due to the pause in educator effectiveness data as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

QUALITY SCHOOLS

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 invest in evidence-based strategies to be successful, we will help them progressively improve and maintain their academic performance.

Strategic Activities

We will foster relationships with districts and schools grounded in transparency and trust.

- Effectively implement the CDE district Support Coordinator role to help coordinate and deploy streamlined resources and supports from across the department
- Build an integrated Data Pipeline, grants management, and customer relationship management system to strengthen cross-CDE coordination in providing effective school and district support
- Establish data systems and resources to increase transparency in and strengthen the strategic allocation of funding opportunities

We will partner with districts to ensure they identify school needs 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

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Strategic Activities Cont.

We will implement a coherent, integrated service delivery model that includes the development of evidence-based practices that are aligned with identified needs 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.
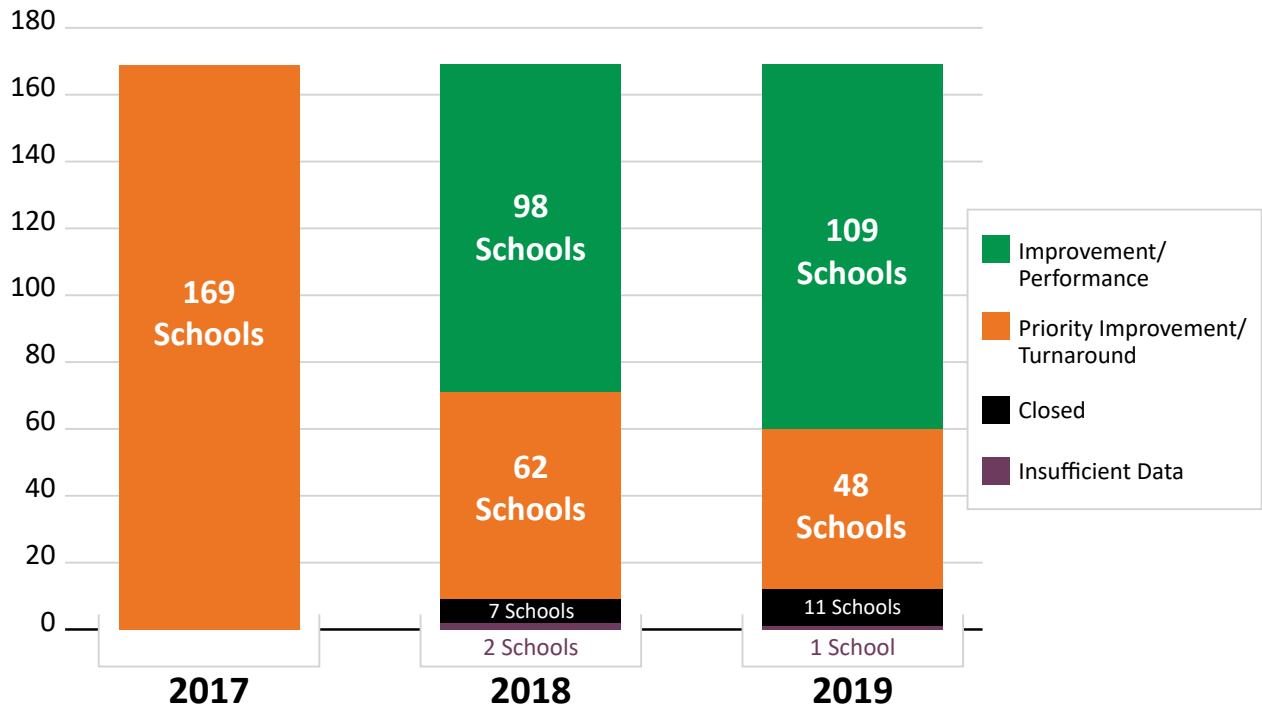
- Continue to review statewide needs, program evaluation results and CDE's resources to determine how best to leverage existing funding sources on behalf of identified schools and districts

- Continue to build and refine the single grant application process and expand the menu of supports for districts to match unique local needs with state and federal resources, decreasing the administrative burden on districts

- Focus CDE support, expertise, and resources on the Colorado Four Domains of Rapid School Improvement

We will provide resources and support districts and schools in implementing evidence-based practices, monitoring implementation progress, and consistently evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention to inform continuous improvement.

- Evaluate the effectiveness of our support for schools and districts and make adjustments needed to increase students' academic outcomes

- Strategically coordinate program evaluation to expand CDE capacity to develop internal quantitative and qualitative evaluations and partner with an external organization to better understand the qualitative impacts of state supports

- Monitor the impact of each support on student outcomes, as measured through the state School Performance Frameworks and federal ESSA indicators

EMPOWERING ACTION FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

DOMAIN 1
Leadership for Rapid Improvement
Prioritize improvement
Monitor goals
Customize supports

DOMAIN 4
Culture & Climate Shift
Build a culture of achievement
Solicit stakeholder input
Engage families

IMPROVED STUDENT OUTCOMES

DOMAIN 2
Talent Management
Recruit, retain & sustain talent
Target PL opportunities
Set performance expectations

DOMAIN 3
Instructional Transformation
Diagnose student needs
Provide rigorous instruction
Remove barriers & provide access

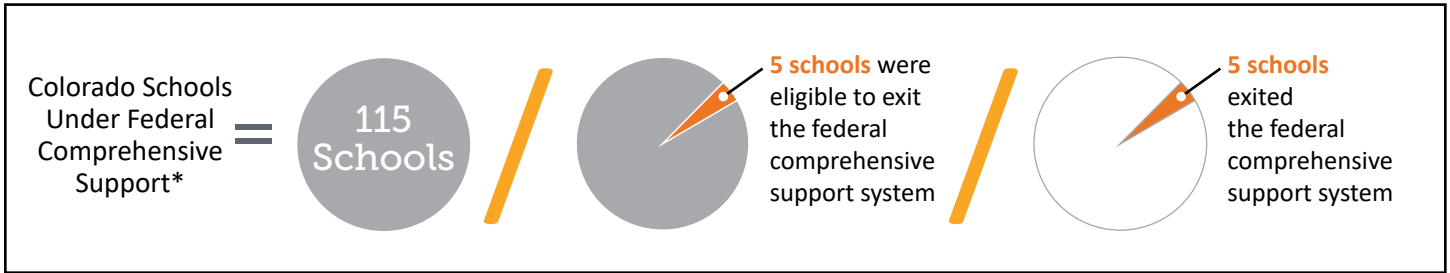**COLORADO FRAMEWORK FOR RAPID SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

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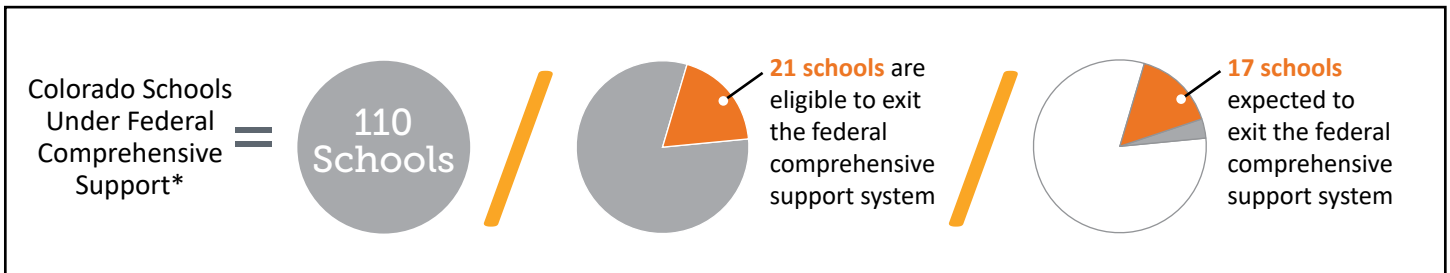## 2017-2019 Schools Moving off of Priority Improvement or Turnaround

Each of the 169 schools in the Priority Improvement and Turnaround categories in 2017, the lowest two categories in the state's accountability system, have different challenges to overcome to increase their students' academic performance. Through grants and support programs, individual schools identified have made progress since 2010. Additional focus and clarity around support available for schools currently identified will increase the academic performance for approximately 79,000 students. These data were not updated for the 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 school years due to the accountability pause.

2018-2019 Identified Schools Moving off of Comprehensive Support and Improvement Lowest 5% and Low Graduation

2021 SUCCESS

Colorado Schools Under Federal Comprehensive Support* **=** **115 Schools** / **5 schools** were eligible to exit the federal comprehensive support system / **5 schools** exited the federal comprehensive support system

2022 GOALS

Colorado Schools Under Federal Comprehensive Support* **=** **110 Schools** / **21 schools** are eligible to exit the federal comprehensive support system / **17 schools** expected to exit the federal comprehensive support system

* Schools listed in the lowest two ratings: Comprehensive Support and Low Graduation

In addition to the state's accountability system, the federal accountability system provides insight into the performance of Colorado's schools. Previously, CDE expected that of the 115 schools with the lowest two ratings (Comprehensive Support and Improvement Lowest 5% and Low Graduation) in the federal accountability system (ESSA) in 2018-19, at least 92 (80%) will improve their ESSA indicators by 2022 and will sustain that performance. In looking at those schools identified as Comprehensive Support-Low Graduation Rate, all (100%) of the schools eligible to exit have met the graduation rate goals.

As we have learned from past national disasters and emergencies, there is an anticipated long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on graduation rates, as well as the academic achievement and growth. Specifically, in addition to anticipating a decline in student performance, a decline in graduation rates is reasonable to expect and likely to occur over the next few years although we continue to provide resources and support with the goal that 80% of Comprehensive Support and Improvement schools will meet exit criteria.

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 2022 and will sustain that rating.

- Of the 21 schools that are eligible to exit Comprehensive Support and Improvement federal (ESSA) identification in 2022, at least 17 (80%) of those eligible schools will improve their ESSA indicators by 2022 and will sustain performance.

- Districts with eligible schools that access funds for improvement will increase from 58% in 2019 to 80% by 2022.

- 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 100% in 2022.

MORE OPTIONS

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 percent of the class of 2022 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 such options as work-based learning experiences and industry credentials

We will foster expansion of innovative models and promising practices that are making a difference.

- Identify and highlight noteworthy gains in high school completion as well as postsecondary and workforce readiness outcomes for students
- 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 through professional development and consultations
- Leverage federal ESSER relief funding to support rural districts to collaboratively develop and expand career-connected learning opportunities.

We will promote Individual Career and Academic Planning (ICAP) as a tool to help students complete high school, gain work experience and plan for their futures
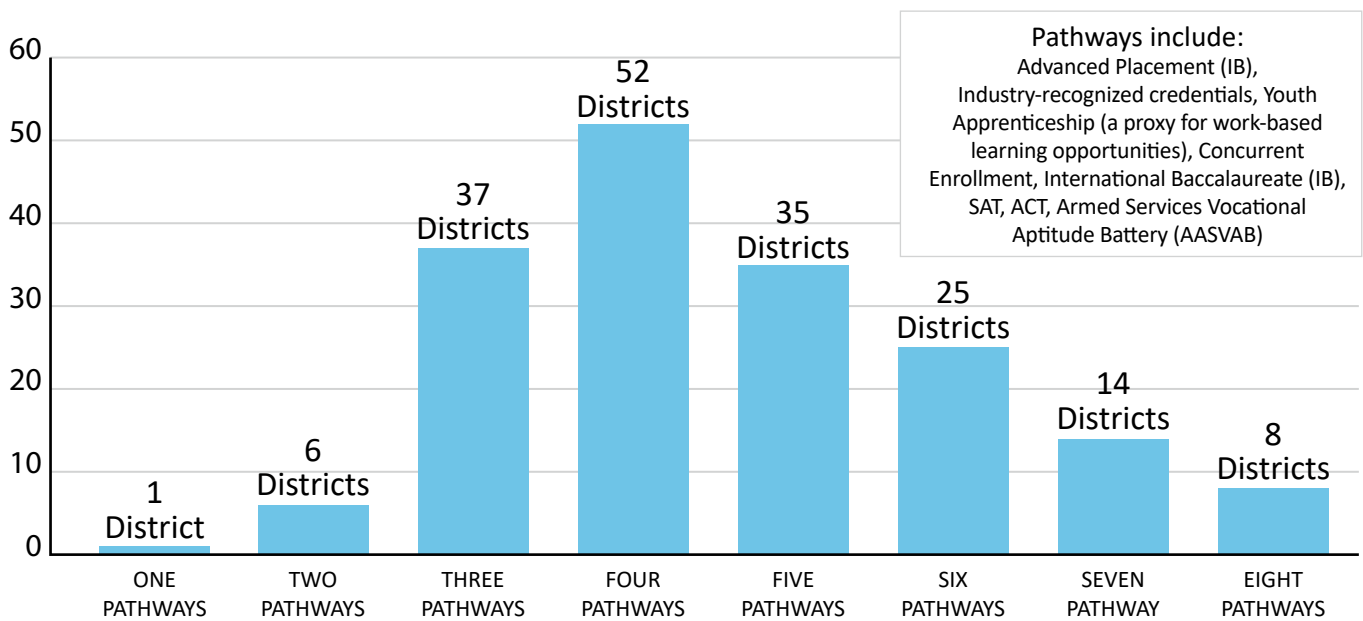
- Collect and share with stakeholders promising ICAP practices that increase students' awareness of seamless pathways and opportunities beyond high school
- Equip all educators to have meaningful career conversations with students

Strategic Activities Cont.

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

- Expand work-based learning opportunities to help students prepare for living-wage, in-demand jobs, while expanding access to certificates and credentials
- Use ESSER funding to support building collaborations across districts and with the communities that they serve
- Assist educators in building effective partnerships with business, based on existing capacity
- Collaborate with other state agencies, libraries, area workforce development boards and community partners to meet students' needs, including participating in Two-Generation programs that meet the workforce training needs of students

Colorado School Districts Offering Multiple-Pathways Options

Pathways include:
Advanced Placement (IB), Industry-recognized credentials, Youth Apprenticeship (a proxy for work-based learning opportunities), Concurrent Enrollment, International Baccalaureate (IB), SAT, ACT, Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (AASVAB)

There are many pathways to a successful career, with colleges and employers both demanding the same knowledge and skills from their incoming students and workers. Apprenticeships, internships and concurrent enrollment classes are examples of ways to earn college credit or attain a postsecondary credential while still in high school. These programs bridge the gap between education and career, increase the relevancy of high school and open a wide variety of options after high school, including meaningful careers and college.

What Progress Looks Like

- Students completing a high school credential within six years will increase from 88.8% in 2020 to 90% by 2022.

- High school students attaining a postsecondary credential within six years of graduation will increase from 59.8% for the class of 2014 to 60% for the class of 2016.

- School districts offering at least three pathways or options for students will increase from 172 districts in 2020 to all 178 districts by 2022.

- Students earning college credit in high school will increase from 33% in 2020 to 50% of students in 2022.

* When data are available again and we can better understand the impact of the pandemic, some of our strategies and targets may need to be updated to address the impacts of learning opportunity loss.

Develop a strong pipeline of high-quality teachers and principals and provide deeper support for school and district leaders

EDUCATORS MATTER

> **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 agencies, 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 pedagogy
- Review and ensure programs are teaching high-quality, evidence-based reading instruction strategies to teacher candidates

Strategic Activities

**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 teachers entering the pipeline through focused programs and partnerships with school districts via grow your own programs, community colleges and state educator preparation programs utilizing concurrent enrollment, and through the establishment of a residency based alternative educator program with AmeriCorp members

- Establish a new statewide mentoring program for preservice and new-to-the-profession educators

- Establish a new authorization pathway for substitute teachers to address staffing challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and use ESSER funding to provide stipends to offset the costs of applying to be a substitute educator

- Support the preparation of substitute educators through a monthly statewide substitute teaching professional development program

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 strategic systems

- Administer the Teaching and Learning Conditions Survey (TLCC) and assist school leaders in understanding, analyzing, and utilizing the data to improve school climate and working conditions
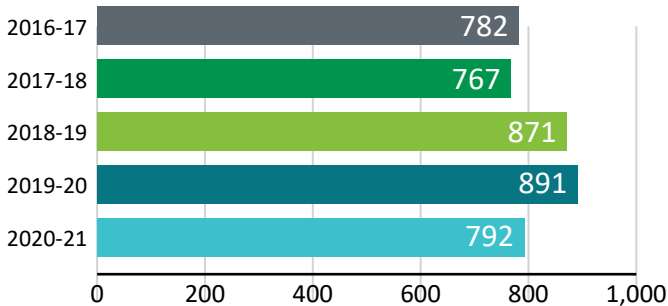
Number of individuals who completed an educator preparation program at an institute of higher education in Colorado
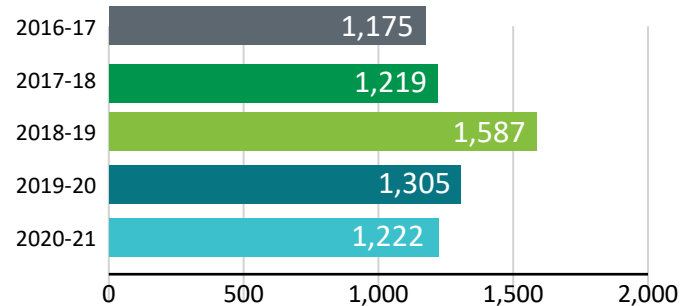
Year	Number
2016-17	2,674
2017-18	2,553
2018-19	2,494
2019-20	2,168
2020-21	2,249
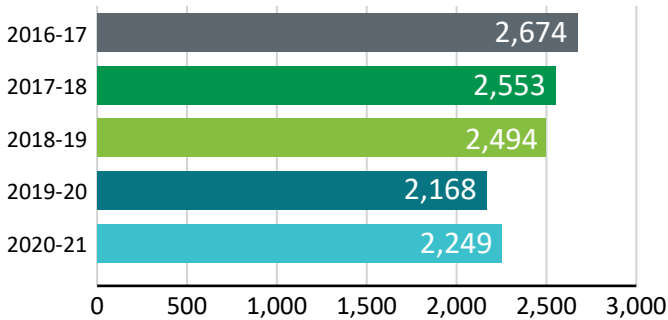
Number of individuals who enrolled in an institute of higher education, educator preparation program in Colorado
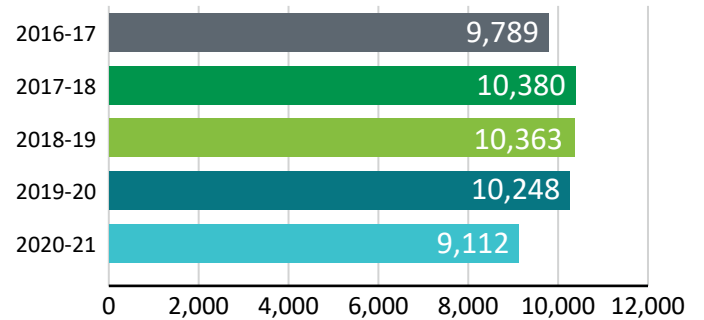
Year	Number
2016-17	9,789
2017-18	10,380
2018-19	10,363
2019-20	10,248
2020-21	9,112

Number of individuals who completed an alternative licensing program in Colorado

Year	Number
2016-17	782
2017-18	767
2018-19	871
2019-20	891
2020-21	792

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

Year	Number
2016-17	1,175
2017-18	1,219
2018-19	1,587
2019-20	1,305
2020-21	1,222

During the 2020-21 school year, Colorado had approximately 8,000 educator openings. Of those openings, approximately 1,250 were not able to be 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 license program. Although we have seen a 7.5% increase in the last few years in educators completing Colorado educator preparation programs, we still 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 make 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 five years are showing improvement in creating a stronger educator pipeline, however, the need for educators, especially specialized service professionals, like school nurses, 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 6,995 in 2019 to 7,274 in 2022.

- Statewide teacher turnover rate will decrease from 16.39% in 2018 to 15.50% in 2022.

23

Organizational Excellence

By strengthening our capacity to best support Colorado's schools and districts – both now and in the future – and committing to excellence in our core programs and functions, we can support each of our key initiatives and ultimately accomplish our goals. Several teams within the department are responsible for essential programmatic and operational functions that allow the department to achieve our broader goals. These teams include School Finance, Human Resources, Accountability and Continuous Improvement, Standards, Assessment, Educator Talent, Communications, Information Management Services and Policy & Legislative Relations.

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

- Error-free fund distributions per cycle will increase from 99.9% to 100% by 2022. This metric reflects over 4,000 payments made each quarter.

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.

CDE has experienced a moderate increase in turnover in 2021 (estimated at 19% in 2021 compared with 15% in 2019). The increase is attributed to the larger nationwide labor market conditions. Due to this turnover and the additional workload associated with federal stimulus funding, CDE has experienced a notable increase in recruitment and onboarding activities.

Strategic Operation

We will connect CDE employees and our work to CDE's values, creating a mission driven and values-based culture. We will refine and learn from flexible work arrangements, utilizing mobile technologies to maximize efficiency and continue to meet business needs. We will identify or develop tools and resources to support the use of hybrid meetings, allowing collaboration between both remote and in-person colleagues. In addition, we will revise CDE policies based on the CDE Workplace Equity assessment and in response to the recommendations from the third party evaluator. 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.
- CDE will reduce the unfavorable turnover rate by 5% annually.
- CDE will develop metrics specific to equity, diversity and inclusion in our HR processes.
- CDE will develop metrics for 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 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.*
- Launch a new/improved public reporting system in 2022.

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* These reports were paused for 2020 and 2021 as a result of the suspension of state assessments in 2019-20 and limited assessments given in 2020-21 due to COVID-19.

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

Decrease the 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 decrease from 12.33 business days in 2019 to 10 business days in 2020 and hold consistent at 10 business days throughout 2021 and 2022.

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 integrated 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, better visibility into CDE touchpoints with districts and to improve access to and visibility of integrated data.

Metric

- Implement SharePoint by December 2021. Once implemented and training is complete, securely transfer data by April 2022.
- Implement two-factor authentication for supported applications by December 2021.
- 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.

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 burden 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.

- Apply CDE values when evaluating potential changes to and implementation of CDE policy, state board rule, and state statute.

- Conduct an equity analysis when developing new or revising departmental or external policies.

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.

- Engaging 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.

- Review internal and 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.

2021-22 Regulatory Agendas for State Board of Education and Division of Capital Construction

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
H.B. 21-1161	Special request to reconsider process	1 CCR 301-1 Rules for Administration of Statewide Accountability Measures	June 2021	June 2021	Aug 2021	Aug 2021
S.B. 21-268 (2021 School Finance Act)	Update deadlines for the CDE-40 forms	1 CCR 301-14 Rules for Administration of the Public School Transportation Fund	Aug 2021	Aug 2021	Oct 2021	Oct 2021
Federal regulations for the operation of transportation vehicles	Update to match federal regulations	1 CCR 301-26 Rules for the Operation, Maintenance and Inspection of School Transportation Vehicles	Aug 2021	Aug 2021	Oct 2021	Oct 2021
H.B. 21-1133	Promulgate new rules concerning individualized seizure action plans, including training and seizure care guidelines	NEW 1 CCR 301-112	Aug 2021	Aug 2021	Oct 2021	Oct 2021
S.B. 21-058; S.B. 21-268 (2021 School Finance Act); S.B. 21-185; S.B. 21-017	Adjustments to approval of alternative principal programs; adjustments to causes for revocation or suspension of license; adjustment to requirements for adjunct instructor authorization; promulgate new rules	1 CCR 301-37 Rules for Administration of the Educator Licensing Act	N/A	October 2021	Nov 2021	Nov 2021

2021-22 Regulatory Agendas for State Board of Education and Division of Capital Construction

Basis for Adoption	Purpose	Rule	SBE Votes to Notice	Info Item on Board Agenda	Hearing Date	Tentative Adopt Date
	defining standards of unethical behavior					
S.B. 21-185	Promulgate new rules concerning the Educator Recruitment and Retention Program	NEW 1 CCR 301-113	N/A	Oct 2021	Nov 2021	Nov 2021
S.B. 21-106	Adjust requirements for Innovative Learning Pilot Program	1 CCR 301-110 Rules for Administration of the High School Innovative Learning Pilot Program	Sept 2021	Sept 2021	Nov 2021	Nov 2021
S.B. 21-056	Adjust rule language concerning administration of cannabis-based medicine by school personnel	1 CCR 301-68 Rules for Administration of Medications	Oct 2021	Oct 2021	Jan 2022	Jan 2022
21-268 (2021 School Finance Act)	Adjustments to requirements for Expelled and At-Risk Student Services Grant Program	1 CCR 301-43 Rules for the Administration of Educational Alternatives for Expelled Students	Oct 2021	Oct 2021	Jan 2022	Jan 2022
Federal guidance	Adjustments made based on guidance from OCR related to disability status on enrollment forms	1 CCR 301-88 Standards for Charter Schools and Charter School Authorizers	Nov 2021	Nov 2021	Jan 2022	Jan 2022
Federal guidance	Adjustments made based on guidance from OCR related to disability status on enrollment forms	1 CCR 301-8 Rules for the Administration of the Exceptional Children's Educational Act	Feb 2022	Feb 2022	April 2022	April 2022

2021-22 Regulatory Agendas for State Board of Education and Division of Capital Construction

Basis for Adoption	Purpose	Rule	SBE Votes to Notice	Info Item on Board Agenda	Hearing Date	Tentative Adopt Date
	Adjustments related to educational interpreters Other clean ups as necessary					
H.B. 19-1418; HB 20-1214	Adjust requirements for full-day kindergarten funding; adjust alternative count day language; general rule clean-up	1 CCR 301-39 Rules for Administration of the Public School Finance Act	March 2022	March 2022	May 2022	May 2022
S.B. 21-185	Promulgate new rules concerning state and federal reporting requirements for students enrolled in the TREP program	1 CCR 301-1 Rules for Administration of Statewide Accountability Measures	May 2022	June 2022	Aug 2022	Aug 2022

2021-22 Regulatory Agendas for State Board of Education and Division of Capital Construction

Division of Capital Construction Regulatory Agenda

Basis for Adoption	Purpose	Rule	Notice Date	Hearing Date	Tentative Adopt Date
SB 21-216	Adjust priorities and use of grant funds in line with new statutory changes	1 CCR 303-3 Building Excellent Schools Today Grant Program	July 2021	Sept 2021	Sept 2021

Request Name	Interagency Review	Requires Legislation	Total Funds	FTE	General Fund	Cash Funds	Reappropriated	Federal
Non-Prioritized Request								
NP-01: Paid FMLA Funding	No Other Agency Impact	No	$29,961	0.0	$29,961	$0	$0	$0
NP-02: CSEAP Resources	No Other Agency Impact	No	$7,564	0.0	$7,564	$0	$0	$0
NP-03: Annual Fleet Request	No Other Agency Impact	No	($738)	0.0	($738)	$0	$0	$0
NP-04:OIT FY2022-23 Budget Package Request	No Other Agency Impact	No	$6,861	0.0	$4,163	$1,021	$1,677	$0
NP-05: Food Service and Housekeeping Comp Request	No Other Agency Impact	No	$30,247	0.0	$30,247	$0	$0	$0
Subtotal Non-Prioritized Request			**$73,895**	**0.0**	**$71,197**	**$1,021**	**$1,677**	**$0**
Prioritized Request								
R-01: State Share of Total Program Increase	No Other Agency Impact	Yes	$231,244,420	0.0	$0	$231,244,420	$0	$0
R-02: Categorical Programs Inflation Increases	No Other Agency Impact	Yes	$13,370,425	0.0	$0	$13,370,425	$0	$0
R-03: Operating Expenses for the State Board of Education	No Other Agency Impact	No	$124,497	0.5	$124,497	$0	$0	$0
R-04: Departmental Infrastructure	No Other Agency Impact	No	$648,145	6.2	$551,972	$96,173	$0	$0
R-05: CSI Mill Levy Equalization	No Other Agency Impact	Yes	$20,000,000	0.0	$10,000,000	$0	$10,000,000	$0
R-06: Expanding Resources for School Improvement	No Other Agency Impact	No	$2,000,000	0.0	$2,000,000	$0	$0	$0
R-07: Empowering Parents with School Information	No Other Agency Impact	No	$526,315	1.8	$526,315	$0	$0	$0
R-08: CSDB Teacher Salary Increase	No Other Agency Impact	No	$288,614	0.0	$288,614	$0	$0	$0
R-09: CSDB Dishwashing Machine	No Other Agency Impact	No	$65,000	0.0	$65,000	$0	$0	$0
Subtotal Prioritized Request			**$268,267,416**	**8.5**	**$13,556,398**	**$244,711,018**	**$10,000,000**	**$0**
Total for Department of Education			$268,341,311	8.5	$13,627,595	$244,712,039	$10,001,677	$0

Governor's Office

FY 2022-23 Funding Request

November 1, 2021

Jared Polis
Governor

Lauren Larson
Executive Director

Governor's Office Priority: R-01
Request Detail: State Share of Total Program Increase

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2022-23*			
	Totals	Incremental Change	
	FY 2021-22 Appropriation	FY 2022-23 Request	FY 2023-24 Request	FY 2024-25 Request
Total Funds	$4,848,537,247	$231,244,420	$231,244,420	$231,244,420
FTE	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
General Fund	$4,040,848,829	$0	$0	$0
Cash Funds	$807,688,419	$231,244,420	$231,244,420	$231,244,420
Reappropriated Funds	$0	$0	$0	$0
Federal Funds	$0	$0	$0	$0

*The request summary table does not reflect the $450M State Education Fund (SEF) transfer from General Fund (GF) in FY 2022-23, to be spent in equal increments over the next three FY. This will increase the State Share of Total Program funding to $381.2M, $531.2M, and $681.2M in FY 2022-23, FY 2023-24, and FY 2024-25 respectively.

Summary of Request

The Governor's Office, in collaboration with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), requests an increase of $381,244,420 total funds for the State Share of Total Program funding for K-12 public schools, including the additional $150,000,000 General Fund transfer into the State Education Fund (SEF) in FY 2022-23 to buy down the Budget Stabilization Factor (BSF). Funding in the SEF will increase by $458,885,045, alongside a decrease of $77,640,625 from the Public School Fund. In addition to the FY 2022-23 Total Program request to transfer $150M transfer into the SEF, the Governor's Office also requests additional pre-pays totalling $300 million to be transferred into the SEF for use in FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25 to maintain the lowest BSF since the factor was first introduced. In total, this amounts to a $450M one time investment to maintain a reduced BSF. The request represents an 8% increase to the State Share amount for K-12 funding when compared to FY 2021-22 and preserves a $819.4 million fund balance in the SEF at the end of FY 2022-23. This request increases per pupil funding by $526 in FY 2022-23 and will require statutory changes to the School Finance Act.

K-12 Budget Stabilization Factor
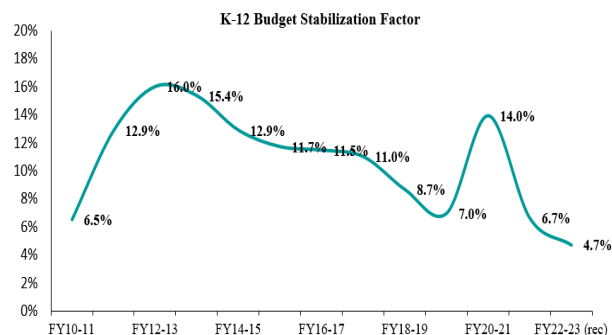
Colorado public schools receive funding from a variety of sources. However, most revenues to Colorado's 178 school districts and Charter School Institute schools (hereafter, both are referred to as districts) are provided through the Public School Finance Act of 1994 (as amended). In FY 2019-20, Total Program equaled 57.8% of total revenue. The Public School Finance Act establishes a formula to determine the amount of state and local funding for each district. The term "Total Program" is used to describe the total amount of funding each district receives under the School Finance Act. Total Program for a district is calculated by the number of funded pupils in the district multiplied by a statewide base per-pupil amount. To account for different district characteristics, a district's base per-pupil amount of funding may be adjusted for various factors including: (a) cost of living, (b) personnel costs, and (c) enrollment size. The School Finance Act formula also adjusts a district's funding to compensate for the presence of at-risk pupils (including Free or Reduced Price lunch and English Language Learners), pupils enrolled in multi-district online schools, pupils enrolled in grades thirteen and fourteen in Pathways in Technology Early College High School included in the district extended high school pupil enrollment count, and the Accelerating Students through Concurrent Enrollment program slots.

Although the General Assembly sets the statewide base per-pupil amount annually, Article IX, Section 17, of the Colorado Constitution, commonly referred to as Amendment 23, requires that at a minimum, the General Assembly increase the base per-pupil amount each year by the rate of inflation. Beginning in FY 2010-11, the School Finance Act began reducing the Total Program amount proportionately across most districts by applying a new calculation called the Budget Stabilization Factor (BSF), formerly the negative factor. In FY 2021-22, the BSF reduced Total Program by approximately $571 million (6.7%) statewide.

Proposed Solution

The Governor's Office requests Total Program increase by $475.6 million total funds in FY 2022-23. This increase consists of an $381.2 million increase to the State Share and an $94.4 million increase to local share. The estimates in this request assume total funded pupil count will increase by 889 pupils (0.1%) and an inflationary factor of 3.7% based on the Office of State Planning and Budgeting (OSPB) September 2021 Economic Forecast. The Total Program request reduces the BSF by $150 million and maintains a projected ending fund balance in the SEF of $819.4 million, as a result of the additional pre-pays totalling $300 million that will be transferred into the SEF to maintain the new lower factor and safeguard our K-12 investments in FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25 .

For FY 2022-23, the State Share appropriations for Total Program from these fund sources will change as follows:

- SEF appropriations for Total Program will increase by $458.9 million from $614.4 million in FY 2021-22 to $1,073.3 million in FY 2022-23. Based on the OSPB September 2021 Economic Forecast and the SEF appropriations contained in the FY 2022-23 budget request, the SEF is forecasted to have a FY 2022-23 ending fund balance of $819.4 million.

- State Public School Fund appropriations will decrease by $77.6 million from $193.3 million in FY 2020-21 to $115.7 million in FY 2022-23. The request reflects the available revenues in the State Public School Fund for Total Program. The available revenues in the State Public School Fund includes a transfer of $33.8 million from marijuana sales tax revenues pursuant to Section 39-28.8-203 (1.5) (B), C.R.S., as forecasted by the OSPB September 2021 Economic Forecast.

- General Fund appropriations will remain at $4.04 billion, but there will be a one-time investment to reduce and sustain a lower BSF through a $450 million General Fund transfer into the SEF in FY 2022-23 These funds will be used to first buydown the BSF by $150M in FY 2022-23 and then maintain a lower 4.7% BSF in FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25.

While not specifically reflected in this decision item, the Governor's Office notes that the General Assembly made progress towards making the public school formula more equitable last year by putting more resources towards schools serving at-risk students and English language learners. The Governor's Office encourages the General Assembly to continue making progress by prioritizing equity in the formula, including providing more resources towards schools serving at-risk students and addressing historic inequities in mill levy calculations that make it difficult for school districts to raise revenue.

Theory of Change	Higher per pupil funding leads to improved student outcomes.		
Program Objective	To provide a better quality education for all Colorado students.		
Outputs Being Measured	Math and reading scores from the Colorado Measures of Academic Success, college entrance exam scores, statewide six-year graduation rate, and statewide matriculation rate.		
Outcomes Being Measured	Academic achievement, academic growth, academic opportunity and achievement gaps, and postsecondary and workforce readiness.		
Cost/Benefit Ratio	N/A		
Evaluations	Pre-Post	Quasi-Experimental Design	Randomized Control Trial
Results of Evaluation	Jackson, C. K., Johnson, R. C., & Persico, C. (2015) and others cited on p. 4	Jackson, C. K., Johnson, R. C., & Persico, C. (2015) and others cited on p. 4	N/A
Continuum Level	Step 4		

R-01

The request ensures districts will receive the funding necessary for increases in student growth and inflation in FY 2022-23. As a percent of Total Program, the BSF will decrease from 6.7% to 4.7%. Overall, the State Share of Total Program funding will increase by 8%. Lastly, the request preserves a $819.4 million fund balance in the SEF at the end of FY 2022-23. This balance is intended to support maintaining the new lower BSF in FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25 while also supporting a smoother transition back to a 10-15% reserve as a percentage of expenditures.

Specifically, this State Share of Total Program request will increase per pupil funding by $526 in FY 2022-23, a 6% increase over the prior year funding level. Recent research has demonstrated a connection between increased per pupil funding and student outcomes. One analysis of the long-term effects of school finance reforms across multiple states, for example, found that increasing per-pupil spending by 10% in all 12 school-age years increases the probability of high school graduation by 7 percentage points for all students, and by roughly 10 percentage points for low-income children.[1] Researchers also observed positive effects on adult wages, with a 9.6% increase in adult hourly wages, and a substantial decrease in adult poverty rates resulting from this size investment. States that have enacted school finance reforms that reduce inequality in K-12 spending between rich and poor districts and those that invested additional money for students in poverty, English learners, and those identified for special education have seen the greatest reduction in disparities between student performance.[2,3,4] As a result of the multiple, longitudinal evaluations of per pupil funding and student outcomes, this request falls as a Step 4 on the State's evidence continuum.

In FY 2022-23, pupil enrollment growth and inflation result in a $231.2 million increase to Total Program funding. Reducing the BSF by $150 million increases Total Program to a total request of $475.6 million. Of this amount, $381.2 million is State Share (appropriated) and $94.4 million is local share (non-appropriated), as shown in Table 1.

Detailed Assumptions and Calculations for Total Program
The details for these calculations are summarized in Appendix A. Appendix B shows the OSPB estimates for the SEF balance at the end of FY 2022-23 with these

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[1] Jackson, C. K., Johnson, R. C., & Persico, C. (2015). The effects of school spending on educational and economic outcomes: Evidence from school finance reforms. (NBER working paper #20847). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

[2] Nguyen-Hoang, P., & Yinger, J. (2014). Education finance reform, local behavior, and student performance in Massachusetts. Journal of Education Finance 39, 297–322.

[3] Downes, T. A., Zabel, J., & Ansel, D. (2009). Incomplete grade: Massachusetts education reform at 15. Boston, MA: MassINC.

[4] Guryan, J. (2001). Does money matter? Regression-discontinuity estimates from education finance reform in Massachusetts. (NBER working paper #8269). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

recommendations. Appendix C shows the OSPB estimates for the Public School Fund balance at the end of FY 2022-23 with these recommendations.

Table 1: Total Program Calculation of State and Local Share	FY 2021-22 Current Appropriation	Change (FY 2022-23 Request Minus FY 2021-22)
State Share (appropriated)	$4,848,537,247	$381,244,420
Local Property Tax	$2,945,599,960	$88,516,999
Specific Ownership Tax	$195,027,143	$5,850,814
TOTAL	**$7,989,164,350**	**$475,612,233**

Appendix A: Budget Request Summary

Colorado Department of Education Public School Finance Act of 1994 Projected Fiscal Year 2022-23 Funding Summary November 2021 Budget Request			
K-12 Total Program	FY 2021-22 Estimate	FY 2022-23 Request	Change
At-risk Funded Count	363,993	363,993	-
Funded Pupil Count	888,556	889,445	889
Average Per Pupil Funding Before BSF	$9,634	$9,991	$356
Base Per Pupil Funding	$7,225	$7,493	$267
Budget Stabilization Factor	**$8,560,407,834**	**$8,886,020,067**	**$325,612,233**
Budget Stabilization Factor	**$8,560,407,834**	**$8,886,020,067**	**$325,612,233**
Budget Stabilization Factor (minus)	-$571,243,484	-$421,243,484	$150,000,000
Total Revised Total Program Funding	**$7,989,164,350**	**$8,464,776,583**	**$475,612,233**
Budget Stabilization Factor as a Percent of Total Program	6.7%	4.7%	-1.9%
Funding Sources of Local Share			
Property Taxes	$2,945,599,960	$3,034,116,959	$88,516,999
Specific Ownership Taxes	$195,027,143	$200,877,957	$5,850,814
TOTAL LOCAL SHARE	**$3,140,627,103**	**$3,234,994,916**	**$94,367,813**
Funding Sources of State Share			
State Education Fund	$614,390,325	$1,073,275,370	$458,885,045
State Public School Fund	$193,298,094	$115,657,468	-$77,640,626
General Fund	$4,040,848,829	$4,040,848,829	$0
TOTAL STATE SHARE	**$4,848,537,248**	**$5,229,781,667**	**$381,244,419**
Average Per Pupil Funding After Negative Factor	**$8,991**	**$9,517**	**$526**

Increased Student Enrollment
- The request estimates that funded pupils will increase from 888,556 in FY 2021-22 to 889,445 in FY 2022-23. This is an increase of 889 pupils (0.1%). These estimates are based upon projections developed by OSPB, which assumes COVID related hesitancy begins to fade.

Unchanged, Elevated At-Risk Counts
- The request estimates at-risk students will remain unchanged at 363,993 between FY 2021-22 and FY 2022-23. As a percentage of total funded pupils, 41% of students will be considered at-risk in FY 2022-23.

Per Pupil Funding
- The request uses an inflation factor of 3.7% based on the OSPB September 2021 Economic Forecast.
- The inflation rate will increase base per pupil funding by $267 from $7,225 in FY 2021-22 to $7,493 in FY 2022-23. This is an increase of 3.7%.
- After all school finance formula factors are calculated (including the reduction to the BSF), the statewide average per pupil revenue will increase by $526 from $8,991 in FY 2021-22 to $9,517 in FY 2022-23. This is an increase of 6%.

Local Taxes
- The request estimates that local property taxes increase to $3.034 billion, based on projections developed by OSPB. Considerations include recent tax property growth in FY 2019-20 and FY 2020-21, and fiscal impacts from H.B. 21-1164 and S.B. 21-293.
- The request estimates that Specific Ownership Taxes will total $200.9 million in FY 2022-23.

Budget Stabilization Factor
- The total BSF dollar amount in FY 2022-23 will be $421.2 million compared to $571.2 million in FY 2021-22, which represents a $150 million reduction to the BSF.
- As a percent of Total Program, the BSF will decrease from 6.7% in FY 2021-22 to 4.7% in FY 2022-23, the lowest BSF as a percent of Total Program since the first year the factor was created.

Appendix B – State Education Fund Balance

Office of State Planning and Budgeting			
Estimated State Education Fund Balance			
Projected Fiscal Year 2022-23 Funding Summary			
November 2021 Budget Request			
	FY 2021-22 Estimate	**FY 2022-23 Request**	**Change**
Beginning Balance	$685,372,092	$767,583,245	$82,211,152
Estimated Revenues (OSPB Forecast)			
Amendment 23 Revenues	$745,323,302	$854,339,211	$108,415,909
Additional General Fund revenues directed to SEF	$262,340,947	$130,862,950	-$131,477,997
Additional Federal Fund revenues directed to SEF	$0	$0	$0
Total revenue directed to SEF	$1,008,264,249	$985,202,161	-$23,062,088
Other transfers into SEF	$0	$450,000,000	$450,000,000
Other income and interest income	$10,082,642	$9,852,022	-$230,621
Total Funds to SEF	$10,082,642	$459,852,022	$449,769,379
TOTAL Forecasted Available SEF Funds	**$1,703,718,984**	**$2,212,637,427**	**$508,918,444**
Estimated Expenditures (Department Request)			
Categorical programs	$197,597,372	$204,908,475	$7,311,103
Various other expenditures	$90,103,033	$115,103,033	$25,000,000
Liabilities and Statutory Transfers	$34,045,009	$0	-$34,045,009
Total SEF expenditures for purposes other than Total Program	$321,745,414	$320,011,508	-$1,733,906
SEF expenditures for Total Program	$614,390,325	$1,073,275,370	$458,885,045
TOTAL Forecasted SEF Expenditures	**$936,135,739**	**$1,393,286,878**	**$457,151,139**
Projected Ending Fund Balance	**$767,583,245**	**$819,350,550**	**$51,767,305**

Appendix C – Public School Fund Balance

Office of State Planning and Budgeting			
Estimated Public School Fund Balance			
Projected Fiscal Year 2022-23 Funding Summary			
November 2021 Budget Request			
	FY 2021-22 Estimate	**FY 2022-23 Request**	**Change**
Beginning Balance	$176,871,134	$61,800,211	($115,070,923)
Estimated Revenues (OSPB Forecast)			
FML revenues	$44,501,140	$45,640,179	$1,139,039
Marijuana Funding)	$32,298,513	$33,838,439	$1,539,926
Total revenue directed to PSF	$76,799,653	$79,478,618	$2,678,965
Permanent fund transfer	$21,000,000	$21,000,000	$0
General Fund or other transfer	$0	$0	$0
Other Diversions	$0	$0	$0
Total Funds to PSF	$21,000,000	$21,000,000	$0
TOTAL Forecasted Available PSF Revenue	$274,670,787	$162,278,829	-$112,391,958
Estimated Expenditures (Department Request)			
Expenditures for other than total program	$13,572,482	$13,787,002	$214,520
Liabilities and Statutory Transfers	$6,000,000	$7,834,359	$1,834,359
Total PSF expenditures for purposes other than	$19,572,482	$21,621,361	$2,048,879
PSF expenditures for total program	$193,298,094	$115,657,468	-$77,640,626
TOTAL Forecasted PSF Expenditures	$212,870,576	$137,278,829	-$75,591,747
Projected Ending Fund Balance	$61,800,211	$25,000,000	($36,800,211)

R-01

Department of Education

FY 2022-23 Funding Request

November 1, 2021

Jared Polis
Governor

Lauren Larson
Executive Director

Governor's Office Priority: R-02
Request Detail: Categorical Programs Inflation Increases

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2022-23				
	Totals		Incremental Change	
	FY 2021-22 Appropriation	FY 2022-23 Base	FY 2022-23 Request	FY 2023-24 Request
Total Funds	$529,534,761	$529,534,761	$13,370,425	$13,370,425
FTE	0.0	73.1	0.0	0.0
General Fund	$163,765,474	$163,765,474	$0	$0
Cash Funds	$198,047,372	$198,047,372	$13,370,425	$13,370,425
Reappropriated Funds	$191,090	$191,090	$0	$0
Federal Funds	$167,530,825	$167,530,825	$0	$0

Summary of Request

The Governor's Office and the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) request a cash fund spending authority increase of $13,370,425 from the State Education Fund in FY 2022-23 and ongoing to fund a 3.7% inflation increase for the education programs commonly referred to as "categorical programs." Colorado school districts may receive funding to pay for specific categorical programs designed to serve particular groups of students or student needs in addition to funding from the School Finance Act formula. The categorical programs include special education programs for children with disabilities, English language proficiency education, public school transportation, career and technical education programs, special education programs for gifted and talented students, expelled and at-risk student grants, small attendance centers, and comprehensive health education.

Total state funding appropriated for categorical programs in FY 2021-22 is $361,362,846, which is subject to the inflationary increases for categorical programs each year pursuant to Section 17 of Article IX of the Colorado Constitution. The inflationary increase is not required to be equally distributed to every categorical program. The Governor's Office requests that $375,000 be allocated to the Colorado Charter School Institute for a new school Prospect Academy design and the remainder of the $13.4 million to be allocated among the programs based on the "gap" in funding between the state and federal revenues provided to the programs versus the actual reported district expenditures as reported to the department.

Colorado school districts may receive funding to pay for specific categorical programs designed to serve particular groups of students or particular student needs in addition to funding provided to public schools from the School Finance Act formula. The education programs that receive this funding include:

- special education programs for children with disabilities;
- English language proficiency education;
- public school transportation;
- career and technical education programs;
- special education programs for gifted and talented students;
- expelled and at-risk student grants;
- small attendance centers; and
- comprehensive health education.

Problem or Opportunity:

Total funding appropriated for categorical programs in FY 2021-22 is $529,534,761. Of this amount, $361,362,846 is state funding, which is subject to the inflationary increases for categorical programs each year pursuant to Section 17 of Article IX of the Colorado Constitution. The OSPB September 2021 Economic Forecast indicates a 3.7% inflationary rate adjustment for FY 2022-23. This results in an increase of approximately $13.4 million over current state funding amounts to be appropriated for the categorical programs.

Proposed Solution:

The Governor's Office requests that $375,000 be allocated to the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI) for a new school designed to primarily serve students with disabilities, and the remainder of the $13.4 million in increased funding be allocated among the programs based on the "gap" in funding between the state and federal revenues provided to the programs versus the actual reported district expenditures as reported to the department.

Theory of Change	Not on the continuum - N/A		
Program Objective	Not on the continuum - N/A		
Outputs Being Measured	Not on the continuum - N/A		
Outcomes Being Measured	Not on the continuum - N/A		
Cost/Benefit Ratio	N/A		
Evaluations	Pre-Post	Quasi-Experimental Design	Randomized Control Trial
Results of Evaluation	N/A	N/A	N/A
Continuum Level	N/A		

Anticipated Outcomes:

If the request is approved, the state will meet the constitutional requirement to provide inflationary funding for categorical programs. In addition, those programs with the largest funding gaps will receive the majority of the funding increase.

Additionally, the funding allocation to CSI will allow the institute to absorb the approximate 20% increase in special education students to be located at the Prospect Academy. This is considered to be a one time adjustment, with any redistribution of special education students to be trued up in future years through the normal distribution process.

Assumptions and Calculations:

The calculation for the requested increase is based on adjusting the FY 2021-22 appropriations subject to Section 17 of Article IX of the Colorado Constitution by an inflation rate of 3.7%. The inflationary rate used the applicable rate for FY 2022-23 projected in the OSPB September 2021 Economic Forecast.

Table 1: Requested Increase for Categorical Programs				
	FY 2021-22 Total Fund Appropriation	Deduct Federal Funds	Deduct Reappropriated Funds	Deduct Public School Transportation Fund*	Total
All Categorical Programs	$529,534,761	($167,530,825)	($191,090)	($450,000)	$361,362,846
Applicable OSPB Inflation Factor (September 2020 Economic Forecast)					3.7%
Total amount of inflation for categorical programs					$13,370,425
*Pursuant to Section 22-51-103, C.R.S., any appropriation made from the public school transportation fund from moneys deposited from overpayments collected by the department through the audit process shall not be included in the calculation of total state funding for all categorical programs as defined in Section 22-55-102,(19) C.R.S.					

The inflationary increase is not required to be distributed to every categorical program. The Governor's Office requests that $375,000 be allocated to CSI for a new school designed to primarily serve students with disabilities, and the remainder of the $13.4 million in increased funding be allocated among the programs based on the "gap" in funding between the state and federal revenues provided to the programs versus the actual reported district expenditures as reported to the department by individual districts. The detailed distribution of additional funding is outlined in Appendix A.

Table 2: Requested Allocation for Categorical Programs Increase			
	FY2021-22 Appropriation	FY2022-23 Department Request	Percent Increase
(1) District Programs Required by Statute			
Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities *	220,154,633	7,705,231	3.5%
English Language Proficiency Program	25,257,742	2,290,813	9.1%
(2) Other Categorical Programs			
Public School Transportation	63,221,962	2,095,815	3.3%
Career and Technical Education Programs	28,244,361	1,013,769	3.6%
Special Education Programs for Gifted and Talented Children	12,994,942	261,036	2.0%
Expelled and At-risk Student Services Grant Program	9,493,560	4,412	0.0%
Small Attendance Center Aid	1,314,250	426	0.0%
Comprehensive Health Education	1,131,396	(1,077)	-0.1%
Total amount of inflation for categorical programs	361,812,846	13,370,425	3.7%
* Includes $375,000 set-aside for Charter School Institute			

Appendix A

Appendix A: Requested Increase for Categorical Programs									
	Special Education Program for Children with Disabilities /1	English Language Proficiency Programs	Public School Transportation	Career and Technical Education Programs	Gifted and Talented Programs	Expelled and At-risk Student Services Grant Program	Small Attendance Center Aid	Comprehensive Health Education	Total
A. FY 19-20 Total District Expenditures	$1,148,781,907	$292,424,544	$275,971,759	$136,037,968	$38,456,780	$7,505,928	$1,469,977	$721,457	$1,901,370,321
B. FY 19-20 Total State / Federal Revenues	402,351,671	59,153,267	62,556,983	32,806,877	11,875,758	7,056,688	1,314,250	831,099	577,946,593
C. FY 19-20 Funding Gap Between District Expenditures and State / Federal Revenues	$746,430,237	$233,271,277	$213,414,776	$103,231,091	$26,581,022	$449,240	$155,727	($109,641)	$1,323,423,727
D. Proportional Percentage of Total Excess Expenditures	56.401%	17.626%	16.126%	7.800%	2.009%	0.034%	0.012%	0.008%	100.000%
E. FY 21-22 State Approps subject to inflation increase	$220,154,633	$25,257,742	$62,771,962	$28,244,361	$12,994,942	$9,493,560	$1,314,250	$1,131,396	$361,362,846
F. R-2 Allocation of the inflation adjustment (see notes)	7,704,609	2,290,619	2,095,637	1,013,683	261,014	4,411	1,529	1,077	$13,370,425
G. Base & Other Requests	0	0	6,888	0	10,165	5,159	0	6,755	$28,967
H. State funds transferred from other Departments / Programs	191,090	0	450,000	0	0	0	0	0	641,090
I. FY 22-23 Est. Federal Funds	156,266,518	11,264,307	0	0	0	0	0	0	167,530,825
J. FY 22-23 Subtotal for the Categorical Programs adjusted by Inflation	$384,316,850	$38,812,668	$65,324,487	$29,258,044	$13,266,121	$9,503,130	$1,315,779	$1,137,074	$542,934,153

FY 21-22 Total Request for Categorical Programs (All Funds and Request Items Included)	$542,934,153
General Fund	$163,765,474
CF - State Education Fund & Public School Transportation Fund	$211,446,764
Reappropriated (Transferred) Funds	$191,090
Federal Funds	$167,530,825

Notes for Appendix A:

Row A: FY 2019-20 total expenditures related to state and federal funding provided by the Department to school districts, CSI, and Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). Source of information is School District Data Pipeline Financial Reporting.

Row B: FY 2019-20 total state and federal revenue reported by the Department to school districts, CSI, and BOCES. Source is CORE Financial Data Warehouse Reports.

Row C: Row A minus Row B equals the estimated gap in unfunded expenditures covered by the school districts, CSI, and BOCES.

Row D: The proportional percentage of each categorical program's unfunded expenditures in relation to the total categorical programs unfunded expenditures.

Row E: The FY 2021-22 state funds appropriation excluding federal funds, state funds appropriated from other programs, and public school transportation funds pursuant to Section 22-51-103, C.R.S.

Row F: Shows the Governor's Office recommended distribution of the inflationary increase.

Row G: Shows the FY 2022-23 base adjustments, such as salary survey and other request items that impact a categorical program.

Totals: The FY 2022-23 total request for all categorical programs.

Appendix B - Request for Information

The Department of Education is requested to work with the Department of Higher Education and to provide to the JBC information concerning the distribution of state funds available for each categorical program, excluding grant programs. The information for special education programs for children with disabilities, English language proficiency programs, public school transportation, career and technical education, and small attendance center aid is requested to include the following: (a) a comparison of the state funding distributed to each district or administrative unit for each program in FY 2020-21 and the maximum allowable distribution pursuant to state law and/or State Board of Education rule; and (b) a comparison of the state and federal funding distributed to each district or administrative unit for each program in FY 2019-20 and actual district expenditures for each program in FY 2019-20. The information for special education programs for gifted and talented children is requested to include a comparison of the state funding distributed to each district or administrative unit for each program in FY 2019-20 and actual district expenditures in FY 2019-20.

Please see the following tables in response to the above Request for Information.

A) Maximum Allowable Distribution:

Categorical Program	State Funds	Maximum State Funds	%	Estimated Increase Required to Fund Statutory Maximum
Exceptional Children's Education Act (ECEA)	203,571,977	281,993,000	72.19%	78,421,023
English Language Proficiency Act (ELPA)	24,105,538	119,947,606	20.10%	95,842,068
Transportation	60,798,417	106,367,732	57.16%	45,569,315
Colorado Career & Technical Act	27,933,575	34,918,861	80.00%	6,985,286
Small Attendance Center Aide	1,314,250	1,469,977	89.41%	155,727
				226,973,419

(B) State and Federal Funding Compared to Actual Expenditures:

Categorical Program	FY19-20 Total State & Federal Revenue	FY19-20 Total State and Federal Expenditures	FY19-20 Total State & Federal Expenditures in Excess of Revenue	Proportional Percentage of Total Excess Expenditures	% Covered by State & Federal
	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	
Exceptional Children's Education Act (ECEA)	402,351,671	1,148,781,907	746,430,237	56.4%	35%
English Language Proficiency Act (ELPA)	59,153,267	292,424,544	233,271,277	17.6%	20%
Transportation	62,556,983	275,971,759	213,414,776	16.1%	23%
Gifted & Talented	11,875,758	38,456,780	26,581,022	2.0%	31%
Colorado Career & Technical Act	32,806,877	136,037,968	103,231,091	7.8%	24%
Expelled Students	7,056,688	7,505,928	449,240	0.0%	94%
Small Attendance Center Aide	1,314,250	1,469,977	155,727	0.0%	89%
Comprehensive Health Education	831,099	721,457	(109,641)	0.0%	115%
Total of all Categorical Programs as Reported	577,946,593	1,901,370,321	1,323,423,727	100.0%	30%

Department of Education

FY 2022-23 Funding Request
November 1, 2021

State Board of Education

Katy Anthes, Ph.D.
Commissioner

Department Priority: R-03
Request Detail: Operating Expenses for the State Board of Education

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2022-23			
		Incremental Change	
	FY 2021-22 Appropriation	FY 2022-23 Request	FY 2023-24 Request
Total Funds	$318,751	$124,497	$127,295
FTE	2.0	0.5	0.5
General Fund	$318,751	$124,497	$127,295
Cash Funds	$0	$0	$0
Reappropriated Funds	$0	$0	$0
Federal Funds	$0	$0	$0

Summary of Request

The Colorado State Board of Education is the governing body of the Colorado Department of Education. Due to the addition of an eighth congressional district representative and an at-large member (28.6% increase in size of the board), the board requests an increase in General Fund on an ongoing basis for the following:
- a security contract for two patrolmen for in-person meetings ($39,960),
- additional funding for technical support during board meetings ($55,862), and
- additional funding for the two new board members' reimbursements ($27,200).

This request results in an increase of $124,497 to the State Board of Education Line Item and represents a 39% increase.

Currently, the Colorado State Board of Education is comprised of seven members representing each of the state's Congressional Districts. These board members serve without pay. The Colorado Constitution provides that there shall be one State Board member elected from each of the state's congressional districts. The board is the governing body of the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). Within the limits of its jurisdiction, the board appoints the Commissioner of Education, makes rules and regulations that apply to school districts, accredits public school districts, and regulates educator licensing, among other duties. The board exercises judicial authority with regard to appeals by charter schools. The board also appoints and receives recommendations from a variety of advisory commissions and committees in the process of carrying out its responsibilities. The board has authority to release school districts from some state statutes and regulations.

Problem or Opportunity

With the additional two members that are dictated by the state constitution, the board feels a sense of urgency in upgrading the security and technology assistance provided at board meetings. The board feels strongly that security needs to be present at each meeting. Currently, the board uses the CDE security guard to address any issues at the meeting. This is not a sustainable solution, as one security guard will not be able to manage a real emergency. The board office did ask the Colorado State Patrol if they could provide security. Unfortunately, they do not have the staff for this request. The board office worked with State Patrol to get the direct cost to hire off-duty officers for their meetings.

The second portion of the request speaks to the additional funding for technical support. Currently, the board is supported by a CDE help desk support staff. Assisting the board is not directly part of the position's current job functions and takes away from the daily help desk support. The plan is to use this funding as partial funding for the help desk staff assisting the board with audio visual and other work. This allows for time for staff to dedicate to becoming familiar with the state board members' needs, primarily for the audio/visual support required. This will allow the board to keep all of the technical management of board meetings internal. Not receiving this money will limit the board's ability to provide virtual or hybrid meeting access efficiently for the public.

Lastly, board members are not allowed to be paid for their work but can request reimbursement for any expenses they deem necessary to do their job as an elected official. Board members usually request conference registrations, mileage to and from board meetings and events in their districts, and lodging and meals when appropriate. These are ongoing reimbursements as board members serve six-year terms. Also, not knowing where these new board members will reside, we need to be prepared if they will require travel arrangements into the Denver metro area for monthly two-day board meetings.

The proposed solution is to give the members of the State Board of Education additional funds to complete their duties. After looking at how other state boards of education operate across the country, the Colorado State Board of Education works very lean. They have few staff and are thoughtful in the requests asked of them.

If these requests are not approved, the board will not have dedicated security which poses a serious safety concern. They will have nobody scanning the crowd prior to entering the public meeting. The board will also continue to operate with less staff than optimal. The board has looked into contracting IT support but found it to be more economical to keep it in-house.

Theory of Change	Additional resources for the board will improve security and technical support, as well as reimburse the two new members' expenses.		
Program Objective	Increased meeting security, increased constituent access to meetings via technology, reimbursement budgets for two new constitutionally-required board members.		
Outputs being measured	Meeting security, constituent access, expenses covered.		
Outcomes being measured	None at this time.		
Cost/Benefit ratio	None at this time.		
Evaluations	Pre-Post	Quasi-Experimental Design	Randomized Control Trial
Results of Evaluation	N/A	N/A	N/A
Continuum Level	Step 2		

Additional board members are required by the Colorado Constitution. Additional representation should increase the voice of the residents of Colorado in how their schools are operated. Security increases the well-being and safety of board members and their ability to express the opinions of the constituents from their congressional district. Additional audio-visual support increases the ability for board members, presenters and constituents to participate in the governing process and increases the ability for individuals to be heard and different perspectives to be considered. It also will assist in the smooth running of the meeting to get the most business accomplished in the shortest amount of time.

Individual board member budgets are based on current board member budgets. The cost of security personnel is based on the rates provided by the Colorado State Patrol for coverage of the current yearly meeting schedule. The additional 0.5 FTE is taken from the current second quartile of the IT Professional class and is representative of an audio-visual technician.

Table 1: FTE Workload Indicators

Workload Indicators	Annual Hours
Manage/configure streaming services for Board meetings	450
Manage audio and video feeds for board meetings using SBE board room system, 100% in person and hybrid meetings	200
Stream SBE meetings occasionally from remote locations	150
Edit, split, and post SBE meetings and other content	100
Other technical support	100
Recommend and assist with IT procurement for SBE	40
Total	1040

With the increase in the size of the board by two seats, the new board members are allocated funds for travel and per diem expenses. While travel and meeting costs have been lower the past couple of years due to the worldwide pandemic, it is anticipated that costs will begin to normalize by FY 2022-23. The total cost associated with the board members is shown below in Table 2.

Table 2: Board Member related expenditures:

	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019
Grand Total	$49,265	$48,351	$56,312	$45,961	$48,138
Average per Board Member	$7,038	$6,907	$8,045	$6,566	$6,877

As illustrated in Table 2, the average of the board member related expenditures is just over $7,000 per board member in non-pandemic years. The addition of two board members will require $14,000 in additional funds to cover board member related expenses. In addition to regular expenditures, the 9th board member will be an at-large board member. Their 'district' will be the entire state. It is anticipated that this board member will potentially require significantly more resources as visiting their district will entail travel throughout the state. An additional $1,100 per month is included to allow for travel and per diem throughout the state and to ensure costs associated with the new board members are covered (their location is currently unknown and distance from Denver will impact the total amount needed), for a total cost of $27,200.

The security request is based on the quote from State Patrol of $90/hour and the number of hours that need to be covered.

- Two Troopers for two days and eight hours per day each month.
  - 2 x 2 x 8 x 90 x 12 = $34,560.
- Two Troopers for one day and six hours per day for months of January through May for legislative updates.
  - 2 x 1 x 6 x 90 x 5 = $5,400.
- Total request for security is $39,960.

Department of Education

FY 2022-23 Funding Request
November 1, 2021

State Board of Education

Katy Anthes, Ph.D.
Commissioner

Department Priority: R-04
Request Detail: Departmental Infrastructure

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2022-23			
		Incremental Change	
	FY 2021-22 Appropriation	FY 2022-23 Request	FY 2023-24 Request
Total Funds	$10,698,515	$648,145	$669,105
FTE	80.5	6.2	6.7
General Fund	$5,473,312	$551,972	$574,932
Cash Funds	$1,661,683	$96,173	$94,173
Reappropriated Funds	$3,563,520	$0	$0
Federal Funds	$0	$0	$0

Summary of Request

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) requests a total fund increase of $648,145 and 6.2 FTE in FY 2022-23, through a combination of $551,972 General Fund and $96,173 cash fund spending authority to enable the department to meet increased statutory requirements and serve school districts' ongoing programmatic needs. This amount annualizes to $669,105 total funds and 6.7 FTE in FY 2023-2024 and beyond. This request is similar to the request submitted and approved by the Joint Budget Committee for FY 2020-21, prior to the budget reductions required in response to the anticipated economic impact of COVID-19.

CDE has experienced significant growth over the last 17 years, primarily due to legislative actions, including 41 bills passed in the 2021 legislative session. The collective impact of legislation, updates to CDE personnel practices, the increasing complexity of human resource support and internal technology needs, and increased focus on rigorous program evaluation have resulted in additional needs for infrastructure support. Over time, these impacts combined with increased complexity of various systems have reached a level that is no longer sustainable and adversely

impacts the programmatic service delivery of the department, especially for procurement, grants fiscal management, information management, human resources, and payroll teams. The requested infrastructure support FTE will enable the department to effectively support school districts and implement statutory requirements.

Current Program

As with other state agencies, CDE includes various support functions that are critical to the effective functioning of the department's programmatic service delivery. These support functions include accounting, budgeting, communications, contracting, human resources, information management, payroll, procurement, and rulemaking. Additionally, the department's infrastructure supports also include staff aiding the processing for competitive grants, grants fiscal management, and program evaluation given the high volume of grant funding that flows through the department to school districts. These functions comprise the departmental infrastructure and have an impact on the effectiveness of the department to provide services to schools and districts.

Problem or Opportunity

Over the last 17 years, CDE has experienced significant growth, primarily due to legislative actions. Each year, the General Assembly passes several pieces of legislation that impact CDE. For example, 41 bills passed during the 2021 legislative session that required implementation efforts by CDE, on top of 20 bills in the 2020 legislative session, 40 bills in the 2019 session, 41 bills in the 2018 session, and 27 bills in the 2017 session. While the fiscal note process is effective at addressing the resource needs directly related to the programmatic implementation of individual bills, that process does not always address the indirect impact on departmental infrastructure needs. Over time, the identified and non-identified impacts of legislation on the infrastructural support functions of the department have continued to grow.

In FY 2005-06, the department (excluding the Charter School Institute and the Colorado School for Deaf and Blind) had a total of 282.3 FTE. In FY 2020-21, the department's FTE count was 415.2, representing an overall FTE increase of 47%. Furthermore, the projected FTE total for FY 2021-22 is 463.2. At the same time, CDE has experienced updates to its personnel practices and internal technology systems as a result of rapidly changing software upgrades and security tools. In recent years, both CDE and the General Assembly have also placed a priority on rigorous program evaluation to better understand the impact of various education programs.

Over time, the impacts of these changes on the infrastructural support functions of the department have cumulatively reached a level that is no longer sustainable and, as a result, the programmatic service delivery of the department to school district, educators, parents, and children may be adversely impacted.

Proposed Solution

The department requests an ongoing appropriation of $648,145 for the hiring and employment of 6.2 FTE in FY 2022-23 for infrastructure support to provide essential back-office support functions for the department. Specifically, these additional FTE will be used to support the department's increased workload resulting from statutory requirements across Purchasing, Human Resources, Payroll, Data and Evaluation, Capital Construction, and the Colorado Commission on Indian Affairs. There are also significant needs within the Information Management Services (IMS) unit, but it is proposed that these needs be met by utilizing existing reappropriated spending authority and funding it with indirect cost recoveries (current indirect cost recovery revenues are sufficient to cover this immediate need).

Because the IMS resources will be funded with existing spending authority they are not part of the total dollars requested in this request but are outlined here as the spending authority has not previously been funded via indirect cost recoveries. Including the IMS staff funded via current spending authority, the total need is 11.7 FTE. Upon receiving funding, CDE will immediately develop job descriptions and engage in hiring, training and onboarding new team members who will focus on providing the required infrastructure support needed for effective service delivery and support to school districts and implement the statutory requirements placed on the department.

The following section outlines the specific position needs included as part of this request.

Purchasing – 2.0 FTE (Purchasing Agent III)
For FY 2021-2022, the number of Requests for Proposals (RFPs) that CDE's Purchasing Office will likely need to complete increased approximately 300% from prior fiscal years. Historically, CDE has completed between two to four RFPs per year. In FY 2021-22, CDE estimates that it will need to complete approximately 12 to 15 RFPs. The increase in RFPs has come from recent legislation, the administrative needs of CDE, an increased focus on evaluating the effectiveness of current and future programs, and the need for new IT systems. The FY 2021-22 RFPs that resulted from recent legislation and program evaluation include:

- Colorado Imagination Library Program Coordinator pursuant to S.B. 20-185,
- financial review pursuant to S.B. 21-274, and
- potential solicitations related to program evaluations pursuant to H.B. 21-1234, which required evaluation of Supplemental Education High-Impact Tutoring Programs and evaluations of the K-5 Social Emotional Grant and School Health Professional Program.

Additional solicitations for this year based on previous legislation, federal requirements, and CDE needs include:
- solicitation for a new vendor for the READ Act public information campaign (pursuant to previous READ Act legislation),
- subrecipient monitoring of CDE's Coronavirus Relief Funds due to the influx of federal funding due to the pandemic,
- grants system RFP,
- Colorado Talking Book Library Construction RFP;

- several solicitations will likely be required for the Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS) Grant, which requires CDE to procure goods and services on behalf of Non-Public Schools, and
- numerous information technology solicitations that will be posted late this fiscal year or July 2022:
    - Early Literacy Assessment Tool (Continuing READ Act Legislation),
    - Migrant Student Data System,
    - 21st Century Community Learning Centers Data Collection and Management System,
    - Facility Schools System, and
    - Online Web-Based Performance Management System.

This RFP increase of approximately 300% is in line with pre-pandemic increases. For example, for FY 2019-20, the number of RFPs that CDE's Purchasing Office completed increased 300 percent as well from prior fiscal years. The FY 2019-20 RFPs that resulted from recent legislation and program evaluation included:

- Read Act Marketing Campaign RFP – S.B. 19-199;
- Read Act Training Development RFP – S.B. 19-199;
- Read Act Evaluator RFP – S.B. 19-199;
- Pilot Program Coordinator - H.B. 19-1017;
- Program Evaluator - H.B. 19-1017; and the
- Career Advisor RFP.

Other solicitations during FY 2019-20 included solicitations for a security guard, a new roof for the Talking Book library, a new teacher licensing system, a new ESSU data system, computer science training, and training RFPs for schools of choice.

For FY 2020-21, there were fewer solicitations than in FY 2019-20 because of the state funding deficits caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, CDE still issued six RFPs, 2 documented quote solicitations, and one Invitation for Bids which is still higher than just a few years ago. These solicitations included the adult education system, Colorado High School College Entrance Suite of Assessments, court reporting services, technical support and facilitation for equity convenings, mediators, coaching and support for charter school developers, for CDE servers, Assessments for a Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) Database and Generate Tool, and Assessment of Microsoft Power BI implementation. Many of these were federally-funded projects. In addition, because of the influx of federal funding due to COVID-19, CDE purchasing has been working on time-intensive projects like purchasing goods and services on behalf of non-public schools as required by the Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS) Grant.

In addition to the increased workload for RFPs, the FY 2021-22 RFPs will result in Purchasing having to write and negotiate fifteen new contracts. In FY 2018-19, excluding interagency agreements, leases, and BEST agreements, CDE had 24 contracts. Thus, the additional RFPs and contracts just from FY 2019-20 resulted in a nearly 70% increase in workload, both immediately and ongoing, as contracts will also need to be renewed and negotiated via amendments in the years moving forward. There will be additional contracts added for the FY 2020-21 RFPs.

Likewise, of the 15 solicitations in FY 2021-22, most of them are likely going to have to be re-solicited in five years.

Furthermore, there has been and will continue to be a significant increase in Requests for Information (RFIs): a publicly posted, formal request for vendors to provide information about potential costs and services. This must be completed to comply with a statute that was passed a few years ago requiring RFIs be completed prior to major information technology systems being solicited via RFPs. CDE has gone from zero RFIs previously to having to do several RFIs in a fiscal year.

The CDE Purchasing Office currently has 3.5 FTE and a Procurement Official. The office was struggling to keep up with the approximately four annual RFPs, contracts, interagency agreements, BEST grant agreements, 300 purchase orders, vendor agreements, leases, High School Equivalency MOUs, Colorado Correctional Industry Waivers, Requests for Information, Covendis solicitations for IT augmentation, construction project agreements, financial system entries, and many other tasks assigned to it. The workload challenges were increased in July 2018 when CDE became delegated to draft and facilitate RFPs. Previously, RFPs were drafted and facilitated by the Department of Personnel & Administration (DPA) or DPA's delegate, instead of by CDE staff. The delegation to draft and facilitate RFPs has provided for greater efficiencies and greater flexibility in regards to solicitations but means that starting in FY 2018-19, CDE's purchasing staff took on greater responsibilities in regards to RFPs from previous years.

Human Resources – 0.5 FTE (HR Specialist V)

CDE currently has 4.0 FTE providing professional human resources services for the department. These staff support numerous manual and administrative processes required in HR due to the lack of adequate technology in both HR and Payroll.

As stated above, CDE's FTE count was 415.2 in FY 2020-21. The department has been hiring staff at a rapid pace to accommodate all the federal funding related to Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds. Thus, the projected FTE total for FY 2021-22 is 463.2, which includes several new positions created to accommodate the grants management and fiscal portions of ESSER. This equates to a ratio of 1 human resource professional for every 115.8 staff members. The Society for HR Management standard benchmark HR ratio is 1:100. Therefore, the additional HR staff will allow CDE to provide a higher level of support, consistent with the industry best practices (1:102.9).

This proposed 0.5 FTE will support the department across critical areas of need, including professional development, equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives, and supervisor training. This position will work across all divisions, units and programs to facilitate and track the required agency and state level training as well as have the capacity and capability to develop and present HR training throughout the year. Multiple components of the department's strategic plan are interrelated and require an additional high-level HR resource to assist the HR Director in providing this strategic support. This position will facilitate the integration of a training and development program into our HR systems that support continuous process improvement.

Payroll Support – 1.0 FTE (Accountant I)

CDE currently has 1.0 FTE providing payroll administration for the department. The department processes payroll for approximately 500 employees each month, 60 of which are on bi-weekly payroll. This is far above the industry standard average ratio of one payroll administrator processing payroll for 250 employees. Further, CDE does not have an automated timekeeping system. As such, the department has manual, time intensive processes. In this environment, payroll staff are critical to ensuring time and effort are accurately recorded. An additional payroll administrator will provide CDE with the appropriate level of resources for this critical function. This position will be classified as an Accountant I position.

Data and Evaluation Lead – 1.0 FTE (Senior Consultant)
CDE would like to build capacity in evaluating the many state programs we implement, in order to:

- maximize the return on investment of our state programs to support Colorado's education system,
- increase efficiency and coherence across the different, limited evaluation resources within the department, and
- support the goals of S.B. 21-284, Evidence-based Evaluations for Budget.

By creating a 1.0 FTE position to coordinate and provide evaluation and data expertise across CDE, we will be able to begin building department capacity. The position will be housed with the Policy and Legislative Relations Office to prioritize evaluation work related to legislative priorities. This functionality will help enable resources to be directed to the most effective programs.

BEST Regional Program Manager – 1.0 FTE (Senior Consultant)
The appropriations for the BEST Cash Grants have significantly increased in recent years. Additionally, a number of lease purchase grants have been awarded in the last five grant cycles. The program awarded approximately $1.7 billion in projects between FY 2008-09 and FY 2017-18 and another $1.7 billion between FY 2018-19 and FY 2021-22. The average dollar amount per year has increased from approximately $170 million to $430 million. This increase in funding (and complexity of projects due to lease purchase grants) has created a work environment where Regional Program Managers deal more with review of project fund requests and less with site visits, proactive outreach, and developing appropriate projects with potential applicants. As such, there is a need for an additional 1.0 FTE to serve as a term-limited Regional Program Manager to more evenly distribute this workload and provide better customer service. This will benefit school districts, especially small rural school districts that have less expertise in facility management and construction projects.

Communications – 0.5 FTE (Marketing and Communications Professional III)
A 0.5 FTE increase of a part-time staff member who will support copy editing of the numerous communications to teachers, districts and families required of the department's various programs. Whether a variety of new state grants, decisions around federal pandemic funds, or simply school related issues coming forward in the news requiring coordination and communication, over the past couple of years the communications needs of the department have increased significantly and are expected to remain elevated.

Staff Support for Colorado Commission for Indian Affairs - 0.65 FTE (Senior Consultant)
This additional funding will support current staff supporting the Colorado Commission on Indian Affairs. Currently, the department does not have adequate support in this position. As the primary liaison between CDE and the Native American schools across the state, support for this position is vital to maintaining and enhancing the service the department provides.

Information Management Systems – 5.0 FTE
The department's growth over the past 17 years has resulted in increased needs for technology support and maintenance and has put additional strain on existing Information Management Services (IMS) resources. More employees translates into more computers, email accounts, productivity tools, and other back office tools to support. The department has never increased its base budget for maintaining these new tools and increased security demands. As vendor maintenance bills increase by 5%-10% every year, the IMS budget has remained level. With the exception of some one-off, one-time small increases via decision items to address these issues, nothing has been added to address the continuing escalation of vendor maintenance bills. As a result, the division is forced to dip into other financial sources, e.g., funds previously allocated to paying staff. This resulted in declining availability of funds for paying the highly specialized staff needed to stay current in the ever-changing Information Technology field. This is felt as a reduction of personnel that the division cannot afford, and is multiplied by the increases in salaries demanded by these specialists across the IT industry. IMS makes every effort to maximize economies of scale, new productivity tools and other process efficiencies, but these efforts have not been enough to accommodate the overall loss in available funds. The division is at a critical point where sufficient funds are not available to make up the difference.

Additionally, in the rapidly changing environment of technology software—where upgrades, new tools, and new security are needed every year—it is imperative that CDE regularly invests in technology infrastructure and emerging security needs. As a government agency, CDE strives to keep pace with the changing landscape and best practices of information management systems but needs the resources to do so.

This was the situation prior to the pandemic, with a critical need for additional internal support resulting from statutory changes and overall department growth. On top of the existing internal support situation, the past 18 months (during the pandemic) also brought forward additional support needs. The need to support employees working remotely or in a hybrid work environment accentuated the already strapped resource situation. IMS also supports school districts with data collection, storage, security and reporting. It was demonstrated during the pandemic that our systems and our internal processes are not nimble enough to adjust on the fly when new or different data are needed from the school districts to evaluate program effectiveness and to adjust where needed. While this is a common challenge for all states, there are areas that could be improved by right-sizing the FTE count to be better aligned to the support needs accentuated by the pandemic. With all this in mind, CDE is requesting the following additions to the IMS team:

> Enterprise Security Specialist - 1.0 FTE (IT Professional). As time goes on, state government is seeing additional threats and the need for increased technology security support for local education agencies and other education entities. This requires additional

security to support the new remote/hybrid work model, for continuous improvement, and the capacity to respond quickly to incidents and breaches. CDE must proactively assess and prepare for the latest attacks and vulnerabilities, provide additional and more frequent patching, and support enhanced authentication and access management for school districts. Keeping platforms and systems up to date is more important than ever with the current ransomware attack proliferation. New applications require security support, follow up with security alerts and available intelligence prevents issues, keeping staff informed, trained, aware, and secure remotely requires additional resources. Remote workers and computers are more vulnerable to cyber-attacks requiring additional support. CDE supports over 35,000 school district and other educational organization logon accounts and access control for 20 platforms and applications with only 1 FTE.

Administrative Assistant – 1.0 FTE (Administrative Assistant III). Currently, many highly paid technology staff are spending long hours tracking purchases, managing payments for equipment and vendor contracts, and tracking/reporting state assets. IMS project managers are also spending time on purchasing documents that could be completed by someone in a lower salary range. As a result of the pandemic, it will be necessary to add items to the list of state-provided equipment that CDE must track, due to employees requiring CDE equipment to work effectively at home. This adds a huge burden in asset tracking, and currently IMS does not have staff to perform that function. As other agencies across the state are finding, the "new normal" hybrid work environment saves significant money in most areas, but this working model creates an increased need for many IT support services. An administrative assistant is be an economical way to add value to IMS by eliminating the need for highly paid specialty technical staff to perform general administrative functions as they have done in the past. If there is time available, the general administrative portion of the role can be shared with another CDE unit to ensure maximum use of the opportunity this position will provide the department.

Help Desk Analyst - 2.0 FTE (IT Professional). Remote and hybrid support entails additional time to resolve per call, due to being remote. Additional equipment, VPN, and remote access all require additional support, and new productivity platforms required for hybrid work, never widely used prior to 2020, such as Office 365, Teams, and Zoom require additional support. CDE experienced a rise in help desk tickets of 1300 requests (50% increase) from 2019 to 2020, and that trend continues into 2021. Remote and hybrid public meetings, remote/in-person split meetings, and platforms and equipment required to deliver those functions require additional support. In addition to the increased overall load as a result of the new hybrid working model, the growth CDE is experiencing presents other support challenges.

Business units are allowed to select tools based on what they can afford from grants, fiscal notes, etc., but many units do not have the ability to pay for tools. CDE's size allows the department to take advantage of economies of scale and utilize enterprise versions of many technology tools to save money for the department as a whole, but enterprise tools require administrators for them to run smoothly and the department has not received funding for that. As a result, the support load created by the flexibility offered to

individual units often falls to those individual units or to the Help Desk. Another Help Desk position will allow the team to administer enterprise tools like Office 365, Smartsheet, Sharepoint, and other department-wide tools, to remove the need for individuals within educational business units to administer them. This will free up program units to focus on educational program work, and allow CDE to reduce overall support costs created by the multiple non-standard tools used across the department.

<u>Quality Assurance – 1.0 FTE (IT Professional)</u>. CDE has never had a formal quality assurance (QA) program. A valid QA program will free up educational program specialists' time since often the program staff are the individuals performing system testing now. This will improve the quality of data, address communication issues between technical and educational teams, and overall will contribute time-savings for many CDE employees. IMS is currently working on improving all testing processes; this is being conducted by existing project managers, business analysts and developers. However, there is no one dedicated to coordinating this effort, working closely with the program units to understand their needs and capacity to do user testing, and overseeing the quality and consistency of testing. This FTE will formalize a QA program, have expertise in various technical areas, understand business requirements and communications, and will focus on the quality of data stored and reported out of CDE's data management process. Data is such an important lever for CDE, that the quality of that data is critical to its success. The intent is to put much more focus on improving data quality so that the department and our constituents have more confidence in the data used to make decisions.

Theory of Change	Additional infrastructural support resources will enable the department to effectively support school districts and implement statutory requirements.
Program Objective	Provide sustainable, efficient programmatic delivery of procurement, information management, human resources, and payroll services.
Outputs Being Measured	Number of RFPs, hirings, payroll processing, program evaluations, copy edited communications documents, updated secure IT systems, help desk tickets resolved, QA system testing.
Outcomes Being Measured	None at this time.
Cost/Benefit Ratio	None at this time.

Evaluations	Pre-Post	Quasi-Experimental Design	Randomized Control Trial
Results of Evaluation	N/A	N/A	N/A
Continuum Level	Step 2		

Anticipated Outcomes

The department expects funding for infrastructure support FTE will enable CDE to more effectively provide programmatic support to school districts, while also implementing the new statutory requirements as determined by the General Assembly. A discussion of the specific positions that represent the outcome of this item in the paragraphs above. Please see the Assumptions and Calculations section for detailed costs by position and in total.

Assumptions and Calculations

Detailed FTE worksheets for each position are included as Appendix A. This request proposes funding the IMS resource needs with spending authority already in the IMS Long Bill line item. Letternote 'k' establishes $534,029 in reappropriated spending authority as funds transferred from various appropriations to the Department of Education. Historically, a majority of this spending authority has been reverted and not been used to meet the technology needs of the department but ultimately this letternote, transfer of funds from other funding sources, meets the definition of indirect cost recoveries. This spending authority is sufficient to cover the needs associated with the IMS FTE and there are sufficient indirect cost recoveries to fund this portion of the request.

As the General Fund pays for its share of the indirect cost pool via direct appropriations, the General Fund will cover the portion for payroll, purchasing, HR and other administrative staff.

The BEST support staff will be funded with BEST cash funds.

Department of Education
Charter School Institute

FY 2022-23 Funding Request

November 1, 2021

Jared Polis
Governor

Dr. Terry Croy Lewis
Executive Director

Department Priority: R-05
Request Detail: CSI Mill Levy Equalization

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2022-23

		Incremental Change	
	FY 2021-22 Appropriation	FY 2022-23 Request	FY 2023-24 Request
Total Funds	$18,000,000	$20,000,000	$20,000,000
FTE	0	0	0
General Fund	$9,000,000	$10,000,000	$10,000,000
Cash Funds	0	$0	$0
Reappropriated Funds	$9,000,000	$10,000,000	$10,000,000
Federal Funds	$0	$0	$0

Summary of Request:

The Charter School Institute (CSI) requests a $10,000,000 General Fund appropriation increase to the CSI Mill Levy Equalization Fund for distribution to the Colorado Charter School Institute's charter public schools in FY 2022-23 and ongoing. This represents a 111% increase in funding and will be a step towards providing equitable public funding for all children attending Colorado public schools located within a school district, regardless of the type of public school. Currently, children attending a district public school—whether a traditional or charter public school—have access to funding from the district's local mill levy overrides (MLOs) as required by H.B. 17-1375. To account for the fact that CSI schools do not have access to local tax revenue, this bill also established the CSI Mill Levy Equalization Fund as a mechanism to ensure children attending CSI schools had access to similar levels of funding as their district peers.

While the bill created the mechanism for funding, no dollars were immediately allocated to the CSI fund, resulting in a persistent funding difference for the 20,000+ public school children that are attending CSI schools. Over the last three years, the General Assembly has taken steps to move the level of funding for children attending CSI schools closer to that of their district peers. However, there remains a gap of over $31 million in Mill Levy Override funding between children attending district schools and those attending CSI schools. This request for increased funding for

mill levy override equalization dollars will move Colorado closer to ensuring all children attending public schools have access to the same public resources within their geographic regions.

Charter schools have been part of Colorado's public school system for over 25 years, serving roughly 16% of the public school children in Colorado through 260 schools. The Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI) was created by the legislature in 2004 in response to the growing demand for more charter public schools, the desire for innovative models serving at-risk children, and to offer an alternate mode of authorizing charter schools than the traditional district charter school authorizer.

In Colorado, charter schools can be authorized by school districts retaining exclusive chartering authority or by CSI, Colorado's only statewide authorizer. Currently, 172 of the 178 school districts in Colorado retain exclusive chartering authority (ECA). CSI authorizes charter schools 1) in districts that do not retain ECA, and 2) in districts that retain ECA and either release the charter to CSI or waive ECA. Currently, CSI authorizes 42 public charter schools within 17 school districts across the state, from Grand Junction to Colorado Springs, Durango to Steamboat Springs, collectively serving over 20,000 children from preschool through Grade 12. For the small percentage of applicants that can seek authorization by CSI, only about half have been approved in CSI's history.

A fundamental premise behind charter schools is that increased autonomy with greater accountability can lead to improved outcomes for children. The CSI approach to authorizing charter schools balances autonomy and accountability. CSI offers its schools the flexibility to choose the educational models and methods that best meet the unique needs of their students and communities and holds them accountable to clear expectations for academic, financial, and organizational performance. Higher performing schools benefit from increased autonomy and lower performing schools receive additional interventions and support that seek to guide them towards improvements.

One primary way in which CSI holds its schools accountable is through regular review and analysis of student and school outcome data. Due in part to the wide variety of models – ranging across Alternative Education, Tribal Culture and Language, Classical, Dual-Language, Early College, Montessori, Project-based, and Waldorf – and geographies, CSI does not evaluate a school's outcomes in comparison to other CSI schools unlike most school districts. Instead, CSI compares the performance of its schools to schools that students might otherwise attend and evaluates the school's outcomes in comparison to the outcomes of the geographic district or the schools nearest to the CSI school. This is seen in both the CSI annual evaluation that determines a school's accreditation rating as well as the annual review and associated programming related to special populations.

The statutory mission of CSI is to foster high-quality charter schools that demonstrate high academic performance with a particular focus on service to at-risk children. In the 2018-2019 school year, the most current year for which there is available data due to COVID-19 impacts, 38 of the 39 CSI schools earned one of the state's highest two ratings for academic performance—Performance and Improvement—and collectively served Minority students, English Learners,

children eligible for free or reduced price lunch, and children with a 504 Plan at rates similar to that of the state.

Figure 1: Student Populations over Time

Minority Students Over Time

- %Minority (School)
- %Minority (State)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
School	46.2%	46.6%	46.6%	47.1%	47.5%
n=	8642	9238	9257	9225	9592
State	52.6%	52.6%	50.7%	50.5%	46.2%

English Learners Over Time

- %ELL (School)
- %ELL (State)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
School	14.3%	14.1%	13.8%	13.5%	12.9%
n=	3432	3493	3128	3185	3079
State	20.9%	19.9%	17.1%	17.4%	14.8%

Lunch Eligibility Over Time

- %FRL (School)
- %FRL (State)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
School	42.2%	41.7%	40.7%	40.7%	40.2%
n=	7244	7239	6853	6958	7206
State	44.1%	41.2%	37.5%	38.1%	34.7%

Gifted Students Over Time

- %GT (School)
- %GT (State)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
School	7.3%	7.4%	7.3%	7.3%	7.4%
n=	666	728	749	738	749
State	4.1%	4.1%	4.1%	4.0%	3.6%

Students with an IEP Over Time

- %IEP (School)
- %IEP (State)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
School	10.5%	10.9%	11.2%	11.6%	11.8%
n=	919	1022	1199	1293	1362
State	5.6%	5.8%	6.6%	7.1%	6.6%

Students with a 504 Over Time

- %504 (School)
- %504 (State)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
School	2.0%	2.3%	2.8%	3.1%	3.3%
n=	427	478	610	632	710
State	2.6%	2.7%	3.3%	3.5%	3.4%

Note on Data Source: Data included in this report comes from the annual student October Count files.

Furthermore, CSI continues to prioritize service to and outcomes for at-risk children and has sought to target student needs through a variety of mechanisms. In 2015, CSI passed Board Resolution 1549, which affirmed CSI's commitment to closing the achievement gap and charged staff with increasing and improving service for students. The following year, CSI commissioned a Special Education Report to review the state of its special education programs and services and provide recommendations for moving forward. In 2017, CSI collaborated with the National Center

for Special Education in Charter Schools to develop the Student Services Screener and Tiers of Support to both assess and support schools in providing equal access and quality programs to students who qualify for specialized supports. More recently, CSI has expanded its special education initiatives by working collaboratively with schools to increase financial resources for students with special needs as well as to expand capacity-building strategies for special education staff. During the Fall of 2021, the CSI Board of Directors passed a resolution on CSI's Commitment to Equity. The CSI board made a commitment to apply an equity lens in decision-making, prioritize diversity on the board and in board officer positions, and hold CSI staff accountable for pursuing equity within the organization and among the CSI portfolio of schools.

The board also directed CSI staff to incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion into the organizational goals, consider organizational policies to advance DEI within the organization and within the CSI portfolio of schools, and to advance diverse opportunities in charter schools and charter school models. This renewed commitment to serving all students reflects the original mission and vision of CSI.

This persistent and systemic funding disparity disproportionately impacts students from historically underserved populations. With equitable funding, CSI schools will be able to increase the ways in which they address the unique needs of their individual school communities whether by improving transportation options to and from campus, expanding social emotional support for students, or strengthening teacher training and retention programs.

As an example, within the Aurora Public Schools geographic boundaries alone, CSI oversees four unique schools serving diverse student populations at rates greater than or equal to the state and geographic district averages:

Table 1: CSI School Details in Aurora

School	Model	Demographics (populations served at rates greater than or comparable to both state and geographic district averages)
New America School – Aurora	Alternative Education Campus (AEC) serving recent immigrants and their families	● Minority: 95% ● Economically disadvantaged: 89% ● English Learners: 67%
New Legacy Charter School	AEC serving pregnant and parenting teens and their children	● Minority: 93% ● Economically disadvantaged: 100% ● English Learners: 37% ● Students with IEPs: 14%
Colorado Early Colleges – Aurora	Early college offering the opportunity to concurrently earn a high school diploma and a postsecondary credential	● Minority: 87% ● Students with 504 Plans: 5%
Montessori del Mundo	Elementary school offering a dual language education within a Montessori teaching philosophy	● Minority: 89% ● English Learners: 35% ● Students with IEPs: 12%

Despite the unique missions of these schools to serve underrepresented groups, the four schools are facing a $2.2M annual funding inequity from MLOs alone, which equates to over $2,200 per student a year, and over $6,600 per student since district authorized charters were fully equalized in FY 2019-20. That is over 22% less funding per year for each of the 1,000 Colorado

students served by these four schools.

MLOs will generate over $1.3B of local property tax revenue in FY 2021-22 for use by public schools across the state. Historically, a district-authorized charter school's access to local mill levy override revenues has varied greatly depending on decisions made by the authorizing school district. In the 2017 legislative session, however, there was a concerted, bipartisan effort to ensure that all public school children have access to an equitable share of public school funds, regardless of what type of public school they attend.

As a result, H.B. 17-1375 was signed into law on June 2, 2017. H.B. 17-1375 requires school districts to distribute funding they receive from local property taxes generated by MLOs on an equal per pupil basis to district charter schools beginning in the 2019-2020 fiscal year. Additionally, out of recognition that schools authorized by CSI have no access to local tax revenue, the bill created the Mill Levy Equalization Fund, a mechanism for providing equitable funding to CSI students. While the bill created the mechanism for funding, no dollars were immediately allocated to the CSI fund, resulting in a persistent funding gap for the 20,000+ public school children that are attending CSI schools.

To address the funding gap for CSI students, the Governor's FY 2018-19 budget included a $5.5 million transfer from the state's general fund to the CSI Mill Levy Equalization fund to be distributed to CSI schools in the 2018-2019 school year. In FY 2019-20, the JBC approved an additional $1.5M transfer to the CSI Mill Levy Equalization fund, bringing the total to $7M. In FY 2020-21, the JBC approved an increase of $2M during the first round of figure setting bringing the General Fund transfer to $9M, but due to the unexpected state budget shortfall resulting from COVID-19, the committee reduced funding by $3.4M (38%), with a final appropriation of $5.6M. Prior to this reduction, the increases made incremental steps towards funding equity for children attending public charter schools within the same geographic boundary. During the 2021 legislative session, the JBC approved an increase of $1.4M to the CSI Mill Levy Equalization funding to restore the reduction made in FY 2021-22. The FY 2021-22 School Finance Act included an additional $2M, bringing the total allocated to the fund to $9M.

Without equitable funding and without a legal mechanism to raise local funding, CSI students, teachers, and communities will continue working towards the same academic standards, but will do so with fewer resources for CSI students, including limited facilities and transportation options, in addition to higher staff turnover and recruitment abilities due to lower salaries.

On a per pupil basis, CSI schools spend less on staff compensation and more on facility costs than district schools. The effects of the reduced access to public school funding are illustrated in the following graph which compares per pupil spending by category between Colorado school districts and CSI.

Per Pupil Spending By Category
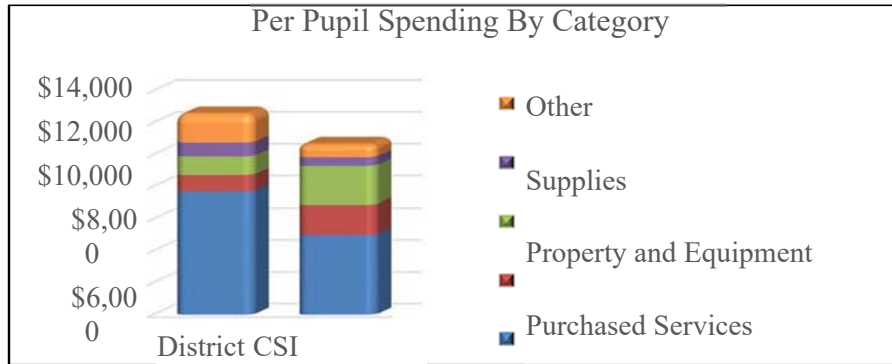
Some of the greatest challenges, which could be addressed in part with mill levy equalization dollars, CSI schools face include:

- *Lower Teacher Salaries*: As compared to school district peers, CSI teachers and principals receive over $10,000 less in salary per year. While teachers often choose to work at a charter school because of its mission, its model, and the students it serves, the lack of adequate compensation leads teachers to take on multiple jobs, find roommates, or ultimately leave the charter school in order to keep up with the cost of living.

CSI and State Comparison of Salaries
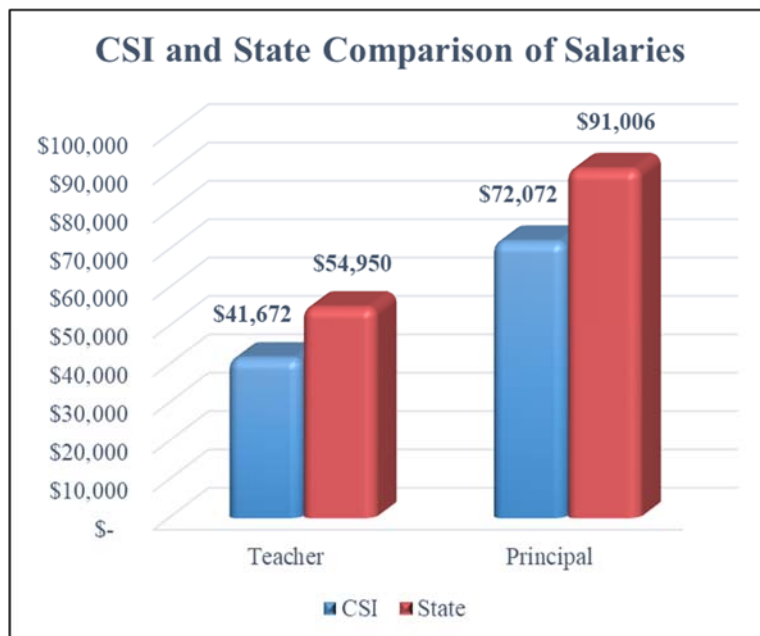
- *Higher Teacher Turnover*: The teacher turnover rate of CSI charter schools is nearly double that of the state's public schools as a whole, with non-competitive compensation likely a factor in this turnover.

CSI and State Comparison of Turnover
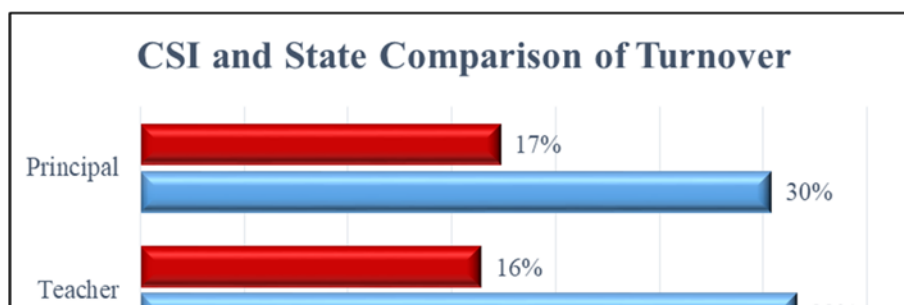
- *Rising Facility Costs and Lack of Facility Funding*: Facility costs make up 18.3% of total spending for CSI schools as compared to only 3.8% of total spending for non-CSI schools.
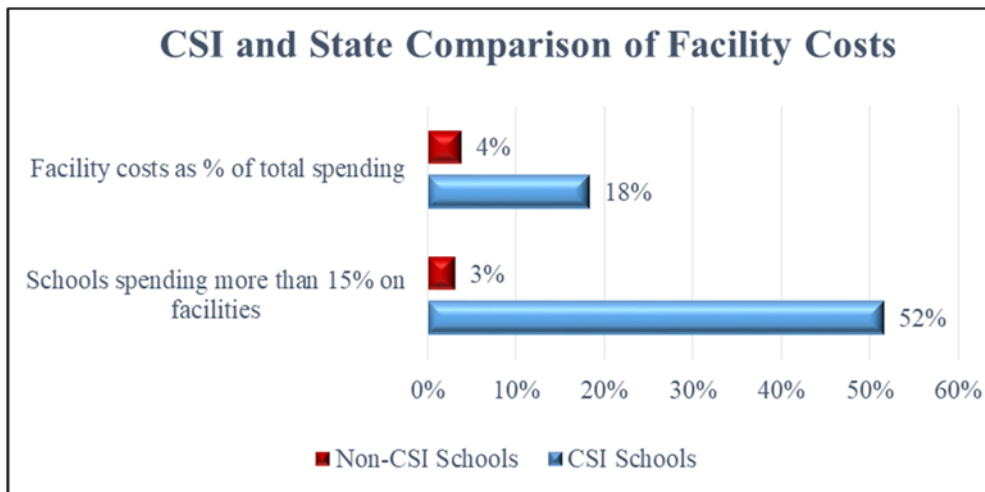
- *Limited Transportation and Food Services:* Inequitable funding compounds the heightened challenges CSI schools face when it comes to offering additional services like transportation and lunch programs. Fewer than half of CSI schools have the ability to offer regular transportation services between school and homes, and many cite the high costs of starting up a transportation program as a limiting factor. Generally, district-run charter schools work with their districts to receive a full service food service program through their district; however, CSI charter schools do not always have the opportunity for this coordination with their district and many times seek non-district School Food Authorities (SFAs) to support their food service program. This also contributes to inequitable access for historically underserved populations who often need school provided transportation and meals.

Proposed Solution:

CSI requests an increase of $10,000,000 GF to the CSI Mill Levy Equalization Fund for distribution to CSI's public charter schools. This increase to the existing $9M base amount of the Mill Levy Equalization Fund will directly benefit the more than 20,000 students attending CSI schools. It is

expected that funding will help to ensure that CSI schools can continue to provide high quality seats to historically underserved communities by providing funding not only for teachers and classroom staff, but also additional services that ensure equitable access for all students such as transportation and food service. The funding will address the impacts of the challenges (e.g., staffing, facilities, programming) described throughout this request, all of which can be evaluated through publicly available data on the Colorado Department of Education's website.

Current statute requires CSI to distribute these funds on an equal per pupil basis across the portfolio, with each school's per pupil allocation capped at the per-pupil MLO amount for its accounting district. CSI would like to consider legislative changes to this distribution to ensure that funds can be weighted to provide additional funding to historically underserved populations. Additionally, CSI would like to pursue legislative changes to gain continuous spending authority in the CSI Mill Levy Equalization fund so that interest accruing in the fund (~$150K) can be distributed to CSI schools rather than sitting idle in the state coffers. CSI would also like to pursue legislation to add language to Section 22-30.5-513.1(2)(b), C.R.S. that is similar to Section 22-32-108.5(4)(f), C.R.S., which would eliminate the requirement to distribute these funds to Multi District Online Charter Schools.

Theory of Change	Additional resources will lead to increased access to high quality education opportunities.		
Program Objective	Help schools better meet the needs of students through increased recruitment and retention of high quality teachers and staff, reduced staff turnover, and more equitable funding.		
Outputs Being Measured	Transportation and food services, comparison of facility costs, and teacher pay and turnover.		
Outcomes Being Measured	None at this time.		
Cost/Benefit Ratio	None at this time.		
Evaluations	Pre-Post	Quasi-Experimental Design	Randomized Control Trial
Results of Evaluation	N/A	N/A	N/A
Continuum Level	Step 2		

Anticipated Outcomes:

As the intent of H.B. 17-1375 was to ensure all public school students, regardless of public school type, had equal access to mill levy override dollars, funding this request will move the state closer to fulfilling the intent of the legislature. The increase of $10,000,000 GF for the Mill Levy Equalization Fund is expected to reduce the MLO funding gap.

CSI expects additional resources will lead to increased access to high quality education opportunities through increases in recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers and staff, reduction in staff turnover, and facilities that better meet the need of students so they are prepared to learn, in addition to more equitable service provision by providing needed funding

to implement programming such as food and transportation services. As a charter school authorizer, CSI will continue to encourage its schools to allocate its resources in a way to best meet the unique needs of its school community while also being accountable for delivering positive outcomes. Charter schools are generally granted greater autonomy in decision making, and CSI schools are no different. It is expected that each school will prioritize its greatest needs and allocate resources accordingly.

Assumptions and Calculations:

The calculations are based on the sum of the total mill levy equalization for each CSI school.

The total mill levy equalization for each CSI school is calculated using the most recent available information for the following data points and the following formula as described in statute:

- December 2020 Mill Levy Override Revenues for each respective accounting district,
- FY 2020-21 District projected funded pupil count, and
- FY 2022-23 CSI projected funded pupil count.

Office of the Governor

FY 2022-23 Funding Request

November 1, 2021

Jared Polis
Governor

Lauren Larson
Executive Director
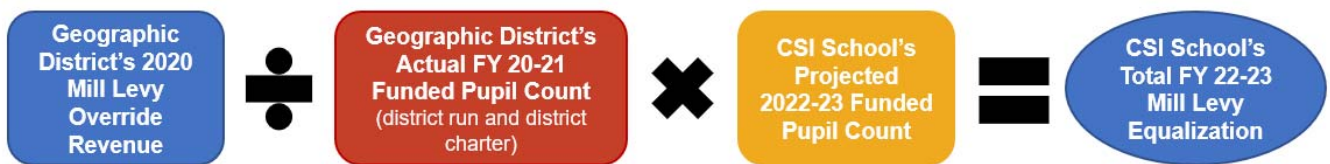
Governor's Office Priority: R-06
Request Detail: Expanding Resources for School Improvement

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2022-23			
		Incremental Change	
	FY 2021-22 Appropriation	**FY 2022-23 Request**	**FY 2023-24 Request**
Total Funds	$4,435,997	$2,000,000	$2,000,000
FTE	0.0	0.0	0.0
General Fund	$2,431,222	$2,000,000	$2,000,000
Cash Funds	$2,004,775	$0	$0
Reappropriated Funds	$0	$0	$0
Federal Funds	$0	$0	$0

Summary of Request

The Governor's Office requests a General Fund increase of $2,000,000 in FY 2022-23 and ongoing to expand access to existing and new evidence-based supports for schools identified as underperforming under the Colorado state accountability system. The request was developed with the technical collaboration of the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). The increase is projected to serve an additional 38 schools every year, beyond the 21 state-identified schools and 9 districts with state-identified schools last year. Each year CDE is unable to provide high-quality, intensive support to all schools identified by the state accountability system due to limited resources. Similarly, CDE's federal school improvement funding is insufficient to serve every interested and eligible federally-identified school. The unmet needs of both state- and federally-identified schools were significant prior to the pandemic, but there have been added impacts of COVID-19 on student learning as evidenced by low Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) results across the board. CDE does plan to use Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) dollars to support school improvement activities, but because state funds cannot be used for schools that only have a federal identification, CDE will consider ways to leverage the one-time ESSER funds to serve federally-identified schools while leveraging state funds for state-identified schools. This request is aligned with the bipartisan Education Leadership Council "State of Education" recommendation to prioritize differentiated support for low-performing schools. This increase in funding will ensure more schools and school districts have the ability to participate in the program with the goal of improving student outcomes.

Current Program

Under current state and federal law, schools are evaluated based on two separate, but similar identification systems: the federal system under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the state's accountability system (state system). Each system includes similar, but slightly different metrics by which schools (ESSA and the state system) and school districts (state system) are held accountable. The goal of both of these systems is to ensure that schools and school districts have the support and oversight to ensure all students receive a high-quality education that prepares them for postsecondary, career, and life.

Under the state system, schools are assigned four ratings: Performance (highest), Improvement, Priority Improvement, and Turnaround (lowest). Schools identified as Priority Improvement or Turnaround are eligible for state (but not necessarily federal) funding. ESSA identifies schools for comprehensive support and improvement (CSI), which are the lowest-performing 5% of Title I schools, high schools with graduation rates below 67%, and schools with chronically low-performing disaggregated student groups (such as African American students or students with disabilities). ESSA also identifies any school with at least one consistently underperforming disaggregated student group as a "targeted support" school and additional targeted support schools as any school with at least one disaggregate group that, on its own, meets the criteria for CSI.

In 2019-2020, 100 schools were identified using only the state accountability criteria, 192 schools were identified only under the ESSA accountability criteria, and 79 schools were identified under both. Under federal law, the 100 schools identified only for state support are not eligible for federal monies. The 100 state-identified schools face the strongest consequences in that if they remain on the "accountability clock" for five years, the State Board of Education is required to direct one of four statutory options: closure, become a charter, pursue external management, or pursue a school of innovation pathway. In addition, Colorado's accountability system has been paused for two school years (2020-2021 and 2021-2022), resulting in district and school ratings from 2019 continuing into the 2021-2022 school year.

For schools identified by either the state or federal system, CDE has a single application for state and federal school improvement funds called the Empowering Action for School Improvement (EASI) application. This application uses a needs-based approach to award services and funding. Approximately $5 million is available for award through ESSA and $4 million for the state School Transformation Grant. The amount of funding a school district may apply for is dependent on the chosen route(s), which are described below:

- Exploration supports for districts interested in funds and/or services to better understand the needs of the school and community and planning to address those needs;

- District designed and led supports for school districts that already have a plan or are already implementing a plan that meets school(s) needs and are interested in pursuing grant funds to support activities; and
- CDE-sponsored program or support aimed at improving school systems, such as Connect for Success, the Turnaround Network, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support , and the School Turnaround Leaders' Development program, and implementing a state accountability pathway action.

In 2017-18 and earlier, prior to the passage of H.B. 18-1355, state school improvement funds could only support turnaround leadership development programs. In 2018-2019, H.B. 18-1355 expanded the use of state school improvement dollars to support interventions beyond leadership development. The Governor's FY 2019-20 budget included increased funding and additional support to schools identified as Priority Improvement and Turnaround. The list below describes the level of need that schools are demonstrating through school improvement grant requests:

- In 2018, 45% of identified schools were served through the school turnaround leadership development grant, leaving 55% of identified schools unfunded.
- In 2019, with expanded options for support, but without additional funding, 48% of identified schools' applications were funded, leaving 52% of identified schools unfunded.
- In 2020, the department received approximately $29 million in requests for school improvement funds, with $11 million in state and federal funds available to award. Only 35% of the state-identified school requests at the district level received school improvement grant funding, leaving 65% of identified school and district-level requests unfunded.
- In 2021, the department received approximately $15 million in requests for school improvement funds, with $9.5 million available in state and federal funds to award. Approximately 60% of the amount requested from state-identified schools and district-level was funded, leaving 40% unfunded.

The Governor's FY 2019-2020 budget increase for the School Transformation Grant included additional resources for the department to conduct an external evaluation of the supports CDE provides to the field. The department contracted with the Center for Assessment, Research, Design, and Evaluation (CADRE) at the University of Colorado Boulder to conduct an external evaluation of CDE's intensive supports during the 2020-2021 school year. The first phase of the external evaluation indicates CDE's intensive services serve schools with higher rates of free and reduced price lunch, minority students, English Language Learners, and students with IEPs compared to other eligible schools and schools statewide. The external evaluation found positive trends in student achievement for each cohort that are consistent with the magnitude of positive effects found in national research on turnaround interventions (full evaluation report from CADRE is available here: Evaluation of Colorado School Turnaround Network and School Turnaround Leadership Development Grants: Descriptive Analysis of 2015-2020 Cohorts). Moreover, schools that participate in CDE-offered intensive supports come off the accountability clock and stay off the clock at

a higher rate than schools that do not participate. For CDE's most intensive support, the Turnaround Network, 93% of the schools that participated in the second cohort were identified as Priority Improvement or Turnaround on the 2014 School Performance Framework (SPF). After completing the network, 73% of these schools were identified as Performance or Improvement. For the third cohort, 100% of schools were identified as Priority Improvement or Turnaround on the 2014 SPF and 90% of these schools were identified as Performance or Improvement upon completion of the program.

The first phase of the evaluation identified schools that achieved above-average increases in student achievement that will serve as bright spot schools for a phase two evaluation to understand what strategies and practices resulted in those improvements. Phase two will inform the continuous improvement of CDE's services to the field.

Increasing resources for school transformation is critical now as schools seek to rapidly address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on student learning. As evidenced in the external evaluation, CDE's supports for the field are a key way to ensure schools have access to rigorous, high-quality interventions that can improve student outcomes.

Problem or Opportunity

The goal of a school accountability system is to identify schools and school districts that are struggling and provide them with the support they need to improve. The impacts of COVID-19 on student learning are profound, and ensuring CDE can respond with timely and effective interventions for struggling schools is critical to educational equity. School Transformation Grant funding was insufficient to serve all eligible and interested schools prior to the pandemic. In 2019, CDE received $29.8 million in requests for funds with approximately $11 million available to award. In 2020, CDE received $14.8 million in requests with approximately $10 million available to award.

Schools identified as Priority Improvement and Turnaround are in need of significant support and intervention, a need heightened by the impacts of the pandemic. While districts have access to federal stimulus funding, the funding does not come with the intensive support schools and districts need to improve and the funding is also time-bound. The School Transformation Grant is not only a funding source, but a proven way for CDE to partner with schools and districts on interventions that have a track record of improving student outcomes. The support is designed to help schools address under-developed systems such as leadership and instruction, a need that remains critical even as schools are using stimulus funding to address the impacts of COVID-19 on student learning.

The lack of funding to support interested schools has implications for educational equity in Colorado.

Proposed Solution

The Governor's Office proposes that this funding be used to provide additional resources for schools identified under the state accountability criteria to improve performance.

These schools will be prioritized based on the greatest needs and strongest commitment to use the funds to improve student achievement and ultimately help the school meet state-determined exit criteria.

CDE plans to use ESSER dollars to support school improvement activities and will consider how to use ESSER dollars to increase grants to schools. Because state funds cannot be used for schools that only have a federal identification, CDE will consider ways to leverage the one-time ESSER funds to serve federally-identified schools while leveraging state funds for state-identified schools. In 2020, CDE was unable to fund $836,259 in federally-identified schools and $2,780,000 in district-level requests. In 2020, CDE was unable to fund $567,000 in state-identified-only schools and $705,600 in state- and federally-identified schools. Given the 2020 application was the second round of the same eligibility list, CDE is anticipating greater demand for resources as schools look to school improvement supports to address the impacts of COVID-19 on student learning and sustain school improvement strategies after ESSER funding ends.

Importantly, all of the support provided to schools and school districts under the EASI program will need to meet strong evidence requirements to ensure these supports are working for students and families. These requirements are dictated by the Every Student Succeeds Act, and CDE has adopted them for the state system as well.

The first phase of the external evaluation of CDE's supports available through the EASI process indicates that CDE's intensive services serve more schools with higher rates of free and reduced price lunch, English Language Learners, and students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) compared to other eligible schools and schools statewide. The figure below outlines these demographic differences (note "STN" denotes the Turnaround Network, "STLD" denotes the School Turnaround Leadership Development program, and "SD" denotes standard deviation).

Table 1: Demographics of Participants in State Turnaround Programs

Variable	STN		STLD		All Schools (2018-19)	
	Participants	All Eligible	Participants	All Eligible	Mean	SD
% FRL	75.6%	64.0%	76.5%	63.8%	45.1%	27.3%
% Minority	68.5%	61.8%	75.4%	61.9%	44.9%	26.5%
% ELL	26.7%	27.6%	33.6%	26.7%	16.1%	19.1%
% IEP	13.4%	11.7%	13.3%	12.1%	11.3%	5.0%
Rural	14.1%	25.4%	11.4%	24.3%	27.6%	44.7%
Enrollment	441	460	512	472	489	413
N Schools	64	583	123	503	1744	

Additionally, the first phase of the external evaluation indicates that schools that participate in CDE-offered supports come off the accountability clock and stay off the clock at a higher rate than schools that do not participate. The figures below show the change in SPFs and student achievement on CMAS over time for schools participating in both the Turnaround Network and School Turnaround Leadership Development Programs. Cohorts 2 and 3 of the Turnaround Network are included, as well as graphs for Cohort 2 and 3 of the School Turnaround Leadership Development program.

School Turnaround Network Cohort 2 SPFs — n = 15 schools
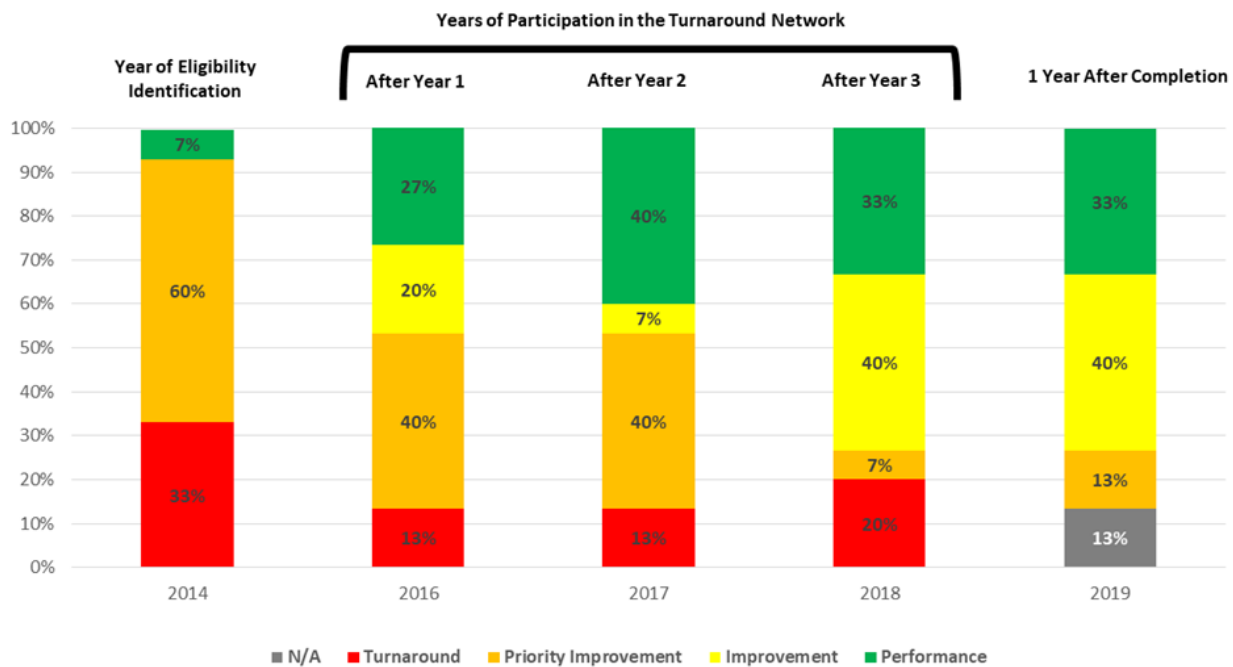
School Turnaround Network Cohort 2 Achievement Percentile over Time

n = 10 Elementary, 5 Middle schools
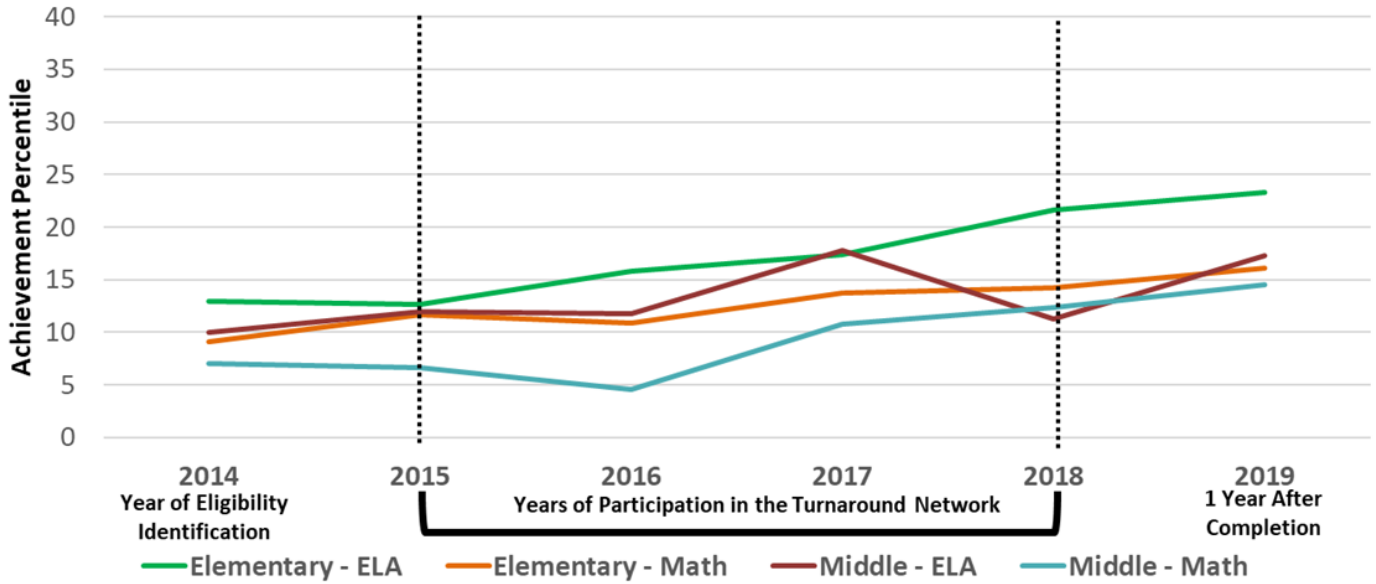
School Turnaround Network Cohort 3 SPFs

n = 10 schools
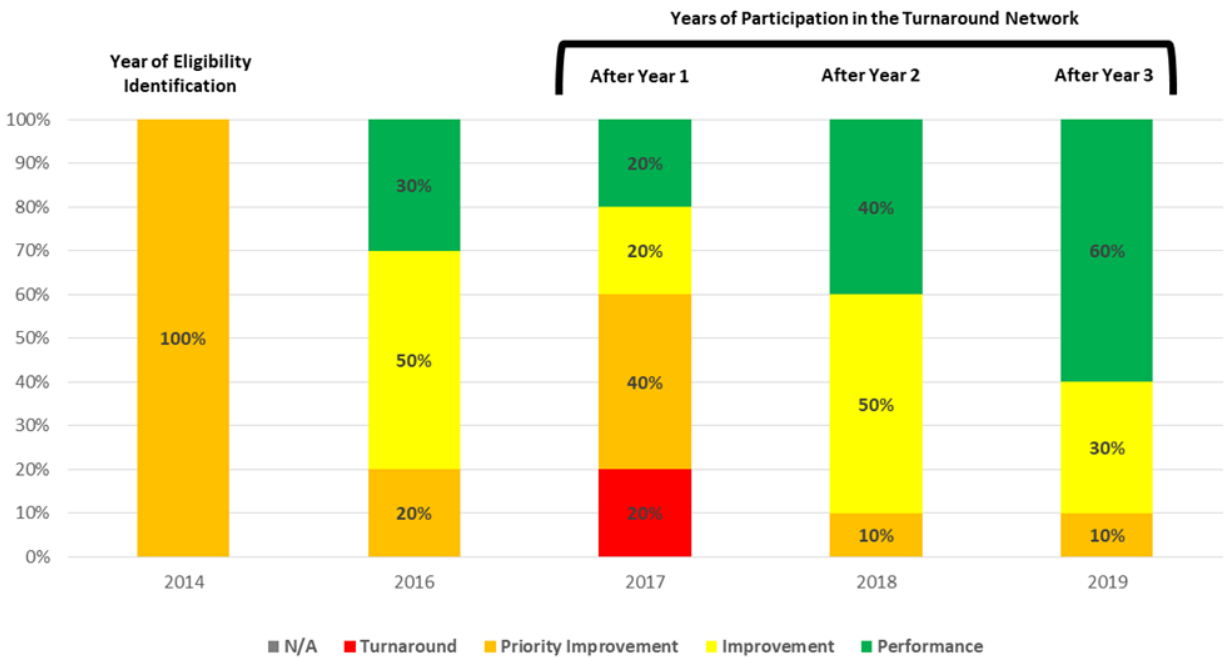
School Turnaround Network Cohort 3 Achievement Percentile over Time

n = 6 Elementary, 4 Middle schools

Year of Eligibility Identification

Years of Participation in the Turnaround Network

— Elementary - ELA   — Elementary - Math   — Middle - ELA   — Middle - Math
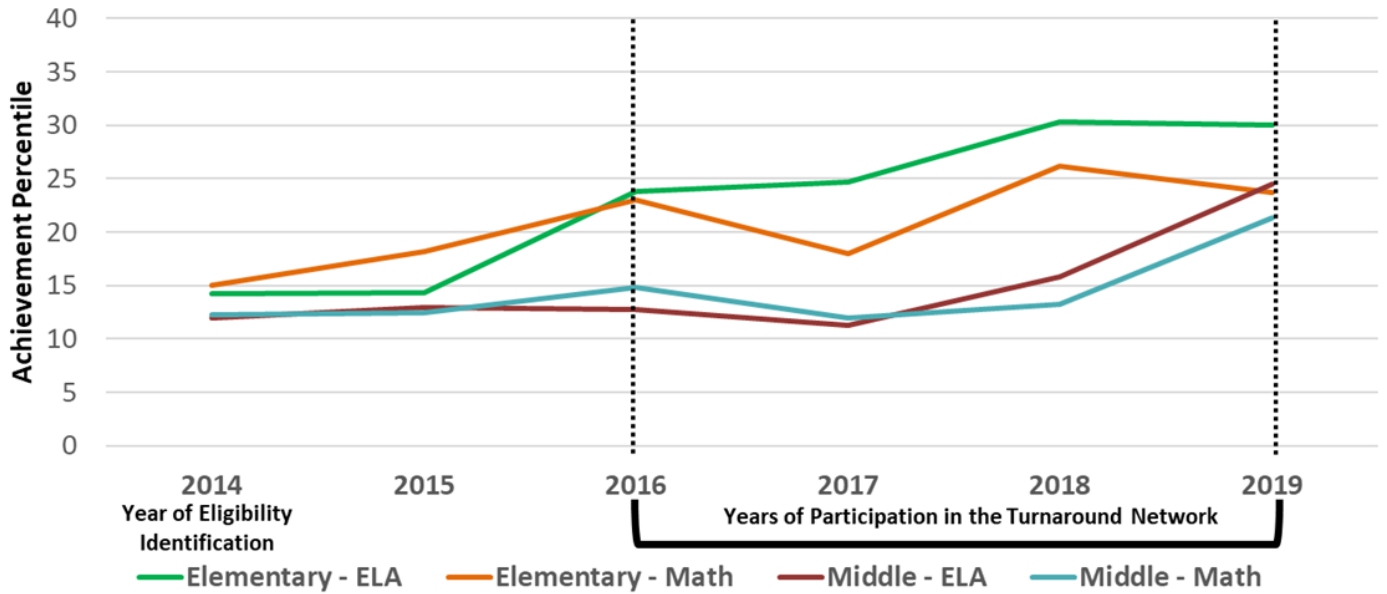
n = 28 schools

School Turnaround Leadership Development Cohort 2 SPFs

Year of Eligibility Identification

Year First Participated in STLD Program

■ N/A   ■ Turnaround   ■ Priority Improvement   ■ Improvement   ■ Performance
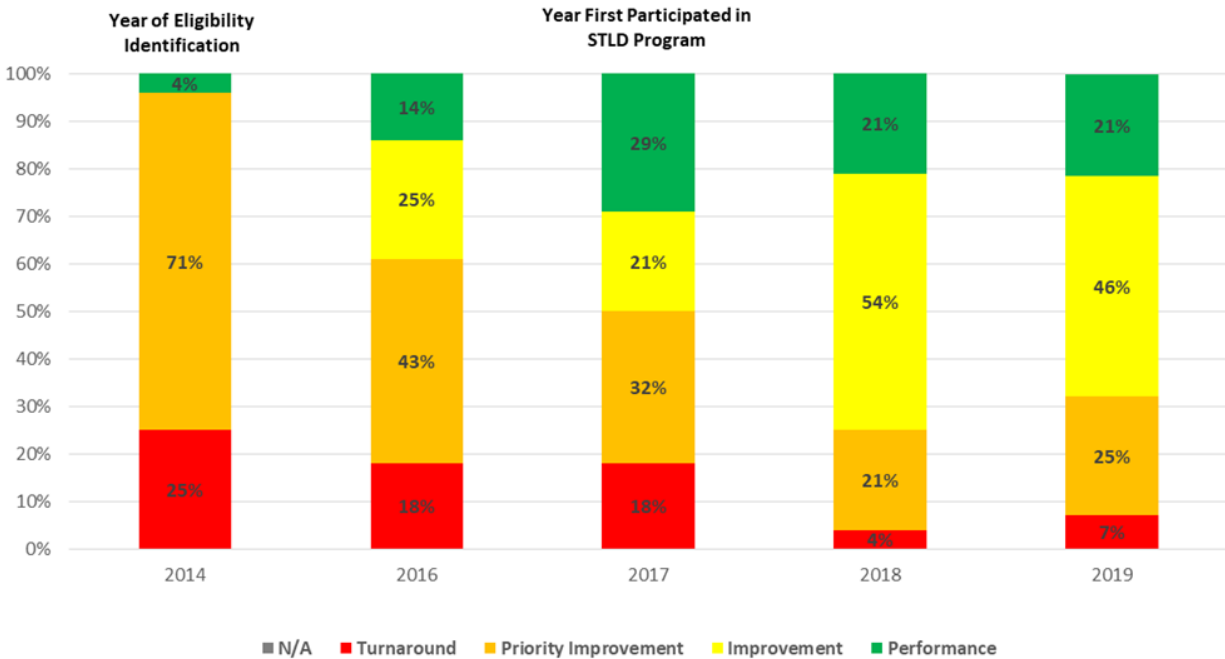
School Turnaround Leadership Development Cohort 2
Achievement Percentile over Time

n = 19 Elementary,
9 Middle schools
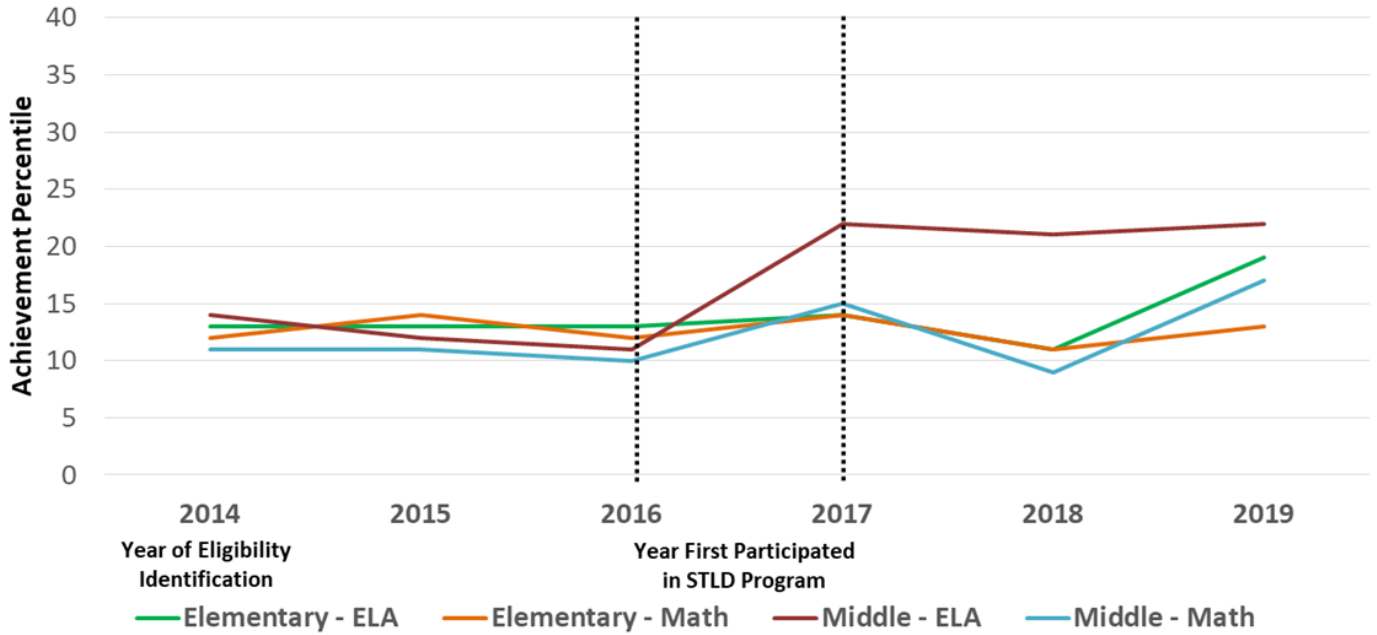
n = 38 schools

School Turnaround Leadership Development Cohort 3 SPFs
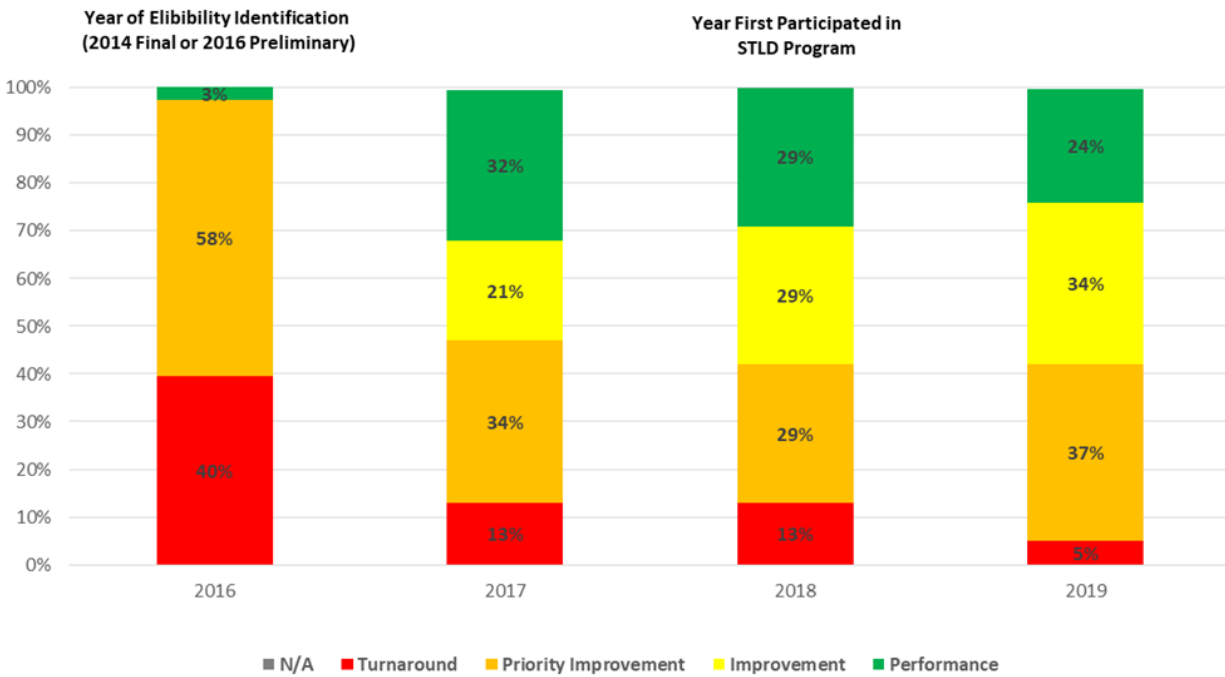
School Turnaround Leadership Development Cohort 3
Achievement Percentile over Time

n = 26 Elementary, 7 Middle schools
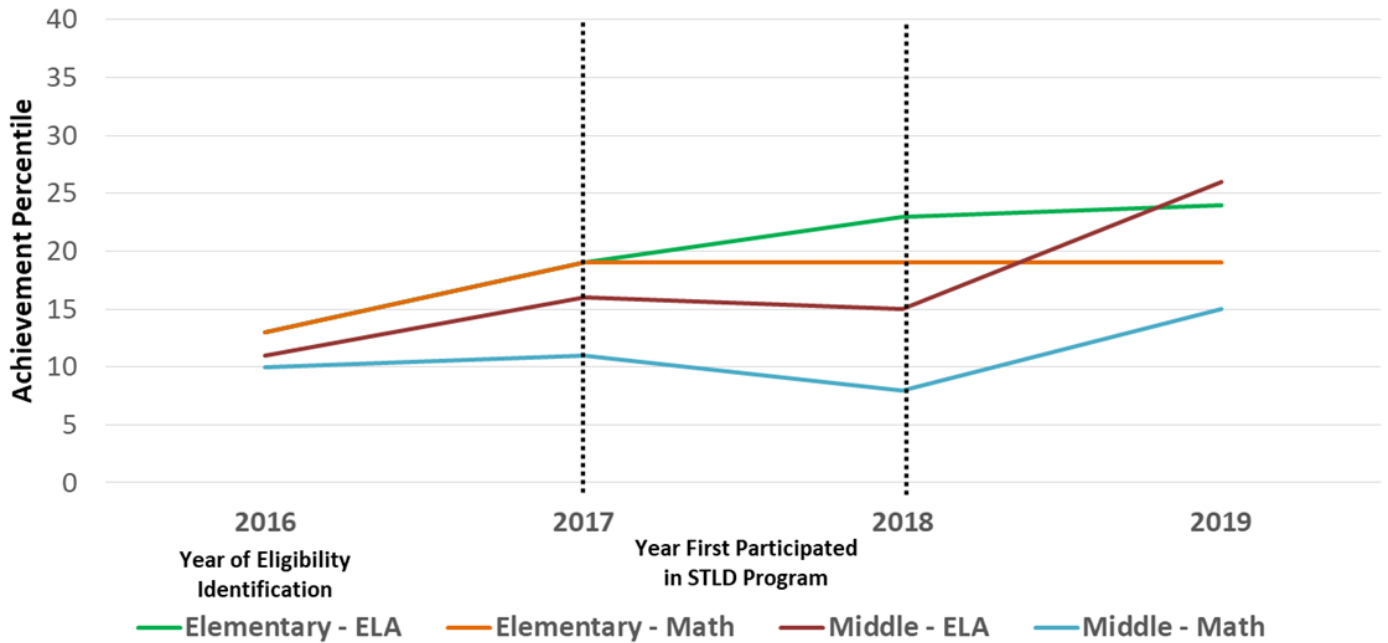
Legend: Elementary - ELA, Elementary - Math, Middle - ELA, Middle - Math

X-axis: 2016 (Year of Eligibility Identification), 2017 (Year First Participated in STLD Program), 2018, 2019

This request is aligned with the bipartisan Education Leadership Council "State of Education" recommendation to prioritize differentiated support for low-performing schools.

If not approved, Colorado will not be able to effectively prioritize schools that are in urgent need of support and will be unable to connect these schools to high-quality, intensive support needed to improve student achievement. If schools do not receive support and interventions early, then intervening later when schools and school districts might be at the end of the accountability clock will be more expensive and extreme.

Theory of Change	If funding to the School Transformation Grant is increased, then CDE will support a higher number of eligible schools and districts identified as Priority Improvement and Turnaround.
Program Objective	To expand proven support to schools by increasing the amount of resources available to schools identified as Priority Improvement and Turnaround.
Outputs being measured	Increase the share of funding requests awarded to all eligible schools.
Outcomes being measured	- Improved leading indicators of change such as increased student attendance, decreased incidences of referrals and suspensions. - For high schools, increases in the percentage of students on track to graduate, increased graduation rates, decline in dropout rates.

	• Reduction in the number of schools identified as Priority Improvement/Turnaround and increase in the number of schools identified as Performance.
Cost/Benefit ratio	Typically, the cost of intervention for schools that reach the end of the accountability clock is approximately $250,000 per year. CDE's grants to these schools are at least $100,000 per school per year. By responding to schools' needs earlier and connecting schools to supports that help them move off of the clock, CDE is better able to prevent the expensive cost of interventions when schools reach the end of the clock.

Evaluations	Pre-Post	Quasi-Experimental Design	Randomized Control Trial
Results of Evaluation	Evaluation: Phase 1 complete, Phase 2 begins August 2021	N/A	N/A
Continuum Level	Step 3		

Demand for CDE's supports and services remains high. School Transformation Grant dollars support each route under EASI, with the priority of serving schools that have reached the end of the accountability clock. The cost to support these schools exceeds the current funding allocation, thus limiting CDE's ability to meet the full demand of school improvement grant requests. The request is even more timely as it is critical to provide comprehensive and intensive support to schools in the wake of the pandemic to ensure they have the support needed to address the impacts on student learning.

Anticipated Outcomes

It is anticipated that increasing School Transformation Grant funds will lead to more schools applying for support and being awarded funding under the EASI program and, over time, decrease the number of schools and school districts identified for support under the state or ESSA accountability systems. The average grant award over the past four cohorts of EASI have ranged from $25,000-$100,000 per school, with most awards around $50,000. As such, CDE uses this award size to calculate how many additional schools may be served. CDE estimates that the proposed increase of $2,000,000 per year would support 38 additional schools per year (assuming an average of $50,000 per school per year). The department also anticipates that expanding access to School Transformation Grant funds will help reduce the student achievement gap, which could result in long-term benefits, particularly for underserved students, such as improved postsecondary enrollment, preparation, and completion, increased earnings and family economic security, and reduced crime. With more schools coming off the clock, there will be fewer schools that are ultimately subject to more rigorous, expensive interventions.

Assumptions and Calculations

The department uses an average of $50,000 per school per year to determine how many schools can be served with the additional funding. School Transformation Grant funding appropriates 5% for administration of the grant. As shown in Table 2, below, the recurring $2 million increase will serve an additional 38 schools per year.

Table 2

	Yearly Change
Recurring $2M Increase	$ 2,000,000
Administrative Costs (5%)	$ (100,000)
Increase to School Transformation Grant	$ 1,900,000
Yearly Additional Schools Served	**38**

Office of the Governor

FY 2022-23 Funding Request

November 1, 2021

Jared Polis
Governor

Lauren Larson
Executive Director

Governor's Office Priority: R-07
Request Detail: Empowering Parents with School Information

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2022-23			
		Incremental Change	
	FY 2021-22 Appropriation	**FY 2022-23 Request**	**FY 2023-24 Request**
Total Funds	$4,563,934	$526,315	$257,763
FTE	30.9	1.8	2.0
General Fund	$3,929,481	$526,315	$257,763
Cash Funds	$0	$0	$0
Reappropriated Funds	$634,453	$0	$0
Federal Funds	$0	$0	$0

Summary of Request

The Governor's Office requests a one-time General Fund increase of $526,315 and 1.8 FTE in FY 2022-23, as well as an ongoing General Fund increase of $257,763 and 2 FTE in FY 2023-24 and beyond, to contribute to significant improvements in data quality, accessibility, and transparency in the State's school and district dashboard, SchoolView. This request has been developed with the technical collaboration of the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and builds on work already undertaken by CDE. This request is also a key priority identified by the bipartisan Education Leadership Council in the 2018 "State of Education" report. Current base Total Fund is $4,563,934 and base General Fund is $3,929,481. This request is an 11.5% Total Fund increase in FY 2022-23 and a 5.6% Total Fund increase in FY 2023-24. This request is a 13.4% General Fund increase in FY 2022-23 and a 6.6% General Fund increase in FY 2023-24.

This request will support the improvement of the SchoolView site, which currently uses outdated technology, which will make it easier for parents to find and understand information about schools and districts, and will increase the accessibility of the data for people with disabilities. Ultimately, the investment in the new SchoolView will empower parents and the public to make more informed decisions about education.

Current Program

New federal requirements in 2001 mandated all states provide parents, students, educators and members of the public additional education-related data, including school, district, and state-level data on school performance. Additionally, state law required numerous data elements to be publicly reported, including overall school performance, the performance of key student groups, and measures of student conduct, including absences, suspensions and expulsions. As a way to fulfill this requirement, Colorado began investing in data reporting infrastructure and reporting tools as early as 2001, adding new functionality and addressing new state and federal reporting requirements over the years.

Introduced in 2010, SchoolView was an outcome of the additions and modifications of the initial 2001 technology. The system uses Oracle Application Development Framework technology and tools from 2008 and is difficult and costly for the department to maintain due to the technology's complexity. It was intended to serve district administrators and other audiences with a high level of technical and institutional knowledge. The SchoolView suite of tools provides a mechanism for education stakeholders to see limited information on school demographics and school program offerings. Unfortunately, the existing SchoolView tool is out of date and no longer supports the current School Accountability Frameworks. Additionally, CDE has not had the resources (human or financial) to perform a wholescale rewrite of the infrastructure supporting SchoolView, nor was the department able to update the reporting tools themselves until 2018 when CDE asked for and received funds to do just that. Funding is needed to target one last segment of the Data Warehouse still in need of modernization.

Since 2014, assessments used by CDE have changed, and currently the school performance data is split across multiple internal systems and comes from different assessment vendors. For this reason, the existing SchoolView is only capable of displaying data up through 2014 without significant modifications. The department manages the full lifecycle of SchoolView data, including collection, storage, processing, reporting, and training, and all of these phases need continual support and upgrades to maintain accuracy and functionality. Because it has become a patchwork of different legacy systems, the effort required to maintain and update the overall system is extensive.

Problem or Opportunity

The existing SchoolView application was developed with the then-current CDE data warehouse, originally designed for the sole purpose of generating static federally mandated reports. Over the past ten years, technology and data demands have changed significantly. The expectation of easy access to static data reports has changed to a more demanding requirement for interactive reporting that provides easily accessible visual representations for more efficient decision making. The existing SchoolView system was modified and adjusted to try and meet this need, but still cannot keep up with current demand.

Schools and their communities are more data-driven today than they were in the past. As a result, the demand for school performance measurements has increased while state and federal requirements are also evolving. Under federal law, all states are required to have school, district, and state report cards that provide parents, students, educators, and the general public with easy-to-find information about school performance. However, the current system, SchoolView, was designed and built before the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) passed. ESSA added more requirements for data reporting and easy navigation to critical data often accessed by parents. In addition, because the current system is older and more complex, it is time consuming and expensive to maintain. Parents and community members struggle to find and interpret key information required by ESSA and necessary for educational decisions, including achievement data for all of the federally required disaggregated student groups, discipline data, and per-pupil expenditures. Although SchoolView adheres to the letter of the law, CDE seeks to make it easier for parents and communities to find and understand critical information about their schools so they can make informed decisions about their children's education.

In addition, the Office of Civil Rights found SchoolView to be out of compliance with the accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Since the system uses older technology it is difficult and expensive to meet these accessibility needs with existing technology. The bipartisan Education Leadership Council identified this as a top priority request in its 2018 "State of Education Report". It has since also been included as a recommendation in the Education Leadership Council's 2021 Report. CDE has done foundational work to update the tool and would like to be able to continue and accelerate the process via the resources in this budget request.

Over the past seven years, the department strategically improved sections of the data infrastructure to align with various modernization efforts as funding became available. For example, resources were requested and received for CDE to build a Business Intelligence team and to invest in a new data reporting tool (Tableau Server). Two new positions were hired, and the new reporting tool was purchased and implemented. Because the Data Warehouse itself is very old, staff have improved various design aspects of it as they could, however, there still remains a critical layer within the Warehouse yet to be upgraded, including the data presentation layer. The additional development resource will start the process of building a more easily accessible Data Warehouse by the Business Intelligence team, moving towards direct access to the Data Warehouse data, automation of this process, and fully utilizing the new reporting capabilities available via the Tableau Server. In conjunction with the new developer, CDE will hire a specialized expert to provide the majority of the buildout of this presentation layer and to help with management of the effort. A temporary influx of technical help will enable the department to complete this last phase of the modernization efforts. The new permanent FTE will work closely with the contractors and existing staff to ensure knowledge transfer and documentation is completed so that maintenance and sustainability is possible with CDE resources. Without additional funds to build out this presentation layer, every report must be designed, configured, constructed and tested as a "one-off", taking much more time than the

alternative automation would allow. This presentation layer within the Data Warehouse is the last significant segment of the Data Warehouse requiring an upgrade.

Proposed Solution

The requested $526,315 and 1.8 FTE will support extensive infrastructure upgrades to the state's SchoolView site. Specifically, in the first year of funding, the department will hire an Extract/ Transform/ Load developer (i.e. a Data Warehouse designer/developer) FTE to develop an information exchange layer between the existing warehouse that stores school and district-level student data and the SchoolView reporting tool. This FTE will work closely with the CDE communications team in creating reports for SchoolView, as well as collaborate with department staff to conduct testing necessary to understand what types of information are necessary for parents and families to make informed education decisions for their students.

In addition to the Data Warehouse designer/developer, the department will hire internal an external engagement and feedback processes to develop and launch the improved dashboard.

The department will use the additional funding beyond that which is needed for the 1.0 FTE in FY 2022-23 to contract externally for specialized skills necessary to help expedite the SchoolView improvement process in the first year of funding.

The updated SchoolView site will be intuitive for parents, students, educators, and the public to use, offering centralized access to interactive data that meets all state and federal ESSA requirements. The new system will provide not just access to education data, but also information for parents about the resources that the school offers for their child.

Theory of Change	Accessible and interactive data is increasingly essential to a transparent and adaptive education system. By empowering not just educators but also parents with such data, the updated SchoolView can tighten the feedback loop among various stakeholders in the school system, creating a pathway to make the system work better for all Coloradans. Furthermore, by reducing information disparities between parents and educators about school performance and resources, this policy will increase trust, engagement and buy-in from parents, thereby bringing stakeholders closer to a shared vision for Colorado's schools.
Program Objective	To increase transparency, engagement, and access to information for parents through an accessible and interactive data platform.
Outputs being measured	Available reports for constituents; "parent-friendly" data dashboards depicting state-level education metrics; and responses to new data dashboards via user focus groups, e.g., usability of visualizations, understanding of data presented, accessibility challenges, applicability to decisions needed.
Outcomes being measured	● Improved quality of data and visualizations provided to parents, advocacy groups and policymakers.

	● Broader scope of data available to parents, advocacy groups and policymakers. ● Remaining compliant with federal civil rights accessibility requirements. ● Resilience with additional or modified reporting needs.		
Cost/Benefit ratio	N/A		
Evaluations	Pre-Post	Quasi-Experimental Design	Randomized Control Trial
Results of Evaluation	N/A	N/A	N/A
Continuum Level	Step 2		

Anticipated Outcomes

There will be positive outcomes across key stakeholder groups from SchoolView's improved data quality, accessibility, and transparency. Parents will be able to make more informed school choice decisions based on school performance and available resources, such as after-school or summer programs, access to arts, music, and preschool. Policymakers and advocacy groups will better understand the gaps in Colorado's education system, particularly among certain disaggregated student groups, such as racial and ethnic minorities, students with disabilities, and English learners, and will be able to more efficiently direct resources for school improvement. In addition, the state will reduce its risk of becoming non-compliant with Federal data transparency requirements under ESSA and the Office of Civil Rights, and CDE will be able to maintain data reporting systems more effectively and be more flexible with data requested by policymakers and parents.

Assumptions and Calculations

Table 1 summarizes the total costs for this request; assumptions are presented below.

Table 1

Description	FY 2022-23 Cost	FY 2023-24 Cost
Payroll (including benefits)	$221,215	$242,663
Contractors	$276,000	$0
Operating	$29,100	$15,100
Total	**$526,315**	**$257,763**

- Payroll: Please see the FTE template for details on the payroll. The payroll costs include benefits.
- Contractors: The department will need approximately 2,760 hours from contractors to complete this work. The department's estimated and usual rate for this type of IT expertise is $100 per hour.
- Operating: Please see the FTE template for operating costs.

Department of Education

FY 2022-23 Funding Request

November 1, 2021

State Board of Education

Katy Anthes, Ph.D.
Commissioner

Department Priority: R-08
Request Detail: CSDB Teacher Salary Increase

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2022-23				
	Totals		Incremental Change	
	FY 2021-22 Appropriation	FY 2022-23 Base	FY 2022-23 Request	FY 2023-24 Request
Total Funds	$11,553,296	$11,553,296	$288,614	$288,614
FTE	153.1	153.1	0.0	0.0
General Fund	$9,848,996	$9,848,996	$288,614	$288,614
Cash Funds	$0	$0	$0	$0
Reappropriated Funds	$1,704,300	$1,704,300	$0	$0
Federal Funds	$0	$0	$0	$0

Summary of Request

The Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB) is requesting funds to provide staff who follow the Colorado Springs District 11 pay schedule step increases and provide an incentive for hard-to-fill positions that follow the Colorado Springs District 11 pay scale. It is important CSDB aligns with the District 11 salary scale, and the Colorado Springs District 11 Board of Education and the Colorado Springs Education Association agreed to the following:

- A one and a half percent (1.5%) increase to the salary schedule, with the BA Step 1 salary starting at $40,200.
- Teachers will receive one-step movement on the step system. This is approximately a two percent (2%) increase.
- Teachers will receive a three percent (3%) one-time, non-recurring compensation payment.

CSDB is a state-funded school that was established for the purpose of providing comprehensive educational services for children under the age of twenty-two who are blind and/or deaf. The CSDB is a "Type 1" agency within the Department of Education and is overseen by a seven-member board appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the State Senate.

Problem or Opportunity

CSDB at-will staff, who follow the District 11 salary scale, do not receive any state across-the-board or merit salary increases, as they are compensated in accordance with the provisions of the salary schedule adopted by the Colorado Springs District 11 Board of Education as of January 1 of the previous fiscal year and the established CSDB procedures adopted to implement the salary schedule. It is important CSDB aligns with the District 11 salary scale and supports teachers in very difficult-to-fill positions. The Colorado Springs District 11 Board of Education and the Colorado Springs Education Association agreed to the following:

- A one and a half percent (1.5%) increase to the salary schedule, with the BA Step 1 salary starting at $40,200.
- Teachers will receive one-step movement on the step system. This is approximately a two percent (2%) increase.
- Teachers will receive a three percent (3%) one-time, non-recurring compensation payment.

CSDB at-will staff, who follow the District 11 salary scale, are hard-to-fill positions. CSDB is requesting an experience increment be added to each of these staff members in order to provide an incentive for hard-to-fill positions. Teachers at CSDB must have unique skill sets in addition to being a certified teacher. There is a national shortage of teachers of the Deaf and teachers of the Visually Impaired. In order to recruit and retain teachers with the appropriate skill sets for their field, CSDB needs to be able to provide an incentive through an experience increment as these positions are extremely difficult to fill.

Proposed Solution

CSDB proposes funding the experience step increases, based upon the Colorado Springs District 11 pay schedule.

Theory of Change	Fund experience step increases based on Colorado Springs District 11 pay scale to incentivize hard-to-fill positions.

Program Objective	Recruit and retain teachers with the appropriate skills sets.		
Outputs being measured	Comparative teacher salary, hirings and open positions.		
Outcomes being measured	None at this time.		
Cost/Benefit ratio	None at this time.		
Evaluations	Pre-Post	Quasi-Experimental Design	Randomized Control Trial
Results of Evaluation	N/A	N/A	N/A
Continuum Level	Step 1		

Anticipated Outcomes

If the funding increase is approved, the teachers will receive:
- A one and a half percent (1.5%) increase to the salary schedule, with the BA Step 1 salary starting at $40,200.
- Teachers will receive one-step movement on the step system. This is approximately a two percent (2%) increase.
- Teachers will receive a three percent (3%) one-time, non-recurring compensation payment, which is $105,810 of the total request. This amount is only for FY 2022-23.

Assumptions and Calculations

The salary increase is based on experience steps according to the placement of those teachers on the Colorado Springs District 11 salary schedule.

Class Title	Column	STEP 20/21	Salary Schedule Placement	1.5% Salary Schedule Increase	One Step Movement 2% Increase	Hard to Fill Increment ($1377)	Increase	One-Time, non-recurring 3%
Teacher	VII	S (20)	$ 72,945	$ 74,039		$ 75,416	$ 2,471	$ 2,262
Teacher	IV	C (3)	$ 46,477	$ 47,174	$ 48,117	$ 49,494	$ 3,017	$ 1,485
Teacher	VIII	E(5)	$ 57,525	$ 58,388	$ 59,556	$ 60,933	$ 3,408	$ 1,828
Teacher	V	Q (17)	$ 63,797	$ 64,754	$ 66,049	$ 67,426	$ 3,629	$ 2,023
Teacher	VII	S (20)	$ 74,322	$ 75,437		$ 76,814	$ 2,492	$ 2,304
Teacher	VIII	S (21)	$ 78,457	$ 79,634		$ 81,011	$ 2,554	$ 2,430
Teacher	VII	J (10)	$ 61,218	$ 62,136	$ 63,379	$ 64,756	$ 3,538	$ 1,943
Teacher	I	C (3)	$ 42,236	$ 42,870	$ 43,727	$ 45,104	$ 2,868	$ 1,353
Teacher	VII	B (2)	$ 51,074	$ 51,840	$ 52,877	$ 54,254	$ 3,180	$ 1,628
Teacher	VIII	S (22)	$ 72,945	$ 74,039		$ 75,416	$ 2,471	$ 2,262
Teacher	III	C (3)	$ 45,982	$ 46,672	$ 47,605	$ 48,982	$ 3,000	$ 1,469
Teacher	V	D (4)	$ 49,317	$ 50,057	$ 51,058	$ 52,435	$ 3,118	$ 1,573
Teacher	VIII	I (9)	$ 63,530	$ 64,483	$ 65,773	$ 67,150	$ 3,620	$ 2,015
Teacher	III	D (4)	$ 46,874	$ 47,577	$ 48,529	$ 49,906	$ 3,032	$ 1,497
Teacher	VI	F (6)	$ 54,674	$ 55,494	$ 56,604	$ 57,981	$ 3,307	$ 1,739
Teacher	VIII	F (6)	$ 58,648	$ 59,528	$ 60,719	$ 62,096	$ 3,448	$ 1,863
Teacher	IV	D (4)	$ 47,407	$ 48,118	$ 49,080	$ 50,457	$ 3,050	$ 1,514
Teacher	VIII	I (9)	$ 60,776	$ 61,688	$ 62,922	$ 64,299	$ 3,523	$ 1,929
Teacher	VIII	S (19)	$ 75,464	$ 76,596	$ 78,128	$ 79,505	$ 4,041	$ 2,385
Teacher	I	D (4)	$ 41,676	$ 42,301	$ 43,147	$ 44,524	$ 2,848	$ 1,336
Teacher	III	I (9)	$ 50,233	$ 50,986	$ 52,006	$ 53,383	$ 3,150	$ 1,601
Teacher	V	G (7)	$ 53,712	$ 54,518	$ 55,608	$ 56,985	$ 3,273	$ 1,710
School Psych	VII	G (7)	$ 57,767	$ 58,634	$ 59,807	$ 61,184	$ 3,417	$ 1,836
Teacher	III	K (11)	$ 53,640	$ 54,445	$ 55,534	$ 56,911	$ 3,271	$ 1,707
Teacher	II	C (3)	$ 45,486	$ 46,168	$ 47,091	$ 48,468	$ 2,982	$ 1,454
Teacher	VIII	R (18)	$ 74,011	$ 75,121	$ 76,623	$ 78,000	$ 3,989	$ 2,340
Teacher	VI	I (9)	$ 59,313	$ 60,203	$ 61,407	$ 62,784	$ 3,471	$ 1,884
Teacher	II	C (3)	$ 45,486	$ 46,168	$ 47,091	$ 48,468	$ 2,982	$ 1,454
Teacher	IV	C (3)	$ 49,231	$ 49,969	$ 50,968	$ 52,345	$ 3,114	$ 1,570
Teacher	VII	O (15)	$ 66,069	$ 67,060	$ 68,401	$ 69,778	$ 3,709	$ 2,093
Teacher	VII	G (7)	$ 57,767	$ 58,634	$ 59,807	$ 61,184	$ 3,417	$ 1,836
Teacher	VIII	S (22)	$ 81,376	$ 82,597		$ 83,974	$ 2,598	$ 2,519
Teacher	VI	C (3)	$ 50,223	$ 50,976	$ 51,996	$ 53,373	$ 3,150	$ 1,601
Teacher	I	M (13)	$ 52,561	$ 53,349		$ 54,726	$ 2,165	$ 1,642
Teacher	VIII	S (22)	$ 81,376	$ 82,597		$ 83,974	$ 2,598	$ 2,519
Teacher	V	H (8)	$ 56,136	$ 56,978	$ 58,118	$ 59,495	$ 3,359	$ 1,785
Teacher	VIII	S (22)	$ 79,999	$ 81,199		$ 82,576	$ 2,577	$ 2,477
Teacher	VI	J (10)	$ 57,690	$ 58,555	$ 59,726	$ 61,103	$ 3,413	$ 1,833
Teacher	IV	B (2)	$ 46,943	$ 47,647	$ 48,600	$ 49,977	$ 3,034	$ 1,499
Teacher	VII	H (8)	$ 58,895	$ 59,778	$ 60,974	$ 62,351	$ 3,456	$ 1,871
Teacher	VIII	P (16)	$ 71,191	$ 72,259	$ 73,704	$ 75,081	$ 3,890	$ 2,252
Teacher	VI	L (12)	$ 60,021	$ 60,921	$ 62,139	$ 63,516	$ 3,495	$ 1,905
Teacher	IV	C (3)	$ 49,231	$ 49,969	$ 50,968	$ 52,345	$ 3,114	$ 1,570
Teacher	IX	S (22)	$ 82,728	$ 83,969		$ 85,346	$ 2,618	$ 2,560
Teacher	VIII	P (16)	$ 72,568	$ 73,657	$ 75,130	$ 76,507	$ 3,939	$ 2,295
Teacher	IV	B (2)	$ 48,320	$ 49,045	$ 50,026	$ 51,403	$ 3,083	$ 1,542
Teacher	VII	Q (17)	$ 71,210	$ 72,278	$ 73,724	$ 75,101	$ 3,891	$ 2,253
Teacher	VIII	D (4)	$ 56,424	$ 57,270	$ 58,415	$ 59,792	$ 3,360	$ 1,794
Teacher	VII	G (7)	$ 57,767	$ 58,634	$ 59,807	$ 61,184	$ 3,417	$ 1,836
Teacher	VII	K (11)	$ 62,415	$ 63,351	$ 64,618	$ 65,995	$ 3,580	$ 1,980
Teacher	VIII	I (9)	$ 62,153	$ 63,085	$ 64,347	$ 65,724	$ 3,571	$ 1,972
Teacher	III	F (6)	$ 48,712	$ 49,443	$ 50,432	$ 51,809	$ 3,097	$ 1,554
Teacher	VI	G (7)	$ 54,363	$ 55,178	$ 56,282	$ 57,659	$ 3,296	$ 1,730
Teacher	V	F (6)	$ 54,063	$ 54,874	$ 55,971	$ 57,348	$ 3,285	$ 1,720
Teacher	I	E(5)	$ 43,887	$ 44,545	$ 45,436	$ 46,813	$ 2,926	$ 1,404
Teacher	VI	C (3)	$ 52,977	$ 53,772	$ 54,847	$ 56,224	$ 3,247	$ 1,687
Teacher	VI	C (3)	$ 52,977	$ 53,772	$ 54,847	$ 56,224	$ 3,247	$ 1,687
						TOTAL	$ 182,804	$ 105,810
							Total Request	$ 288,614

Department of Education

FY 2022-23 Funding Request

November 1, 2021

State Board of Education

Katy Anthes, Ph.D
Commissioner

Department Priority: R-09
Request Detail: CSDB Industrial Dishwasher

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2022-23				
	Totals		Incremental Change	
	FY 2021-22 Appropriation	FY 2022-23 Base	FY 2022-23 Request	FY 2023-24 Request
Total Funds	$668,291	$668,291	$65,000	$0
FTE	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
General Fund	$668,291	$668,291	$65,000	0
Cash Funds	$0	$0	$0	$0
Reappropriated Funds	$0	$0	$0	$0
Federal Funds	$0	$0	$0	$0

Summary of Request

The Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB) current dish washing machine is over 18 years old and it is becoming extremely difficult to find parts when the machine breaks down. The safety of the students is the most important issue as the huge volume of dishes that go through the machine each day must be scalded with steam from the steam booster heater.

CSDB is requesting $65,000 for a one-time increase to the operating budget, which will allow for the purchase of a new industrial dish washing machine. CSDB does not have the funds to purchase this machine within its current budget.

Current Program

CSDB is a state-funded school that was established for the purpose of providing comprehensive educational services for children under the age of twenty-two who are blind and/or deaf. The CSDB is a "Type 1" agency within the Department of Education and is overseen by a seven-member board appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the State Senate. CSDB provides breakfast and lunch to all students and dinner to the residential students.

Problem or Opportunity

The food service department's number one priority is to provide safe, nutritional meals to the students three times per day. This amounts to over 42,000 meals per year. To provide safe food, meals must be served on dishes that are thoroughly sanitized. The current dish washing machine does this but is getting very old and will be beyond repair soon due to the difficulty in finding parts when the machine breaks down.

Proposed Solution

CSDB requests $65,000 for a one-time operating increase to purchase a new industrial dish washing machine. CSDB does not have the funds to purchase this machine within its current budget. CSDB anticipates that a machine would last an estimated 20 years, so a one-time purchase request will benefit the school for many years in the future. The last request for a dish washing machine was made in the FY 2002-03 budget.

The safety of the students is of utmost importance to CSDB and having safe dishes to use is part of that objective. Without the proper means to make the dishes safe from disease, the students' health and safety will be at risk. In addition, the school will not be able to pass the governmental health inspections. Therefore, this request ties closely to student health and safety.

Theory of Change	A new dishwasher is necessary based on current repair difficulties.		
Program Objective	Maintain safety and sanitation standards that students deserve.		
Outputs being measured	Meals per year, repairs.		
Outcomes being measured	None at this time.		
Cost/Benefit ratio	None at this time.		
Evaluations	Pre-Post	Quasi-Experimental Design	Randomized Control Trial

Results of Evaluation	N/A	N/A	N/A
Continuum Level	Step 1		

Anticipated Outcomes

If the funding is approved, CSDB will purchase a new industrial dish washing machine, while following state purchasing rules and regulations, to replace the old dish washing machine. This will ensure that dishes used in the food service department are thoroughly sanitized, keeping students safe.

The current dish washing machine was purchased in FY 2002-03. If the funding is not approved, the current dish washing machine will eventually be beyond repair, as it is getting harder and harder to find parts.

Assumptions and Calculations

CSDB received a quote for a dish washing machine like the current dish washing machine. The quote for a new machine costs $49,230 and installation costs $15,510 for a total of $64,740. CSDB used this information to estimate a cost for replacement and will follow state purchasing rules and regulations when purchasing a new machine if the funding is approved.

Accelerated College Opportunity
Exam Fee Program

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 Grant Program 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 2020-21 school year, 23 districts and 41 schools (two charter schools) participated in the Accelerated College Opportunity Exam Fee Program.

- For the 2020-21 school year, eligible students* took 6,486 AP exams and 720 IB exams. These exam fees were funded at $34.07 per AP exam and $34.07 per IB exam for a total of $245,529.00.

Exams administered

Below is a list of all 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 23 school districts and 41 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.

Advanced Placement Exams administered to eligible students as reported by schools and districts

Advanced Placement Course	Number of Exams Administered
AP Capstone	0
AP Research	46
AP Seminar	139
AP Art History	34
AP Music Theory	22
AP Studio Art 2-D	71
AP Studio Art 3-D	12
AP Studio Art Drawing	73
AP English Language and Composition	963
AP English Literature and Composition	414
AP Comparative Government and Politics	1
AP European History	63
AP Human Geography	334
AP Macroeconomics	42
AP Microeconomics	47
AP Psychology	365
AP United States Government and Politics	352
AP United States History	741
AP World History	468
AP Calculus AB	301
AP Calculus BC	86
AP Computer Science A	48
AP Computer Science Principles	188
AP Statistics	245
AP Biology	355
AP Chemistry	177
AP Environmental Science	190
AP Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism	10
AP Physics C: Mechanics	43
AP Physics 1: Algebra based	105
AP Physics 2: Algebra based	12
AP Chinese Language and Culture	5
AP French Language and Culture	7
AP Latin	0
AP German Language and Culture	5
AP Italian Language and Culture	0
AP Japanese Language and Culture	19
AP Spanish Language and Culture	443
AP Spanish Literature and Culture	60
TOTAL EXAM FEES REQUESTED	6486

International Baccalaureate Exams administered to eligible students as reported by schools and districts

IB Exam Course	Number of Exams Administered
Theory of Knowledge	36
Language A: literature	46
Language A: language and literature	115
Literature and performance	0
Classical languages	13
Language B	66
Business management	13
Economics	5
Geography	6
Global Politics	10
History	70
Information technology in a global society	0
Philosophy	0
Psychology	76
Social and cultural anthropology	0
World religions	1
Biology	33
Chemistry	21
Computer Science	6
Design Technology	0
Environmental systems and societies	17
Physics	16
Sports, exercise and health science	37
Mathematical Studies SL (known as Math Studies)	23
Mathematics SL	57
Mathematics HL	13
Further Mathematics HL	0
Dance	0
Film	6
Music	1
Theatre	4
Visual Arts	29
TOTAL EXAM FEES REQUESTED	720

Air Quality Improvement Grant
SB21-202

Program Overview

Per SB21-202, the Public School Capital Construction Assistance Board (CCAB) is authorized to award up to $10 million in public school facility air quality improvement projects, including the acquisition, repair, maintenance, or upgrading of portable high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) fans or filtration systems. Reimbursement for eligible expenses after April 1, 2021 is available to any public school facilities, including school districts, charter schools, institute charter schools, boards of cooperative educational services, the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind and facility schools. Facility schools are eligible if a district applies on their behalf.

The CCAB is required to prioritize grant awards based on grant applicants' existing calculated local match requirements for BEST grants. Applicants with the lowest matching money requirements have the highest priority and applicants with the highest matching money requirements have the lowest priority. However, there is no local match required for these grants. The CCAB shall report to the General Assembly:

- A list that identifies and briefly describes each grant and sets for the amount of each grant;
- An estimate of the total number of students likely to benefit from the grant; and
- Any other information regarding the grants that the board believes will be informative for the committees.

Funding

Number of Awards	Estimated Number of Students Impacted	Anticipated Number of Classrooms receiving Units and/or Filters	Anticipated Number of Portable HEPA Filtration Units Purchased	Total Dollar Amount Awarded
67	278,446	10638	8836	$6,184,806

We were able to fund all eligible applications in the initial round. Final awards were determined by the number of classrooms, as applied for, at the level of $700 per classroom. Additionally, replacement filters could be requested separately from the units.

With approximately $3.8 million remaining in the appropriation, we are opening a second application period between January 15, 2022 to January 31, 2022 for eligible applicants to request funding. The same program guidelines will apply for prioritization and distribution of funds as in the first round.

All funds must be expended by June 30, 2022.

Award List

Name of District or Authorizer	Brief Description of Each Grant	Final # of classrooms	Final Award
ADAMS 12 FIVE STAR	District wide	206	$336,560.00
ADAMS-ARAPAHOE 28J	District wide	2000	$1,400,000.00
AGATE 300	Agate School K-12	20	$14,000.00
ALAMOSA RE-11J	5 schools	86	$60,200.00

BAYFIELD 10 JT-R	District wide	130	$91,000.00
BOULDER VALLEY RE 2	District wide	2397	$308,008
BYERS 32J	District wide	64	$44,800.00
CANON CITY RE-1	6 schools	307	$214,900.00
CENTER 26 JT	3 schools	15	$10,500.00
CLEAR CREEK RE-1	3 schools	83	$58,100.00
COLORADO RIVER BOCES	Yampah Mountain High School	12	$8,400.00
COLORADO SPRINGS	Eastlake High School	7	$4,900.00
COTOPAXI RE-3	District wide	50	$35,000.00
CREEDE SCHOOL DISTRICT	Creede School District	3	$2,422.08
CSI	Academy of Arts & Knowledge	15	$10,500.00
	Animas High School	14	$9,800.00
	Salida Montessori Charter School	8	$5,600.00
	Steamboat Montessori Charter School	10	$7,000.00
	Pinnacle Charter School	119	$83,300.00
	Colorado Early Colleges Inverness	15	$10,500.00
	Global Village Academy Northglenn	100	$5,726
DENVER COUNTY 1	District wide	388	$271,600.00
DOUGLAS COUNTY RE 1	District neighborhood schools	66	$46,200.00
	Renaissance Elementary Magnet School	20	$14,000.00
	Renaissance Secondary School	17	$11,900.00
DURANGO 9-R	District wide	341	$238,700.00
EAGLE COUNTY RE 50	Edwards Elementary School	30	$21,000.00
EAST GRAND 2	4 schools	139	$97,300.00
EATON RE-2	5 schools	150	$105,000.00
ELIZABETH	5 schools	152	$106,400.00
FALCON 49	Pikes Peak School of Expeditionary Learning	23	$16,100.00
FREMONT RE-2	Fremont Elementary School	43	$30,100.00
GARFIELD 16	3 schools	45	$31,500.00
GARFIELD RE-2	District wide	340	$238,000.00
GREELEY 6	District wide	100	$70,000.00
	Salida del Sol Academy	47	$32,900.00
HANOVER 28	2 schools	80	$56,000.00
HARRISON 2	Atlas Preparatory School	5	$3,500.00
	District wide	750	$525,000.00
JEFFERSON COUNTY R-1	Mountain Phoenix Community School	18	$12,600.00
KIOWA C-2	District wide	55	$38,500.00
MANCOS RE-6	District wide	40	$28,000.00
MANITOU SPRINGS 14	4 schools	20	$14,000.00
MEEKER RE1	Barone Middle School	13	$9,100.00
MESA COUNTY VALLEY 51	14 schools	44	$30,800.00
MOFFAT 2	Moffat PK-12 and Crestone Charter School	25	$17,500.00

MOUNTAIN VALLEY RE 1	Mountain Valley School	25	$17,500.00
NORWOOD R-2J	Norwood Public Schools	15	$10,500.00
PARK COUNTY RE-2	Guffey Community Charter School	6	$4,200.00
	3 schools	43	$30,100.00
PEYTON 23 JT	District wide	68	$47,600.00
PLATEAU RE-5	Peetz School District	42	$29,400.00
PLATTE CANYON 1	3 schools	122	$85,400.00
POUDRE R-1	5 schools	121	$85,390.00
PRIMERO REORGANIZED	2 schools	44	$30,800.00
RANGELY RE-4	3 schools	42	$29,400.00
RIDGWAY R-2	District wide	36	$25,200.00
ROARING FORK RE-1	11 schools	420	$294,000.00
SANFORD 6J	District wide	48	$33,600.00
SANGRE DE CRISTO RE-22J	District wide	30	$21,000.00
SARGENT RE-33J	District wide	69	$48,300.00
SCHOOL DISTRICT 27J	Bromley East Charter School	65	$45,500.00
SOUTH CONEJOS RE-10	District wide	21	$14,700.00
SOUTH ROUTT RE 3	4 schools	40	$28,000.00
ST VRAIN VALLEY RE 1J	Firestone Charter Academy	41	$28,700.00
	District wide	100	$70,000.00
THOMPSON R2-J	14 schools	48	$33,600.00
VALLEY RE-1	6 schools	315	$220,500.00
WELD COUNTY RE-3J	2 schools	105	$73,500.00
WIDEFIELD 3	District wide	40	$28,000.00
WINDSOR RE-4	Windsor Charter Academy	90	$63,000.00

John W. Buckner Automatic Enrollment in Advanced Courses Grant Program
Fact Sheet

Introduction

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

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, and the last year of funding is currently the 2021-22 school year.

Funding and participation

Approximately $220,000 is available for the 2021-22 school year, and grants will be awarded for a one-year period. Funding in subsequent years for grantees is 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, 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 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 that was administered for the preceding academic year.

- Any other measure, applied to all students enrolled in a LEP that, in the judgment of the Local Education Provider, 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, 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.

Career Development Incentive Program

Fact Sheet

Program Overview

The Career Development Incentive Program, or Career Development Success Pilot 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, internships, residencies, construction pre-apprenticeship or construction apprenticeship programs or qualified Advanced Placement (AP) courses.

A list of qualifying programs/courses can be found on the Colorado Workforce Development Council website. This list is developed based on Colorado labor market data; existing secondary programs that correspond with high growth, high demand occupations; and business/industry feedback.

Funding

Year	Number of Requests	Amount Funded	Dollar Amount
2016-17	3106	1807	$1M
2017-18	5777	3688	$2M
2018-19	6764	5133	$4.8M
2019-20	9110	6441	$4,279,837
2020-21	6709	4685	$4,483,081.34
TOTAL	31,466	21,754	$16,562,918.34

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, see below, with industry credentials funded before all other qualified programs. The three Career Development Incentive Program tiers are:

1. Industry certification programs
2. Internships, residencies, construction industry pre-apprenticeships or construction industry apprenticeships
3. Computer science AP courses.

2020-21 program participation

- 49 school districts and six charter schools reported students who completed qualified industry credential programs. A total of 63% of these local education providers were categorized as rural or small rural.
- A total of 6,709 qualifying credentials/courses were reported. Only 4,685 were funded due to available appropriations.
- As required by state law, Colorado Revised Statute 22-54-138, participating districts or charter schools cannot receive a distribution of more than 10% of the total number of completed industry certificates reported by districts and charter schools. Therefore, three district received funding for only 483 certificates, rather than the amount reported, thus reducing the number of credentials funded.

2020-21 reported credentials breakdown

*Personally-identifiable numbers were removed to protect student privacy.

Qualified Programs	# Reported by Districts	# Funded	$ Amount Funded
Industry-Recognized Certificates	4831	4685	$4,483,081.34
Internships	700	0	$0.00
Residency Programs	0	0	$0.00
Construction Industry Pre-Apprenticeships	172	0	$0.00
Construction Industry Apprenticeships	*	0	$0.00
Advanced Placement Computer Science Courses	1005	0	$0.00
Total	6709	4685	$4,483,081.34

2020-21 reported demographics

	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	White	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	Two or More Races
Industry Certificates	133	182	82	840	2965	412	217
Internships	21	22	*	175	406	43	21
Pre-Apprenticeships	*	*	*	44	113	0	10
Apprenticeships	0	0	0	0	*	0	0
AP Computer Science Courses	*	196	18	85	653	*	49

CDE Comprehensive Quality Physical Education Instruction Pilot Program Fact Sheet Health and Wellness Unit

OVERVIEW

The Colorado Health and Wellness through Comprehensive Quality Physical Education Instruction Pilot Program Legislative declaration 22-99-11 states, "that while ensuring cognitive development and strong academic outcomes for Colorado's students is of paramount importance, focus must also be placed on the whole student including their physical, psychological, and social health and development. It is important to the health and well-being of Colorado's children and youth to ensure competent and comprehensive quality physical education instruction based in the model physical education policy". The intent of the funding is to address the barriers to implement comprehensive quality physical education instruction programs based in the model physical education policy. The purpose is to develop a pilot program and funding to schools or districts to implement model physical education policies. The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) funded three districts (four schools) for a three-year grant program, approximately $80,000 per school year to implement the grant focus areas.

GRANT FOCUS AREAS

LEPs awarded The Colorado Comprehensive Quality Physical Education Instruction Pilot Program (C.R.S. 22-99-101) are required to use the grant to implement a comprehensive quality physical education instruction program that includes, the following components: For more details see the PE Pilot website

- Implementing daily physical education for all students 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 providing a safe, clean, and well-maintained indoor and outdoor spaces for physical education
- Curriculum should meet Colorado's physical education standards at each covered grade level; provide regular assessment and student progress monitoring.
- Policy's that prohibit against 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.
- In addition, grantees that receive funding are expected to 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.

Grantees:

PE Pilot Grantees:

Three districts (four schools) are currently funded to implement the grant focus areas. Districts have identified two middle schools and two elementary schools.

McAuliffe Middle School is an urban school located in Denver Public School District serving 310 students with an 11% mobility rate, 78% of students identify as a minority. Eligible students for free and reduced lunch rates are at 67%.

Center Consolidated School District is a rural district located in the San Luis Valley. They are supporting two schools. Haskin Elementary School serves 310 students with a 15% mobility rate, 91% of students identify as minority students. Their free and reduced lunch rates are 90.6%. Skoglund Middle School serves 142 students with a 12.6% mobility rate, 93% students identify as minority and their free and reduced lunch eligibility rates are 92.3%.

B.F. Kitchen Elementary School is a suburban school in Thompson School District. This K-5 school serving 217 students has a 13.8% mobility rate, with 28% of students identify as minority. Their free and reduced lunch eligibility rates are 61.8%.

Data from School View 2018-2019

For more information contact:
Jamie Hurley, PhD
CDE Health and Physical Education Consultant.
Hurley_j@cde.state.co.us

COMPREHENSIVE QULAITY PHYSICAL EDUCATION INSTRUCTION PILOT PROGRAM SUCCESS STORIES 2020-2021

Highlights from the first year of the grant included:

All districts received focused professional development and ongoing support from CDE and statewide partners. CDE conducted monthly communities of practice convenings and partners supported districts with individual coaching based on local needs and the grant component areas. Professional development and coaching included standards and curriculum alignment, developing a scope and sequence, best practices in physical education, and assessment development. Grantees were able to collect baseline data and engage in extensive planning for implementing comprehensive physical education for all students in Year 2. All schools were impacted by COVID-19 guidelines and restrictions in the 2020-2021 school year. The PE pilot grantees had many challenges and were still able to make significant gains in their grant objectives and outcomes. Below you will find grantee success stories from the 2020-2021 school year.

Skoglund Middle School and Haskin Elementary School - Center Consolidated School District 26JT
Our school district has participated in schoolwide PBL (project-based learning) approach and physical educators are implementing engaging projects through physical education. Using funding from grant we were able to provide the necessary equipment for class sizes of 25-30 students. Without these resources we would not have been able to provide our students with instruction that follows appropriate practices to give students a rich learning experience. Funding has supported ensuring moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPS) in our classes especially with state COVID -19 guidelines that placed limits on the quality of our instruction. In the upcoming school year, we will incorporate all the training received this year, with lesson plans and curriculum design into our daily instruction. Despite obvious limitations we are confident in the progress that we made and feel that this past year resulted in the growth and development, not only for our students but for our staff as well. We learned what worked and how we can improve. This included working with our colleagues in other fields of study and incorporating more core curriculum material into our physical education classes. We were then able to make sure we were supporting our classroom teachers and helping address their standards as well as ours, thus, adding to the quality of our class lessons and promoting unity and closer working relationships amongst staff.

McAuliffe Manual Middle School - Denver Public Schools
McAuliffe Manual Middle School is moving forward providing students with comprehensive quality physical education. In the last year, students at McAuliffe received in-person and virtual physical education. Currently, students receive an average of 150 minutes of PE per week, this is a 100% increase in physical education from the previous year. We are continuing to work together and anticipate increasing physical education minutes to 225 minutes per week by Year 3. We ensured that class sizes did not exceed 26, in line with other class size. We aligned resources and lessons with Colorado Academic Standards and identified needs. This allowed for increased student engagement and an increase in MVPA. In addition, funding allowed us to improve the gymnasium space and install a drinking fountain/water bottle filling station to support overall student health and well-being.

B.F. Kitchen Elementary - Thompson School District
B.F. Kitchen Elementary School is purposefully implementing an Everyday PE Program. In the last year, students were still adjusting to in-person learning after an entire year of virtual learning that took place following the outbreak of a worldwide pandemic. Not only did our program increase students' physical activity, but it also helped them acclimate socially and emotionally after a year of isolation from group learning structures. To support student learning and socialization, B.F. Kitchen implemented a standards-based field day to engage students returning to school. This year, B.F. Kitchen collected fitness data and created deeper relationships with students as they returned to school at the end of the school year. We focused on implementing new engaging PE games and daily student participation showed that students enjoyed having physical education every day. The overall success story of implementing this program was being able to do so in such a short amount of time. Through the Everyday PE Program relationships were created, all required data was collected, and three unique field days were created, which abided by CDC safety guidelines. The physical education teacher was able to share their passion for physical education and physical activity while introducing the importance of this grant to the B.F. Kitchen staff.

Independent Evaluation of Colorado READ Act: Per-Pupil Funding

Joseph McCrary, Katie Grogan, Sara Allender, Amanda Nabors, and Rachel Tripathy, WestED and Dale DeCesare and Robert Reichardt, APA

Colorado READ Act
EVALUATION

WestEd

RTI INTERNATIONAL

APA | AUGENBLICK, PALAICH AND ASSOCIATES

WestEd is a nonpartisan, nonprofit agency that conducts and applies research, develops evidence-based solutions, and provides services and resources in the realms of education, human development, and related fields, with the end goal of improving outcomes and ensuring equity for individuals from infancy through adulthood. For more information, visit WestEd.org. For regular updates on research, free resources, solutions, and job postings from WestEd, subscribe to the E-Bulletin, our semimonthly e-newsletter, at WestEd.org/subscribe.

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Executive Summary

The Colorado State Legislature passed the Reading to Ensure Academic Development (READ) Act in 2012 and updated the Act in 2019. The revised Act requires an independent evaluation to identify and assess strategies that the state, local districts, and schools have taken to support Colorado students in achieving proficiency in reading.

In this report, we describe the lessons learned from the first year of the per pupil evaluation, which included a statewide inventory and virtual site visits conducted with 28 schools and districts between October 2020 and January 2021 along with analysis of achievement and financial data held by CDE

According to schools receiving READ Act funds, the READ Act:

- **Increased the amount of time allocated towards reading instruction;**

- **Led to the use of a data-informed, tiered approach to K-3 literacy instruction; and**

- **Developed a common language to support consistent application of instructional practice across classrooms, schools, and districts.**

Despite these changes, students identified with significant reading deficiencies achieve proficiency by 3rd grade at rates well below their peers who have never been identified with an SRD.

In 2019, the Colorado General Assembly passed and signed into law SB 19-199, which included a provision mandating that an independent, external evaluation of the Colorado's Reading to Ensure Academic Development (READ) Act (see 2020 Annual Report on the Colorado READ Act for an overview of updates in SB 19-199).[1]

This is the first-year report of the evaluation of the READ Act. In this report, we describe the lessons learned from the first year of the per pupil evaluation, which included a statewide inventory and virtual site visits conducted with 28 schools and districts between October 2020 and January 2021 along with analyses of achievement and budgetary data help by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). Remote site visits included in-depth interviews with school and district leaders to gather insight into their use of READ Act funds and to identify successes, challenges, and lessons learned. Described within this report are the historical efforts to implement the provisions of the READ Act and an initial examination of achievement trends of students identified with significant reading deficiencies (SRDs). This initial evaluation report is intended to provide a baseline for future efforts related to the evaluation and is not intended to provide specific findings about the efficacy of a particular READ Act activity or program.

Given the demands the evaluation placed on participating schools and districts during the 2020-21 school year and the COVID-19 pandemic, we express our deep gratitude for their participation.

Summary of Findings

Overall, site visit participants positively viewed the READ Act. Specifically, they noted:

- The law had a positive impact on the amount of time allocated towards reading instruction;

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[1] https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdedepcom/readactreport

- The READ Act positively influenced a movement towards broader use of a data-informed, tiered approach to K-3 literacy instruction;

- They valued CDE's review of the research bases of curriculum, professional development programs, interventions, and assessments and report that these reviews inform their selections in their schools and districts;

- The READ Act and its implementation has allowed the development of a common language and terminology to support consistent application of instructional practice across classrooms, schools, and districts; and,

- ELG grants were transformational in changing how schools approached K-3 literacy instruction by focusing on the complimentary, layered nature of the four areas where schools typically deploy their ELG funds (external literacy consultants, internal literacy experts, teacher training, and updated literacy materials).

There were a number of challenges identified when trying to implement READ Act provisions.

- Per-pupil funding is universally appreciated by site visit participants. However, the level of per-pupil funding each year is typically only a very small fraction of school and district budgets. This level of funding is viewed as insufficient on its own to cover the costs needed to transform reading programs through purchase of new materials, increased staffing, or increased training. Instead, per-pupil funds are most often mixed in with other funding streams as an additional support to school and district K-3 literacy priorities.

- School and district leaders identified challenges hiring teachers with adequate training in the five core elements of literacy instruction. Combining this with the challenge associated with the numerous instruction, assessment, intervention, and professional

development programs in place results in substantial efforts being expended to recruit and train new teachers. Teacher turnover in such a system is costly to school and districts.

- Schools and districts with large numbers of English Learners (EL) reported concerns about improperly identifying EL students as having an SRD.

In our analyses of student outcome data, we found that students identified with an SRD are not moving off of that status as rapidly as new students are being identified with an SRD. That is, more students were newly diagnosed with an SRD each year than moved off of an SRD designation. On average, four to five percent of K-3 students were newly diagnosed with an SRD each year, while two to three percent of K-3 students moved off of an SRD designation. Students who have been identified as having an SRD achieve third grade reading proficiency at rates far below their peers who have never been diagnosed with an SRD. Furthermore, less than five percent of students who have been diagnosed with an SRD achieved English Language Arts proficiency on the 2019-20 CMAS in third grade, while about half of their non-SRD peers did.

Recommendations

At this point in the evaluation, it would be preliminary to make any sweeping policy recommendations. However, based on the information we collected during the virtual site visits and interviews with school and district leaders, CDE and the State Board of Education may want to consider the following.

1. Examine processes to consider extending the approval of materials or otherwise supporting schools and districts who are using instructional materials that had been approved but are no longer approved in subsequent reviews. School and district leaders indicated that adoption and integration of instructional programs is expensive and time-

consuming. Of the 28 virtual site visits, about four or five indicated that they adopted material approved in the prior round of reviews, only to have those materials no longer approved on the subsequent review.

2. Consider examining policy and program alignment across CDE divisions that impact K-3 education. For example, during the virtual site visits, participants identified challenges coordinating across multiple plans that students may have, such as READ Act plans, Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), and English Language Development Plans. The READ Act Plan Working Group Report[2] also recommended alignment for READ Act Plans with other individualized plans. Offices such as Educator Preparation, Educator Effectiveness, Principal Resources, District and School Support, and the Preschool through 3rd Grade Office also establish policies and provide programs and supports that impact grade K-3 literacy. Colorado also has other related literacy initiatives, such as the Comprehensive State Literacy Grant, that will impact READ Act implementation and outcomes. We recommend an examination of the alignment throughout CDE and creation of a logic model that illustrates how they should all work together. This will provide context for the evaluation to understand the environment in which school operate. The information will also provide important information for CDE to coordinate policies and programs that impact grade K-3 literacy.

The evaluation also identified several areas where more information is needed.

1. CDE is required to establish measures for growth to standard for K-3 reading. Furthermore, it is difficult to determine if decisions about SRD designation are valid and reliable since each assessment varies in the concepts they measure and how they measure them. Given the large

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[2] https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readplanworkinggrouplegislativereport.

number of K-3 reading assessments in use by schools and districts, we suggest convening a panel of psychometricians to develop recommendations for measuring growth to standard and determining the effectiveness of the assessment system for READ Act purposes.

2. Site visit participants expressed concern about the misidentification of English learners (EL) as also having SRD along with the questions about successful strategies for addressing the reading needs of EL students. We recommend these be significant focal areas for the Year 2 evaluation by identifying schools and districts who are effective improving reading among EL students and exploring the practices they employ.

3. Throughout the site visits, school and district leaders described human resource challenges, including recruiting, training, and retaining teachers who are effective with students who struggle with reading, and human resource solutions, such as instructional coaches, novel professional development approaches, and retention strategies. We recommend the evaluation focus on these human capital challenges and solutions by a statewide teacher survey collecting data about their experiences.

1

Introduction

In this report, we describe the lessons learned from the first year of the per pupil evaluation, which included a statewide inventory and virtual site visits conducted with 28 schools and districts between October 2020 and January 2021.

The Year 1 report is focused on providing baseline information in an effort to learn about prior implementation and not to draw any conclusions about the efficacy of a particular READ Act activity or program.

Two broad research questions guide the evaluation:

- **To what extent were LEPs receiving per pupil funds pursuant to the READ Act, and were schools that were receiving Early Literacy Grant funds successful in reducing the number of students with significant reading deficiencies?**

- **What are the most effective processes, procedures, methods, and strategies that LEPs receiving per pupil funds and schools receiving ELG funds use to achieve significant growth to standard?**

The Colorado Reading to Ensure Academic Development (READ) Act

The importance of achieving early grade reading proficiency for later student academic success is well documented. Achievement of reading proficiency by the end of the third grade is considered by researchers and education leaders to be crucial to a child's future academic success and financial independence.[3] To help schools and districts support all children in achieving this goal, the Colorado State Legislature passed the Colorado Reading to Ensure Academic Development Act (READ Act) in 2012 to replace the Colorado Basic Literacy Act (CBLA).[4] The READ Act provides school districts with funding and support to aid literacy development for kindergarteners through third-grade students, especially those identified with "significant reading deficiencies" (SRDs) who are at risk of not reading at grade level by the end of third grade.

Under provisions of the READ Act, schools test students using reading assessments approved by the Colorado State Board of Education. Those designated as having an SRD are then provided with individual READ plans that identify a pathway for reaching grade-level proficiency. The READ Act specifies certain components required in all student READ plans; however, each plan must be tailored to meet individual student needs.

In addition to specifying that the Colorado State Board of Education approve a set of reading assessments, the READ Act also charges the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) with creating advisory lists of instructional

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[3] 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/

[4] The READ Act includes many of the same elements as the CBLA, including a focus on K-3 literacy, assessment, and individual plans for students reading below grade level with the addition of: (1) funding to support these efforts, (2) requirements for parent communication, and (3) an explicit focus on students identified as having a significant reading deficiency.

programming[5] and professional development programs[6] that are scientifically based and evidence-based (see Appendix 1 for a discussion of the foundation of scientifically based reading). LEPs may use READ Act funds to purchase instructional programming from the advisory list. (LEPs may also purchase instructional programs that are not on CDE's advisory list if they do not use READ Act funds.) With the 2019 revision of the READ Act, the legislation 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 until January 31, 2022. The professional development programs on CDE's advisory list allow teachers who successfully complete the professional development to meet this requirement. CDE has also created an array of resources for districts and schools to help administer the READ Act; see Appendix 2 for a list and links to those resources.

The Comprehensive Early Literacy Grant Program was also created in 2012 as part of the Colorado READ Act. This fund was created primarily to provide resources through Early Literacy Grants (ELGs) for Colorado schools and districts to implement interventions, programs, and supports specifically for K-3 students with SRDs. Each year, approximately $38 million is appropriated to the fund, with nearly $33 million distributed directly to school districts. Schools may apply individually or as part of a consortium of schools. To help ensure that these funds are appropriately targeted, the state has, since 2012, provided districts with a list of approved, evidence-based education interventions that are supported by the grant. Districts, in turn, are required by statute each year to provide information to the Colorado Department of Education regarding their planned usage of funds to support students 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

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[5] https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/advisorylistofinstructionalprogramming2020

[6] https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readactprofessionaldevelopmentevidenceteachertraining

who completed ELG Comprehensive Grants 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.

Evaluation of the 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 evaluation of the READ Act program be conducted over a six-year period (see 2020 Annual Report on the Colorado READ Act for an overview of updates in SB 19-199).[7] The evaluation, which will run from July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2026, is now under way 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 the 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 can best support further improvement in READ Act implementation

An additional goal that has been added to this work is to understand how the current COVID-19 pandemic has impacted district- and school-level strategies for delivering K-3 reading programs, and how READ Act funding and

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[7] https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdedepcom/readactreport

the Colorado Department of Education can best support districts and schools delivering such reading programs during the pandemic.

This report summarizes findings and data gathered during the first year of the evaluation. The report relies on numerous sources of information, including

1. Reviews of existing data that school districts submit each year to the Colorado Department of Education,
2. Data from an inventory sent to all districts and ELG-funded schools by the evaluation team to gather information on their READ Act–funded activities and investments since the beginning of the availability of READ Act funding, and
3. Data gathered through an initial round of virtual site visits that the evaluation conducted with 28 schools and districts throughout the state during the 2020/21 school year.

These site visits included in-depth interviews with school and district leaders to gather insight into their use of READ Act funds and to identify successes, challenges, and lessons learned. In future years, this evaluation will produce additional summary reports to present cumulative findings from data-gathering activities, including data gathered through additional site visits to schools and districts across Colorado.

Research Questions

Two broad research questions guide this report:

1. To what extent were LEPs receiving per pupil funds pursuant to the READ Act, and were schools that were receiving Early Literacy Grant (ELG) funds successful in reducing the number of students with significant reading deficiencies?
2. What are the most effective processes, procedures, methods, and strategies that LEPs receiving per pupil funds and schools receiving ELG funds use to achieve significant growth to standard?

In this report, for the first year, the evaluation focused on gathering descriptive information about the instructional programs, inventions, professional developments, and assessments in use; spending of READ Act funds; and the identification of students with a significant reading deficiency (SRD). The mandate for the first year of the evaluation includes providing this information for the history of the READ Act. Below we describe the data sources we relied on and discuss their limitations.

Purpose and Organization of this Report

In this report, we describe the lessons learned from the first year of the per pupil evaluation, which included a statewide inventory and virtual site visits conducted with 28 schools and districts between October 2020 and January 2021. The summary report allows us to expand upon extant data and learn about the implementation of READ Act funding across a range of schools and districts. **The Year 1 report is focused on providing baseline information in an effort to learn about prior implementation and not intended to be used to draw any conclusions about the efficacy of a particular READ Act activity or program.**

It is also important to note several limitations regarding this year's reports. First, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were forced to conduct abbreviated, virtual site visits instead of the multi-day, in-person visits that were planned. This limited what we were able to cover during the interviews and eliminated our ability to observe implementation of READ Act–related instructional activities. In addition, the information gathered during the virtual interviews is based on retrospective data that is more prone to recall or misclassification bias. Staff turnover also affected the quality of retrospective data collected because current staff members who participated in interviews may not have first-hand knowledge of READ Act implementation from previous years. Lastly, the extant data from CDE was not collected for the purpose of an evaluation. Reporting requirements

also changed from year to year, so making any broad conclusions between years is not always possible.[8]

Key data and information presented in this Year 1 summary report include: (a) a retrospective look at pre-pandemic, READ Act–funded activities undertaken by districts and schools, including information on the types of literacy assessments, student assessments, and reading intervention programs used; (b) preliminary insights from the evaluation's first round of site visits, including programs and practices perceived as being effective in improving student outcomes; (c) a summary analysis of how schools and districts across the state responded to the pandemic, with a focus on READ Act–related activities during spring and fall 2020; and (d) observations, initial findings, and recommendations for next steps from the external evaluation team. See Appendix 3 for a discussion of data sources and Appendix 4 for the process used to select schools and districts for site visits.

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[8] Variable-specific limitations are discussed in the methods section.

2

Overall Approaches to Reading

Site visit interviews included a discussion of each school's overall approach to grades K-3 reading instruction. Questions were designed to gather data on the amount of time students in grades K-3 receive literacy instruction, how such instruction might be divided between whole class and smaller group instruction, how struggling readers are typically supported, if there is variation in how English Learner (EL) students are supported, and how reading curricula and materials are selected for use in the school's literacy program.

Educators whose tenure predates the READ Act indicate that it led to a significant increase in the amount of classroom time spent on reading.

The READ Act also led to an increase in data-informed, tiered approaches to reading instruction and interventions.

Site visit participants indicated that they appreciated the lists of approved materials but also indicated that changing instructional programs when a program is no longer approved is an expensive and onerous task.

Remote visit schools commonly use a three-tiered approach to their K-3 literacy programs. These tiers reflect use of a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) framework to organize instruction[9]. In general, all students receive at least one 90-minute block of time each day dedicated to core literacy instruction. **The 90-minute core literacy block is generally referred to as "Tier 1" of the K-3 literacy program**, and it typically includes time for reading instruction and time for students to work on their writing skills. This writing instruction is viewed as an important component in supporting development of strong reading skills. The Tier 1 literacy block also typically includes both whole group (the entire class together) instruction and time for students to be placed into smaller groups organized by their reading level as determined using a variety of literacy assessments. Small group instruction time is considered important by school leaders because it allows educators to provide more tailored instruction that is aligned with the reading levels in each group and enables instruction to be more differentiated depending on student needs.

Remote site visits included a discussion of each school's overall approach to grades K-3 reading instruction. Questions were designed to gather data on the amount of time students in grades K-3 receive literacy instruction, how such instruction might be divided between whole class and smaller group instruction, how struggling readers are typically supported, if there is variation in how English Learner (EL) students are supported, and how reading curricula and materials are selected for use in the school's literacy program. The READ Act evaluation inventory included a series of items that asked schools or districts to report which core, supplemental, and intervention programs they used for each grade (K-3) for the past four school years (2017-18 to 2020-21).

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[9] More information about MTSS can be found at the CDE website: http://www.cde.state.co.us/MTSS

The support structure used during Tier 1 small group instructional time varies somewhat across case study sites. One approach is to place students into smaller groups with others at a similar reading level within their same classroom. Another approach is to group students across classrooms, or even across grade levels. A third approach is termed a "flooding strategy" designed to bring a variety of adults (including reading coaches, additional teachers, paraprofessionals, and sometimes parents) into the classroom during small group instruction time. These adults are brought in to ensure that as many small groups of students as possible are directly supported by an adult. Schools that do not use a flooding approach, or do not have access to sufficient additional staffing or adults to implement such a strategy, tend to focus small group instruction on their most struggling readers, or have teachers rotate through small groups of students, while small groups self-engage in assignments.

Tier 2 is used to provide additional support to struggling readers usually outside of the 90-minute, core literacy block. Most often this Tier 2 support includes approximately 30 minutes per day of added instruction. To ensure that Tier 2 support does not come at the expense of time in the Tier 1 reading block, case study schools use a mix of strategies, including using a reading interventionist or other staff member to pull students out of science, social studies, or other classes to deliver the Tier 2 support. Some schools have also developed after-school reading tutoring programs to support the needs of struggling readers.

Tier 3 is typically associated with provision of added resources and staffing to support students in special education who have received an Individual Education Plan (IEP). This Tier 3 support is provided by special education staff specialists focused on the specific learning goals outlined in each student's IEP.

There is **significant variation in how virtual site visit schools address the needs of EL students**. One of the approaches schools with larger percentages of EL students use is a dual language approach where K-3

instruction is provided through either an English or Spanish track for students. Another approach among schools is to use a "co-teaching" model where EL-certified teachers in the district co-plan lessons with classroom teachers and support classroom instruction. For schools with smaller EL populations, EL students tend to participate in the Tier 1 literacy block with their English-speaking peers. In some cases, an EL aide is present during at least part of this Tier 1 time to help support EL students, in other cases the primary EL support is delivered through an EL specialist during Tier 2 pull out time.

With regard to the process used to select a core K-3 literacy curriculum and associated materials, leaders tend to review guidance provided by CDE and utilize a collaborative internal process to make final selection decisions. This decision may be made at a district level for the core curriculum or the decision may be made at the school level. Decisions about selecting supplemental or literacy intervention materials could occur at the school or district level. Often, a mix of teachers, coaches, and interventionists are used to review literacy curricular and assessment options and provide feedback on quality and fit based on the specific needs of the student population served. Schools typically attempt to work within the framework of CDE's list of reviewed and approved literacy materials. Schools that receive Early Literacy Grant (ELG) funding sometimes include a grant-funded external literacy consultant in the process of reviewing and selecting appropriate curricula, assessments, and literacy materials. Recommendations on materials from trusted colleagues and successful prior experience with materials were important factors to school and district leaders in materials selection.

According to the LEP inventory, there were 40 different core instructional programs in use during the 2020-21 school year. Amplify CORE Knowledge, which was approved by CDE, was the most commonly used core instructional program (Exhibit 1). Twenty-three districts reported using Amplify CORE Knowledge in Kindergarten and 24 districts reported using the program in grades 1-3. Other CDE approved programs reported in use by at least 5 districts include

McGraw Hill: Wonders 2017 (13-15 districts across each grade) and 2020 (12-15 districts across each grade), Pearson Reading Street (12-13 districts across each grade), EL Education: K-5 Language Arts Curriculum (11-12 districts across each grade), Houghton Mifflin: Into Reading (10-12 districts across each grade), Orton-Gillingham International: Yoshimoto Orton Gillingham (9-12 districts across each grade), Houghton Mifflin: Journeys Common Core 2014 (9-10 districts across each grade) and Houghton Mifflin: Journeys 2016 (8-9 districts across each grade).

Exhibit 1. Number of School Districts Adopting Core Instructional Programs in 2020-2021 School Year

Core Program	2020-21				
	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third	Sum
Amplify: Core Knowledge (CKLA)	23	24	24	24	95
McGraw Hill: Wonders 2017	14	13	13	15	55
McGraw Hill: Wonders 2020	13	12	14	15	54
Pearson: Reading Street	13	13	12	12	50
EL Education : K-5 Language Arts Curriculum	12	12	11	12	47
Houghton Mifflin: Into Reading	10	11	12	12	45
Orton Gillingham International: Yoshimoto Orton Gillingham	9	12	9	10	40
Houghton Mifflin: Journeys Common Core 2014	10	9	10	10	39
Houghton Mifflin: Journeys 2016	8	9	9	9	35

Note. Table is limited to core instructional programs used by more than 5 districts during the 2020-21 school year.
Source: School District responses on LEP inventory.

Districts reported using 55 different supplemental programs during the 2020-21 school year. Lexia Core-5, Amplify: mClass Amplify Reading edition, and Orton Gillingham International: Yoshimoto Orton Gillingham were the most popular supplemental program used by more than 25 districts during the 2020-21 school year (Exhibit 2).

Exhibit 2. Number of Districts Using Supplemental Instructional Programs in the 2020-2021 School Year

Supplemental Program	2020-21			
	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third
Lexia: Core 5	32	32	30	32
Amplify: mClass Amplify Reading Edition	28	31	30	31
Orton Gillingham International: Yoshimoto Orton Gillingham	29	33	27	27
Learning A-Z: Raz-Plus	21	22	18	19
Literacy Resources: Heggerty Phonemic Awareness	6	28	26	19
Curriculum Associates: i-Ready	13	15	16	15
Istation: Istation Reading	11	13	12	12
Wilson: Fundations	14	13	11	9
Moby Max: Moby Max	9	11	15	11
Literacy Resources: Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Spanish	27	4	5	4
Really Great Reading: Blast	8	15	11	6
Gander Publishing: Seeing Stars	7	8	9	9
Gander Publishing: Visualizing and Verbalizing	7	6	9	9
Really Great Reading: HD Word	4	4	11	10
Write: Write now-Right Now	7	7	7	7
Really Great Reading: Countdown	11	6	5	3
EL Education : K-5 Language Arts Curriculum	6	5	4	6

Note. Table is limited to supplemental instructional programs used by more than 5 districts during the 2020-21 school year.
Source: LEP responses on the LEP Inventory.

Lastly, according to the LEP inventory, 77 intervention programs were in use during the 2020-2021 school year. The most popular intervention programs, in use in over 20 districts, include Lexia: Core 5, Amplify Burst, SIPPS, READ Naturally, Orton Gillingham International: Yoshimoto Orton Gillingham, and Amplify: mCLASS Intervention (Exhibit 3).

Exhibit 3. Number of Districts Using Intervention Instructional Programs in Use in the 2020-2021 School Year

Intervention Name	2020-21			
	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third
Lexia: Core 5	28	32	32	34
Amplify: Burst	22	23	23	21
SIPPS: SIPPS	19	21	22	24
Read Naturally: Read Naturally	14	21	25	23
Orton Gillingham International: Yoshimoto Orton Gillingham	23	21	19	17
Amplify: mCLASS Intervention	22	24	25	24
Collaborative Classroom: SIPPS	18	15	19	17
Linda Mood Bell: Seeing Stars	14	15	16	15
Orton Gillingham International: Orton Gillingham International	11	14	16	17
95% Group: Phonics	15	15	15	12
Curriculum Associates: iReady	14	15	13	14
Linda Mood Bell: Phoneme Sequence(LIPS)	14	14	13	12
Wilson: Wilson Reading Systems	11	12	15	15
Istation Reading: English	13	13	14	12
95% Group: Phonological	14	14	12	9
Linda Mood Bell: Visualizing and Verbalizing	9	13	13	13
Really Great Reading: Blast Foundations	8	11	10	6
McGraw Hill: Wonder Works	8	8	7	9
Moby Max: Moby Max	10	8	5	9
Really Great Reading: HD Word	4	5	11	12

Note. Table is limited to intervention instructional programs used by more than 10 districts during the 2020-21 school year.
Source: LEP responses on the LEP Inventory

Challenges, Opportunities, and Lessons Learned

Virtual site visit participants whose tenure at their school or district pre-dated passage of the Read Act report the law had a positive impact on the amount of time allocated towards reading instruction and placed a renewed emphasis on K-3 literacy instruction in general. Prior to the Read Act, for example, some leaders indicate a total of 60 minutes per day was typically spent on reading instruction, and that passage of the law led to an expansion of core literacy instruction to 90 minutes per day plus an additional 30 minutes of added time to support struggling readers. This means that, in some cases, struggling

readers receive double the literacy support they would have received prior to passage of the Act. In some cases, schools reported an increase in student reading assessment scores after implementation of their expanded literacy blocks, and expansion of this block is viewed as one of the more impactful aspects of the Read Act. These site visit participants further indicate that educators were initially concerned with how expanded time devoted to K-3 literacy instruction might negatively impact time spent on other academic subjects. **Flexibility, training, and creativity were needed to help educators incorporate existing science and social studies lessons into reading time to accommodate the expanded literacy block, according to these leaders.**

Virtual site visit participants, teachers, and reading specialists also report that passage of the READ Act positively influenced a movement towards broader use of a data-informed, tiered approach to K-3 student literacy instruction. This included expanding educators' use of data to diagnose the needs of students to be addressed in small groups. Expanded use of data to identify struggling readers also supported successful creation of a separate tier of support specifically for such readers. Some veteran educators reported that the process of using interim assessments to screen students followed by progress monitoring with diagnostic assessments to pinpoint learning needs was a beneficial product of the READ Act.

These leaders and other educators indicate that, prior to the READ Act, it was more common for teachers to use their own judgement or impressions to identify student needs, rather than assessment data, and that the Act helped bring more consistent structure and alignment of data to the process. **This consistent structure led to what is now "common language" used across Colorado among educators with regard to Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 instruction as well as common terminology such as significant reading deficiencies (SRDs) for struggling readers.** Having such common language and terminology is viewed as useful to support more consistent application of instructional practice across classrooms, schools, and districts.

CDE's work to review the research supporting various literacy curricula and assessments is generally viewed by site visit participants as valuable and is used to inform decisions regarding the purchase of such materials and tools. According to these leaders, such decisions for districts and schools are extremely resource-intensive, because they require not only a major investment to purchase curricula and assessments from external vendors, but also because they require massive investments in staff time to conduct sufficient training so that all educators understand how to properly implement the purchased materials in the classroom.

Because of the major investments required in dollars and staff time, school and district leaders indicate it is extremely challenging and sometimes cost prohibitive to shift away from curricula, assessments, or other materials that were purchased in prior years. For this reason, **some district leaders indicate more clarity is needed in CDE's process for reviewing and approving materials.** Such increased clarity is particularly critical if materials approved in one version of the list are not included in later lists of approved materials list.

Teachers and leaders in site visit schools indicated several additional lessons learned regarding K-3 literacy instruction, including:

1. **The critical importance of providing adequate training to teachers, paraprofessionals, coaches, tutors, and other personnel used to support K-3 student literacy development.** In particular, these staff and personnel require training in the five core elements of literacy instruction to ensure: 1) all personnel understand the mechanisms by which children acquire and retain reading skills, and the specific instructional strategies that can help support such skill development; 2) consistent use of terminology across classrooms and grades and across schools so that students have access to consistent literacy instruction regardless of the school or classroom they attend; and 3) K-3 literacy instruction is grounded in research.

2. **The value and importance of building teacher and interventionist capacity to use assessment results to develop and provide targeted reading interventions for students.** This capacity includes the ability to appropriately administer assessments, the ability to identify reading challenges facing students from the assessment data, the ability to identify appropriate materials to address those challenges, and the ability to effectively use materials to improve student reading skills. This represents a complex set of skills whose cultivation requires a system of support where teachers have access to constructive feedback and coaching from reading experts, and adequate time to reflect on their practice.

3. **The importance of using both large and small group instruction to support the literacy skill development of all K-3 students.** This mixed structure exposes students to multiple teaching styles and interventions, which educators believe provides multiple pathways to meet student needs.

4. **In schools that do not rely on a core literacy curriculum for all their K-3 students, teachers use more of an ad hoc approach to instruction, which can lead to inconsistent instruction across classrooms.** Even in cases where a core literacy curriculum is used, school leaders often indicate the need to identify additional materials focused on phonics/phonemic awareness to supplement the primary curriculum.

With regard to the COVID-19 pandemic, school and district leaders uniformly report that online literacy instruction has a disproportionately negative impact on at-risk, immigrant, and homeless students. These students tend to have more issues than other students with internet connectivity problems, lack of quality computer equipment, and distractions at home that make it more difficult

for them to maintain focus on classwork. Key additional lessons learned according to school leaders include:

- **Providing each student with reliable computer equipment** or other hardware to use at home ("1 to 1 technology") improves online learning engagement.

- Overall, **online instruction is not viewed as an effective environment to teach reading for K-3 students**. The youngest students typically cannot spend 90 minutes per day focused on literacy instruction in front of a computer. Case study school leaders indicated the need to reduce such daily literacy instructional time for this reason.

- **Existing inequities across students have been greatly exacerbated**, and those who have access to more parental support at home – in some cases because such parents have jobs that allow them to work remotely – gain even larger advantages over their peers.

- The **negative effects of the pandemic on EL students** may be particularly pronounced. This is because, in addition to challenges with delivering literacy instruction to K-3 students online, in-person instruction also suffers since it is harder to visually track and practice speaking when students and teachers are wearing masks.

3

Pre-service and In-service Training

Site visits interviews included a discussion of the training opportunities available in each school for K-3 teachers, coaches, instructional leaders, and other staff, and any gaps that exist in either veteran or new teacher literacy instructional knowledge or skills.

Discussions included school leader perceptions of the quality of pre-service training that educators received prior to joining the school, as well as in-service training received from state, district, or school-level sources.

School and district leaders note that all teachers require additional training to ensure:

- **Understanding of the research behind effective K-3 literacy instruction;**

- **Understanding of the mechanisms by which children acquire and retain reading skills;**

- **Consistent use of terminology across classrooms, grades, and schools;**

- **Grounding in the most up-to-date research and best practice; and**

- **Capacity to administer assessments and use data to design well-targeted reading interventions for students.**

Site visit participants consistently indicate the **critical importance of providing adequate training** to teachers, paraprofessionals, coaches, tutors, and other personnel used to support K-3 student literacy development. Over 70 percent of districts (n=151) responding to the LEP inventory indicated that the ability to teach reading was a primary factor when hiring K-3 teachers. Site visit participants indicate these staff and **personnel often lack adequate training in the five core elements of literacy instruction**. This training is needed to ensure:

Site visits included a discussion of the training opportunities available in each school for K-3 teachers, coaches, instructional leaders, and other staff, and any gaps that exist in either veteran or new teacher literacy instructional knowledge or skills. Discussions included school leader perceptions of the quality of pre-service training that educators received prior to joining the school, as well as in-service training received from state, district, or school-level sources. With regard to state-level training requirements, site visits probed on Colorado's evidence-based literacy training requirements for all K-3 teachers[1] and other state teacher training requirements, such as training pertaining to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) Education.[1] Site leaders were also asked to discuss the quality of their job applicant pools, and the degree to which they have access to well-trained, well-prepared teachers to fill open positions. As part of the READ Act evaluation inventory, participants were asked to report on hiring practices as well as the professional development programs used over the past four school years (2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020, 2020-2021).

1. All personnel understand the research behind effective K-3 literacy instruction, including the five essential elements of reading instruction.
2. All personnel understand the mechanisms by which children acquire and retain reading skills, and the specific instructional strategies that can help support such skill development.

3. Consistent use of terminology across classrooms, grades, and schools so that students have access to consistent literacy instruction regardless of the school they attend.

4. K-3 literacy instruction itself is grounded in the most up-to-date research and best practice.

5. Teachers have the capacity to administer assessments and use data to design well-targeted reading interventions for students.

The importance of providing adequate training on the five essential elements of literacy instruction is further highlighted by the fact that site visit participants consistently indicate new-to-the-profession K-3 teacher hires and even veteran teacher hires are often not adequately trained in the science of reading instruction. Instead, these leaders point to a general **need to build and develop knowledge and instructional expertise in the science of reading instruction throughout Colorado's teacher workforce.**

While site visit participants agree that literacy instruction experience would ideally be a priority in hiring decisions, many also report that there is a lack of qualified teaching candidates in general. Some schools, particularly in rural areas, report consistent challenges finding any certified teaching candidates for open positions. School reported investing in training and use of a highly structured core curriculum that suits the five essential elements of reading instruction as a result. Significant investment in new hires' reading instructional knowledge and skills can then be easily lost due to persistent teacher turnover in many schools.

Generally, site visit participants are supportive of the need for K-3 teachers to complete research-based literacy instruction training. According to the LEP inventory, districts reported using 22 different professional development programs during the 2020-21 school year (See Exhibit 4). Districts were most likely to use Orton Gillingham International and Voyager Sopris Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS). School and district leaders whose staff have participated in the LETRS training give this program

strong reviews. Other popular programs include Wireless Generation (now known as Amplify), 95% Group, Linda Mood Bell/Gander Publishing Learning Process, Keys to Literacy: Key to Beginning Reading and McGraw Hill.

Exhibit 4. Number of School Districts Using Professional Development Programs, by Year

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Orton Gillingham International: Orton Gillingham International	23	28	29	26
Voyager Sporis Learning: LETRS	11	13	21	25
Cambium Education dba Voyager Sopris Learning: LETRS	7	9	16	18
Wireless Generation (now know as Amplify): Wireless Generation (now know as Amplify)	16	16	15	13
95% Group Inc: 95% Group Inc	4	4	6	11
Linda Mood Bell/ Gander Publishing Learning Process: Linda Mood Bell/ Gander Publishing Learning Process	15	13	11	10
Keys to Literacy: Key to Beginning Reading	2	2	1	9

Note. Table is limited to professional development programs used by more than 5 districts during the 2020-21 school year.
Source: LEP Responses on LEP Inventory.

School leaders are concerned, however, about the burden placed on teachers by Colorado's requirement that all K-3 teachers complete a minimum of 45 hours of literacy instruction training by the end of January 2022. This is the current deadline set by the Colorado State Board of Education. Leaders indicate this requirement takes teachers far longer than 45 hours – sometimes 100 hours per teacher – to complete because of required homework and exercises. While the January 2022 deadline represents a six-month extension over the previous deadline, school leaders point to educator exhaustion and burnout following more than a year of disrupted instruction due to the COVID-19 pandemic and uncertainty over the ability of schools and districts to resume full, normal operations in Fall 2021. Teachers during the pandemic have focused the bulk of their energies to delivering effective online and in-person instruction, which is particularly challenging in grades K-3. In addition, school leaders report that many teachers are simultaneously under pressure to

complete a minimum of 45 hours of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) Education training (also required by the State Board of Education), which is a significant additional burden amidst the pandemic.

Challenges, Opportunities, or Lessons Learned

According to many site visit participants, there is significant value in maintaining a school-based, full-time or nearly full-time literacy coach or reading interventionist trained in the science of literacy instruction. This may enable schools to:

- Establish and continually reinforce research-based literacy instruction throughout the school.
- Continually coach and train teachers and new hires to ensure they are consistently and properly implementing reading curricula.
- Collaborate with teachers in utilizing literacy assessment data to diagnose and address student needs.
- Maximize school and district-level investments in collaborative professional development time, such as professional learning communities
- Ensure the longer-term sustainability of progress made through temporary initiatives such as Early Literacy Grants.

Absent dedicated literacy coach staffing within their school, site visit participants indicate that professional development and other teacher training initiatives can rapidly fade due to staff turnover and lack of continuous reinforcement of initial training priorities. Such internal coaching is particularly critical, site visit participants indicate, since use of external consultants are designed to be short-term investments that need to be self-sustaining over time to justify their expense.

Addressing gaps in teacher and leader training and professional development on literacy instruction is a core motivator for schools' pursuit

and implementation of ELG grants. ELG Grants provide schools with resources to pay teachers stipends for time spent on literacy training such as the LETRS program. Non-ELG schools are unable to provide such stipends to teachers and staff. This is viewed as important because, while Colorado has made the LETRS course free, completing the course imposes significant added teacher time commitment. Compensating teachers appropriately for this time is viewed as an important motivator that also signals the high priority which the school, district, and state places on the training.

Site visit schools that have not received ELG funds indicate that they experience an ongoing struggle to find adequate funding to provide comprehensive teacher training, particularly in smaller districts. These schools often indicate that literacy professional development is provided to their K-3 teachers using a patchwork of trainings through CDE, their district, or through a regional Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES). Leaders indicate this approach to training does not always lend itself to establishment of a unified approach to K-3 literacy instruction. Larger districts have the economies of scale to develop their own training and materials infrastructure that can support reading instruction. However, even schools in larger districts reported they found significant value in ELG-funded training.

Not surprisingly, input received through site visits indicates **schools that experience high levels of teacher turnover require continual staff training to maintain consistency in delivery of evidence-based, K-3 literacy instruction**. Conversely, schools with low teacher turnover enjoy longer-term benefits to training. For instance, some case study schools that have experienced low staff turnover over time report ongoing positive staff impacts associated with training provided through Reading First grants allocated to schools over a decade ago (2007).[10]

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[10] For more information on the Reading First Program, see:
https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20094038/summ_a.asp

READ Act and ELG Funding

4

Site visits in Fall 2020 included 11 Colorado schools that received only per-pupil funding though the READ Act, and 17 that received both per-pupil and ELG funds. Questions were designed to gather data on how each school utilized READ Act funds, the challenges, successes, and impacts associated with using the funds, and any lessons learned by school and district leaders. The two sources of READ Act funding are "pre-pupil funding"— allocated to each school in the state based on the number of students with SRDs—and the Early Literacy Grant.

Schools and districts used READ Act per-pupil funds to:

- **Purchase services, staffing, and other materials, which include reading specialists and interventionists, supplies, and subscriptions;**

- **Purchase instructional and tutoring programs;**

- **Provide professional development;**

- **Operate a summer school;**

- **Purchase technology or software.**

Site visits included a discussion with school and district leaders regarding their use of funds provided through the State of Colorado's READ Act to support K-3 literacy instruction. The two sources of READ Act funding are:

1. **"Per-pupil funding"** that is allocated by the state to every school in Colorado based on their number of enrolled K-3 pupils identified as having a significant reading deficiency (SRD).

2. **Early Literacy Grant** (ELG) funding that is administered by the CDE and distributed to selected districts and schools who choose to go through a grant application process and who are selected for grant awards. ELG grants have been issued to four cohorts of districts and schools, with each cohort occupying a four-year period: i) Cohort 1 from 2013-16; ii) Cohort 2 from 2016-19; iii) Cohort 3 from 2017-20; and iv) Cohort 4 from 2019-22.

Site visits in Fall 2020 included 11 Colorado schools that received only per-pupil funding though the READ Act and 17 that received both per-pupil and ELG funds. Questions were designed to gather data on how each school utilized READ Act funds, the challenges, successes, and impacts associated with using the funds, and any lessons learned by school and district leaders. The inventories included a table of spending categories for each district to indicate how much READ Act funds they had spent in each category. As we examined the spending responses, we identified inconsistencies in the responses that may have indicated multiple interpretations of what was being asked. As a result, we converted the spending figures to binary indicators of whether the district or school spent READ Act funds on that particular use.

The most frequently cited use of READ Act per pupil funds is the purchase of other services, staffing, and other materials (Exhibit 5); these include hiring reading specialists and interventionists and purchasing supplies and subscriptions. Other uses of READ Act per pupil funds include purchasing instructional and tutoring programs, providing professional development, operating a summer school, and technology or software purchases.

Exhibit 5. Number of School Districts Reporting Spending READ Act Funds, by Spending Category and School Year

Spending Category	School Year			
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Purchase Any Other Services, Staffing or Materials	62	62	69	60
Purchase Reading Instruction Programs	40	42	47	49
Provide Reading Tutoring Programming	26	30	30	31
Provide Professional Development for Literacy Instruction	25	25	31	33
Operate a Summer School	32	28	21	28
READ Act Funds Retained by District	27	29	30	14
Provide Technology or Software to Assess or Monitor Students	21	25	24	23
Operate a Full-day Kindergarten Program	26	26	3	1
Purchase the Services of a Literacy Specialist from a BOCES	3	2	2	3

Note: One hundred fifty-one school districts accessed the inventory administered for this evaluation.

Prior to the 2019-20 school year, schools and districts used per-pupil funds to help offset the cost of providing full-day kindergarten programs, especially for at-risk students. However, under 2019 legislation signed into Colorado law, the state now provides funding to cover the cost of full-day kindergarten. School and district site visit participants report that, following this change in state policy, **per-pupil READ Act funds are now typically used to help support the cost of providing summer school for struggling readers, to support the staffing costs of providing reading interventionists in schools, and to support the purchase of K-3 literacy curricula and materials.** While these were frequently cited uses of per-pupil funding, it was not unusual for site visit participants to express confusion as to the state's "allowable uses" of per-pupil funds.

5

Identifying Significant Reading Deficiencies

Site visits included a discussion at each site of the process for identifying students that have Significant Reading Deficiencies (SRDs) as outlined under the READ Act. Questions were designed to gather data on a variety of topics, including the process used to identify SRDs, challenges or successes with this process, additional guidance and support which might be needed, and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Efforts to identify Significant Reading Deficiencies (SRDs) included:

- **interim reading assessments administered to all students**

- **diagnostic reading assessments to verify whether the student has an SRD, diagnose the likely causes of the SRD, and inform instructional strategies to best support that student**

- **on-going progress monitoring**

Schools emphasized the need to ensure that teachers have the training to properly diagnose the particular literacy challenges each student faces.

In general site visit schools used a similar initial approach to screen students for SRDs, which includes using an interim reading assessment (such as DIBELS), typically administered near the beginning of the school year to all K-3 students. Many schools use the vendor-provided color-coded scheme to classify students (with students scoring low in specific literacy areas assigned a "red" or "yellow" color). Whether a school administers a Spanish version of the interim assessment tends to be associated with the size of the school's EL student population. If the EL population is only a small percentage of overall enrollment, then the same assessment is used for all students. In schools with larger EL enrollments, the Spanish language version of the interim assessment is used.

> Site visits included a discussion at each site of the process for identifying students that have Significant Reading Deficiencies (SRDs) as outlined under the READ Act. Questions were designed to gather data on a variety of topics, including the process used to identify SRDs, challenges or successes with this process, additional guidance and support which might be needed, and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Inventory topics focused on assessment use and changes in assessment over time.

According to responses to the LEP inventory, there were at least twenty interim assessments in use by school districts in the 2020-21 school year (Exhibit 6). Amplify Education/Cambium Learning: DIBELS Next and IDEL was the most used interim assessment (n = 80 districts in 2020-2021 school year), followed by NWEA Map Growth which was used by 62 districts in 2020-2021. Other popular interim assessments include Renaissance Learning: Star Reading, Amplify Education: DIBELS 8th edition, Renaissance Learning: Early Star Learning, Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Adequate Progress (MAP) and the Measure of Adequate Progress Primary Grade (MPG).

Exhibit 6. Number of Districts Reporting Interim Assessments in Use, by School Year

Interim Assessment	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Amplify Education: DIBELS 8th Edition	39	38	35	38
Amplify/Cambium Learning: DIBELS Next and IDEL	83	82	84	80
Curriculum Advantage Inc.: Classworks Reading/ English Language Arts Universal Screener	1	1	1	1
Curriculum Associates: i-Ready	18	17	19	21
FastBridge Learning: FAST Early Reading English (k-1) FAST CBMreading English (1-3)	2	3	2	2
Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST): Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST)	4	5	5	5
Greenwood Publishing DBA Heinemann: Benchmark Assessment System and Sistema de Evaluacion de la Lectura	2	1	1	
Istation: ISIP ER and ISIP Spanish	7	10	10	13
Lexia Learning Systems: RAPID Assessment	5	7	9	8
Lexplore: Lexplore	1	1	1	2
Northwest Evaluation Association: Measure of Adequate Progress (MAP) and the Measure of Adequate Progress Primary Grade (MPG)	22	21	20	21
NWEA: Map Growth	61	59	58	62
NWEA: NWEA Map Reading Fluency	17	16	19	20
PALS Marketplace: Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening PALS and PALS Espanol	10	10	9	10
Pearson: Aimsweb English	12	12	12	11
Pearson: Development Reading Assessment 2nd Edition DRA2 and Evaluacion del Desarrollo de la Lectura Segunda Edicion (ELD2)	7	5	5	5
Renaissance Learning: Star Early Learning	26	26	28	27
Renaissance Learning: Star Reading	34	33	37	35
Riverside Insight: easyCBM	1	2	1	1
Riverside Insight: Iowa Assessment			1	1

Note: 151 Districts Accessed the LEP Inventory.
Source: LEP Responses on LEP Inventory.

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Students identified as "red" or "yellow" based on their interim assessment scores are, in most cases, then placed into a progress monitoring sequence where they are administered "diagnostic assessments" to help determine if the student has an SRD, to diagnose the likely causes of the SRD, and to inform instructional strategies to best support that student.

According to the LEP inventory, 11 different diagnostic assessments were in use by school districts during the 2020-2021 school year. Over seventy districts reported using the Voyager Sopris: DIBELS Deep: Phonemic Awareness, Word Reading Decoding, Comprehension, Fluency, and Oral Language. Other popular diagnostic assessments include Renaissance: STAR Early Literacy Assessment and Curriculum Associates: I-ready (Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7. Diagnostic Assessments in Use as Reported by School Districts on the LEP Inventory

Diagnostic Assessment	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Curriculum Associates : I-ready	18	17	21	24
Heinmann: Benchmark Assessment System	3	2	2	2
McGraw Hill: Acuity	1	1	1	1
Northwest Evaluation Association : Chidren's Progress Academic Assessment CPAA	4	5	5	4
PALS Marketplace: Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) and PALS Espanol	11	10	10	9
Pearson : DRA2	9	6	4	4
Pearson : Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test	4	4	4	4
Pearson : Woodcock Reading Mastery Test 3rd Edition (VRMT-III)	5	6	5	6
Renaissance : STAR Early Literacy Assessment	33	33	35	38
Riverside Insight: Woodcock Munoz LS (English and Spanish)	3	3	3	4
Voyager Sopris: DIBELS Deep: Phonemic Awareness, Word Reading Decoding, Comprehension, Fluency, Oral Language)	77	74	72	73

Note: 151 Districts Accessed the LEP Inventory.
Source: LEP Responses on LEP Inventory.

Typically, progress monitoring occurs over an 8-10 week period, with diagnostic assessments administered every 2-3 weeks. After each assessment is administered, classroom teachers and reading interventionists (when such

staffing exists at a school) review the diagnostic assessment data and attempt to design instructional interventions to address the student's reading challenges. These interventions typically take place during small group instruction or during pull-out time from the classroom. If, at the end of this progress monitoring period, assessment data show that the student's reading ability has not made sufficient growth, then the student is typically diagnosed as having an SRD, and the process commences for creating a READ Plan.

One approach to the SRD identification process that has developed over the past several years is a "body of evidence" approach which school leaders indicate is supported by CDE. This approach attempts to use a more holistic method of identifying the existence of an SRD. This includes not only use of diagnostic assessment data, but also teacher-generated formative and summative assessments, as well as teacher and reading interventionists' professional judgement based on working closely with each student.

Challenges, Opportunities, and Lessons Learned

A key challenge with regard to SRD designation is the **need to ensure that teachers have the training to properly diagnose the particular literacy challenges each student faces.** Developing this capacity requires that teachers and other staff in schools have the training to correctly administer interim and diagnostic assessments and to use the resulting data to properly identify and diagnose SRDs. School leaders report that teacher hires who are new to the profession typically are not adequately trained to diagnose SRDs.

Another challenge raised – particularly during site visits in districts with larger numbers of students who are English Learners – is **a concern with improperly diagnosing EL students as having an SRD**. School leaders in these districts report that often students whose primary language is not English may struggle to read not because they have an SRD, but because they are attempting to read in a language that is not spoken regularly at home. These

leaders indicate treating EL students the same as native English speakers for purposes of the READ Act can trigger a demoralizing and counterproductive process for students, their parents, and their teachers. This is because the SRD designation is viewed by some students and their families as a stigma. From the district's perspective, it is important to receive the added per-pupil funding that is provided under the READ Act to fund added supports for EL students who are struggling to read in English. However, school and district leaders struggle with giving an SRD designation to those EL students whose reading challenges are language-based. School leaders also indicate the need for additional approved assessment tools that can assess students in their native languages.

School and district leaders during site visits were very supportive of the option to use a "body of evidence" to make student SRD determinations. These leaders express a belief that providing space for educators to take a more wholistic approach to assessing student literacy needs is appropriate and respects the professional judgement of those education professionals who work closest with students. School leaders also indicated that using this approach requires added time and training for teachers to execute effectively.

School leaders consistently report significant challenges to the SRD identification process brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic starting in spring 2020 and continuing through the 2020-21 school year. These include:

1. A lack of reliable and accurate assessment data has impacted teacher ability to properly diagnose students with SRDs during the pandemic. **Data produced through interim and diagnostic assessments administered to students at home during the pandemic are almost universally viewed as less reliable for several reasons**, including:

   - Parents or older siblings may attempt to help the student as they take the assessment, yielding inaccurate results.

- Internet connection quality can vary widely, causing technical difficulties with test administration.
- Distractions in the home impede students' ability to maintain their focus on the assessment.
- Students at home do not always show up for their assigned online assessment, which creates significant pressure on teachers to communicate with parents to arrange assessment times and to ensure the student is present to take the assessment at the arranged time.

2. **Challenges with gathering reliable assessment data are reported to be most pronounced for students living in poverty**. For instance, children in poverty typically have less reliable internet connections or access to reliable computer equipment. Such students may also have less space and opportunity to find a quiet area to take assessments online.

3. Due to the challenges associated with assessing students during the pandemic, **student SRD designation numbers may see significant swings** during the 2020-21 school year.

Site visit school leaders indicate that, as students returned to in-person instruction at various points during fall 2020, assessment data indicate larger numbers of students than in prior school years were scoring in the lowest (red) performance bands. School leaders attribute this significant increase to the shutdown of all in-person instruction in spring 2020. **The pandemic's shutdown of in-person instruction had a particularly negative impact on high poverty students, according to school leaders**. The extent of this impact was not yet fully known at the time of site visit interviews (fall 2020 and early winter 2021) since schools were in the process of administering more reliable, in-person assessments as students returned to school.

6

Development and Implementation of READ Plans

Site visits included a discussion at each site of the process for creating student Read Plans as required under the READ Act. Questions were designed to gather data on a variety of topics, including how READ plans are developed, which school or district staff are primarily responsible, how parents are involved in the process, and any challenges, successes, or lessons learned.

- **READ Plans are typically created by classrooms teachers with the support of other school staff**

- **Schools with consistent staff support (e.g., reading interventionist or coach) tend to indicate there is higher consistency and fidelity to READ Plan development and process**

- **Parent involvement in the process is critical to the success and effectiveness of READ Plans**

- **READ Plan development is perceived to be compliance oriented, duplicative, or burdensome at times**

Most, if not all students in site visit schools who are identified as having an SRD are placed on a READ plan. Typically, each student's grade level classroom teacher is the staff member primarily responsible for READ Plan design and implementation. Classroom teachers receive varying degrees of support in this process from reading interventionists, school-level coaches, or school administrators, with support focused on assisting the classroom teacher in identifying the most appropriate instructional strategies for addressing the student's particular needs. Coaching or reading interventionist support can play an important, positive role. In fact, **schools where consistent staff support was provided to classroom teachers in creating READ Plans – such as through a reading interventionist or coach – tend to indicate there is higher consistency and fidelity to the process across classrooms and grade levels**.

> Site visits included a discussion at each site of the process for creating student Read Plans as required under the READ Act. Questions were designed to gather data on a variety of topics, including how READ plans are developed, which school or district staff are primarily responsible, how parents are involved in the process.

READ Plans are typically created starting in the mid- to late-fall, after teachers have had the opportunity to: 1) administer reading assessments to students near the beginning of the school year; 2) progress monitor those students whose initial assessment results indicate a potential SRD; 3) administer diagnostic assessments to zero-in on the particular reading challenges that each student faces; and 4) discuss data with reading interventionists, coaches, or other colleagues to make a final determination on SRD status and the appropriate focus of the student's READ Plan. READ Plans in most site visit schools are loaded into an online platform such as the Alpine, Infinite Campus, or other district-selected data management system. Schools and districts give mixed reviews of the ease which READ Plan components can be entered into these existing online platforms.

Once a draft READ Plan is created, teachers in most schools then utilize fall parent-teacher conferences to discuss the plan's content, to review the assessment data which informed the plan's design, and to discuss with parents the intended instructional strategies that will be used to meet the student's needs. Teachers also use the parent conferences – including follow-up conferences in the spring – to discuss opportunities and strategies for parents to support their student at home. Teachers in some schools report they would benefit from additional guidance or a set of specific, suggested strategies to offer parents – beyond simply reading to their child at home – that more effectively support their child's literacy development at home.

The level of parent capacity to attend conferences with teachers and to support students at home can vary significantly across schools. However, **parent involvement in the process is viewed as a critical element to the success and effectiveness of READ Plans, and strong parent involvement and support at home can greatly enhance overall impact.**

School leaders indicate that READ Plans often do not automatically follow students with SRDs who were previously served in another Colorado school district. Instead, school leaders sometimes must specifically request such plans be provided by the prior district, which can be time consuming. Many school leaders and staff, however, also indicate a preference for "starting over from scratch" with any new student who arrives at the school with an SRD, which includes administering assessments, reviewing data, and creating a new READ Plan for that student. This preference for re-starting the READ Plan creation process for new students who were served in other districts appears to be driven by each school's desire to diagnose student needs using assessments most familiar to the school's staff. Likewise, school leaders express a preference for creating READ Plan intervention strategies tailored particularly to the instructional curricula and programs in their school (which may differ from the curricula and programs in place at the student's prior school).

Challenges, Opportunities, or Lessons Learned

A key challenge with regard to READ Plan development is the need to ensure that teachers have the capacity, support, and training to identify the most appropriate instructional strategies available to meet each student's specific literacy challenges. This requires that teachers and reading interventionists not only are able to use diagnostic assessments to appropriately identify student reading deficiencies, but that they are then able to translate accurate diagnoses into actionable READ Plan goals and strategies. Some districts or schools have created strategy "crosswalks" to facilitate teacher alignment of READ Plan goals with common reading deficiency areas.

A common challenge heard across site visits was that, while READ Plans have some utility for teachers, **the process of creating the Plans is viewed as "compliance-oriented," added paperwork that can be time consuming and administratively burdensome.** Teachers, coaches, interventionists, and school leaders often do not view the time investment required to create READ Plan documentation as proportional to the added value that such documentation produces in the classroom.

In some cases, school leaders indicate the content of READ Plans are viewed by their staff as duplicative with other required documentation. Such duplicative documentation could include overlaps with Individualized Education Plans required for students in special education who often also have SRDs, or with school-level planning documents that teachers are asked to create as part of district or school-level Response to Intervention (RTI) programs.

Another challenge frequently cited is a lack of clarity in terms of how best to exit students from READ Plans once such plans are created. Leaders from multiple site visit schools indicated that once students are assigned a READ Plan, they often remain on the plan year after year. These leaders indicate that clearer criteria for exiting students from plans, and more training or

support for teachers and reading interventionists would be valuable to help create more consistency in the process for exiting students off their READ Plans.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted READ Plan development and implementation in several ways. Most notably, online assessment is universally viewed as less reliable and effective. The pandemic also in some cases caused delays in delivering the assessments. The lack of timely and reliable assessment data impacted the ability of teachers and literacy leaders in schools to appropriately diagnose student needs and to design appropriate intervention strategies in READ Plans. The pandemic also negatively impacted the ability of teachers to meet with parents to discuss the content of READ Plans, and to outline how parents could best support READ Plan goals with activities at home.

Student Outcomes

7

Data on K-3 student SRD status and student third grade English Language Arts (ELA) scores on the Colorado Measures of Academic Success assessment (CMAS) helps to document the rates at which students were diagnosed with an SRD, the rates at which students moved off of an SRD designation, and the extent to which CMAS proficiency rates differed between SRD and non-SRD students.

- **The overall SRD rate consistently increased as students progressed toward third grade, with more students diagnosed with an SRD each year than were moved off of an SRD designation.**

- **Nearly all of the students who are identified with an SRD do not achieve proficiency in third grade on the CMAS ELA.**

- **The evaluation team recommends convening a psychometric panel in Year 2 of the evaluation to inform CDE and the evaluation team as to how to best operationalize growth to standard.**

Changes in Students' SRD Status

The total number of students identified with SRD each year has varied between 38,000 – 41,000 annually (Exhibit 8). That said, the total number masks movement in and out of SRD status, as described below.

Exhibit 8. Statewide K-3 Student SRD Status, by School Year

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Yes	38,228	40,533	39,612	41,002
No	214,802	218,246	215,495	209,908
NA	3,655	3,972	4,248	3,910
Grand Total	256,685	262,751	259,355	254,820

Annually, around 12,000 - 13,000 students move from not having an SRD designation to having one while around 8,000 who have an SRD designation are determined to no longer have an SRD designation (Exhibit 9).[11]

Exhibit 9. Students Moving Between SRD Designations

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
No SRD to Yes SRD	12,204	12,893	12,015	12,515
Yes SRD to No SRD	7,626	7,728	8,353	7,263
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
No SRD to Yes SRD	4.8%	4.9%	4.6%	4.9%
Yes SRD to No SRD	3.0%	2.9%	3.2%	2.9%

The number of students who continue to have an SRD designation from one year to the next has increased annually, from 16,205 in 2015-16 to over 18,000 in 2018-19 (Exhibit 10). From the 2015-16 school year to the 2018-19 school year, the overall number of K-3 students who retained their SRD designation rose by about one percentage point, while the number of students who maintained a "No SRD" status remained largely unchanged.

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[11] This figure excludes students' first instance in the dataset (approximately 30% of students each year, mostly Kindergarteners), as there is no prior year for comparison.

Exhibit 10. Students Maintaining Same SRD Status from Prior Year

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Remained Exempt	1,001	1,021	806	972
Remained No SRD	140,865	137,632	141,984	139,482
Remained Yes SRD	16,205	16,945	17,896	18,264
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Remained Exempt	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%
Remained No SRD	54.9%	52.4%	54.7%	54.7%
Remained Yes SRD	6.3%	6.4%	6.9%	7.2%

Examining SRD rates by cohort can provide a longitudinal perspective on the reading abilities of a specific group of students. **A cohort analysis of student SRD status indicates that the overall SRD rate consistently increased as students progressed toward third grade, with more students diagnosed with an SRD each year than were moved off of an SRD designation.** Exhibits 11 through 14 each follow a cohort of students from their Kindergarten year onward, tracking annual SRD status and any change in status from the previous year. For example, the first bar in Exhibit 11 depicts the 2014-15 SRD status for the 15,012 students in the READ assessment dataset who started Kindergarten in 2014. The subsequent bars show the annual SRD status rates for this *same* group of students as they progress to first, then second, then third grade across the years (some students in the dataset may repeat grades). The lines connecting each bar indicate how many students moved from one status category to another or remained in the same status category. Each of the four cohorts examined expresses the same pattern of an SRD rate that increases as students move toward third grade, suggesting that, while some students do improve their reading performance and test out of the SRD designation, more students each year are falling behind and acquiring or maintaining an SRD designation.

Exhibit 11. SRD Status of 2014-15 Kindergarten Cohort (starting n = 15,012)
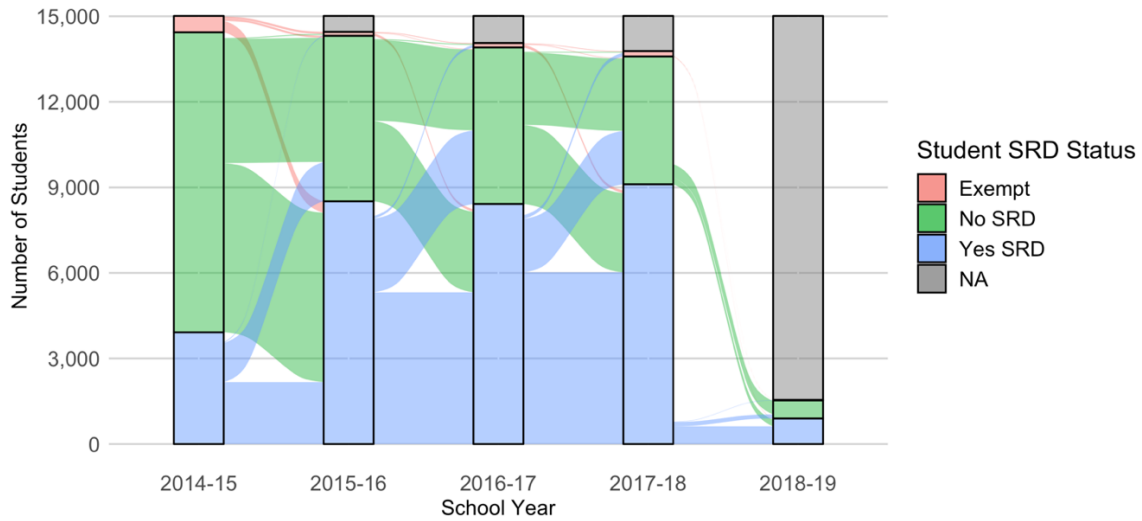
Exhibit 12. SRD Status of 2015-16 Kindergarten Cohort (starting n = 14,186)
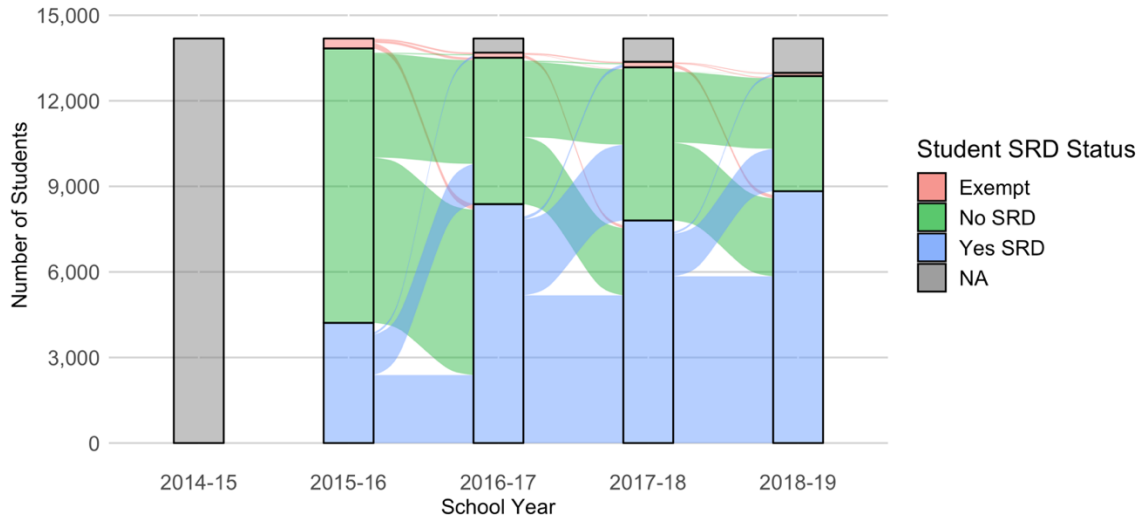
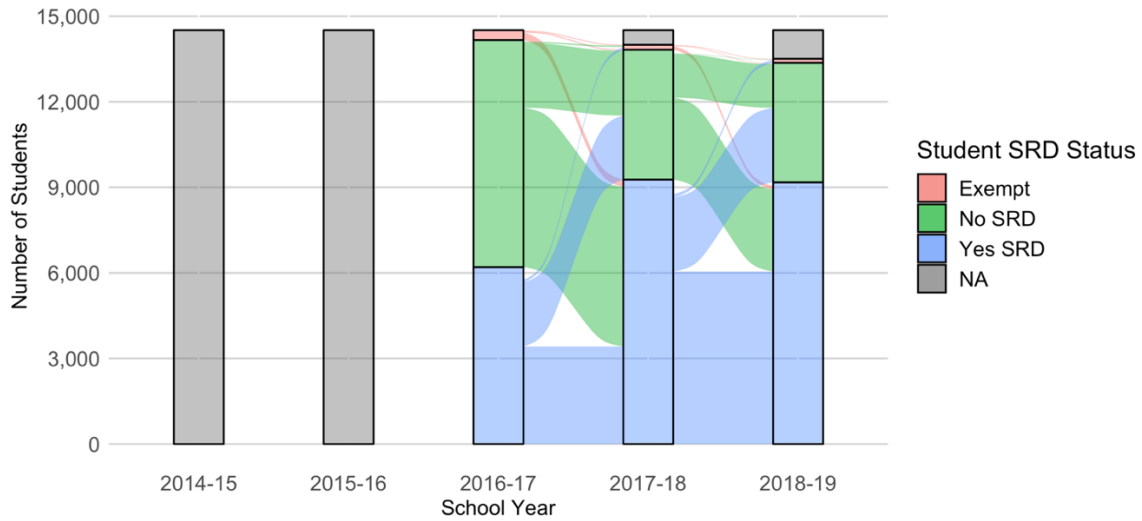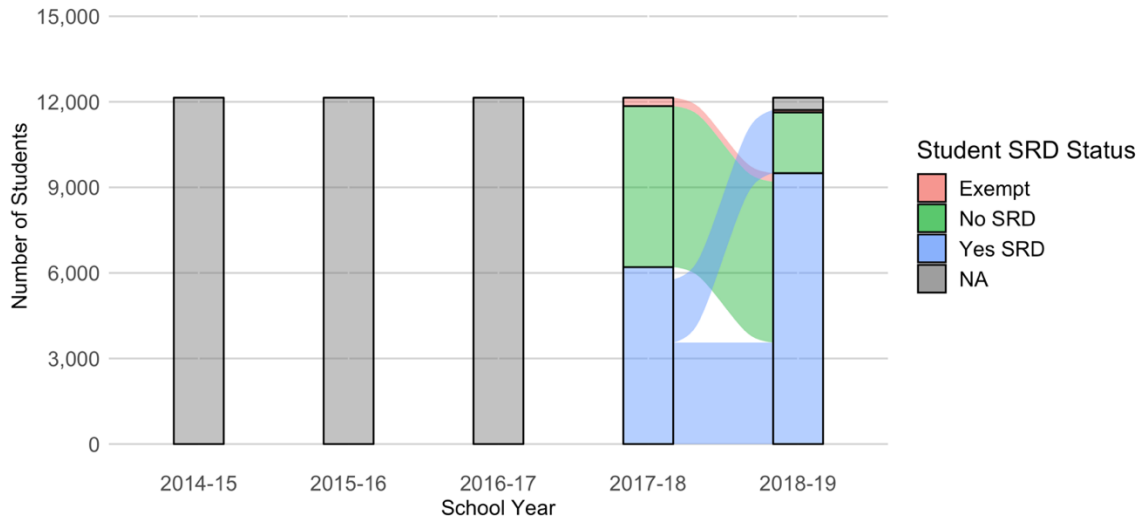*Exhibit 13. SRD Status of 2016-17 Kindergarten Cohort (starting n = 14,511)*

Exhibit 14. SRD Status of 2017-18 Kindergarten Cohort (starting n = 12,143)

Colorado Measure of Academic Success (CMAS) Proficiency and Significant Reading Deficiency Status

Students first take the Colorado Measure of Academic Success (CMAS) assessment in third grade, the final year in which interim READ assessments are given. Since the goal of the READ Act is to identify struggling readers and provide them with the supports they need to read proficiently by the end of third

grade, third grade CMAS scores provide one way to gauge the extent to which early literacy interventions are moving students toward third-grade proficiency. Annually, fewer than 1,000 students who ever had an SRD designation achieve third-grade CMAS English Language Arts (ELA) proficiency (Exhibit 15). That is, **nearly all of the students who are identified with an SRD do not achieve proficiency in third grade on the CMAS ELA**. Among students who never receive an SRD designation, over half meet or exceed proficiency levels on third grade CMAS ELA.

Exhibit 15. Third-grade English Language Arts CMAS Proficiency by SRD Status

		2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Never SRD	Approached, Did Not Yet Meet, or Partially Met Expectations	29,097	27,212	22,962	22,166	20,543
	Met or Exceeded Expectations	23,763	22,562	24,957	24,806	24,242
Ever SRD	Approached, Did Not Yet Meet, or Partially Met Expectations	9,417	11,935	14,758	15,222	14,805
	Met or Exceeded Expectations	67	157	397	562	683

Students who have been identified as having an SRD achieve third-grade ELA proficiency at rates far below their peers who have never been diagnosed with an SRD (Exhibit 9). Less than 5% of students who have ever been identified with an SRD achieve grade-level ELA proficiency on CMAS in third grade, while about half of their non-SRD peers do. However, the proficiency rate for this group has risen steadily over the past five years.

Exhibit 9. CMAS Reading Proficiency Rate* for Students Identified with an SRD

Year	CMAS ELA Proficiency Rate
2014-15	0.71%
2015-16	1.30%
2016-17	2.62%
2017-18	3.56%
2018-19	4.41%

*Expressed as the percent of third grade students who have at any time been diagnosed with an SRD and who "Met or Exceeded Expectations" on the CMAS English Language Arts assessment, divided by the total number of third grade students who have at any time been diagnosed with an SRD.

Growth to Standard

Key questions driving this evaluation include to what extent do students identified with significant reading deficiencies (SRD) achieve significant growth to standard, and what are the most effective processes, procedures, methods, and strategies that lead to students with SRDs making significant growth to standard. The revised READ Act of 2019 requires the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to define "sufficient…growth to standard" over time for students identified as reading below grade level or with SRDs. The definition of growth to standard is: progress (change over time) that puts a student on a path to adequately demonstrate proficiency by the end of third grade.

CDE worked with the Central Regional Educational Laboratory (REL Central) to define a way to measure growth to standard. In December 2020, CDE decided to rely on a projection model to measure growth to standard. In the projection model, assessment scores from the previous cohort are used to develop predictions of how a student with a particular score in an early grade will score in later grades.[12] Scores from previous cohorts of students who have

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[12] Castellano, K. E., & Ho, A. D. (2013). A Practitioner's Guide to Growth Models . Council of Chief State School Officers. Available from https://scholar.harvard.edu/andrewho/publications/practitioners-guide-growth-models.

completed the future grade of interest (in this case, third grade) are used in regression models to predict the relationship between test scores in earlier grades and in third grade. Those predictions are then applied to the current cohort to predict their third-grade test score. The predicted future score is compared to the proficiency cut score. If the comparison is at or above the cut score, then the student is said to be meeting growth to progress. If the predicted score is below the proficiency cut score, then the student is said to not be meeting growth to standard.

One challenge in Colorado is that there are multiple K-2 reading assessments in use by school districts (see Exhibit 6, above). According to responses to the LEP survey conducted between November 2020 and April 2021, there were at least ten interim assessment systems in use by a minimum of eleven school districts in the 2020-21 school year. Furthermore, there were ten other assessments that were in use by only a few school districts. However, LEPs responding to the survey indicated that there were only two summative assessments in use – Curriculum Associates: i-Ready and Northwest Evaluation Association: MAP for Primary Grade. Each of these assessment systems measures reading at grade level[13] differently and uses different scales. Furthermore, school districts may change assessment systems, especially in years when CDE reviews assessment systems. Given the current assessment system, we recommend the convening of a psychometric panel to aid CDE and the evaluation with determining whether growth to standard can be measured and, if so, then develop how the evaluation can compute growth to standard.

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[13] Note that reading at grade level applies to kindergarten through second grade, while grade level proficiency applies to third grade and beyond. Test vendors define K-2 reading at grade level for each of their assessments and there are not requirements that these definitions and metrics be consistent. CDE established grade level proficiency cut scores on the state CMAS assessments.
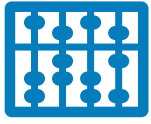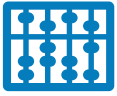
Conclusions

8

In this first year of the evaluation of the Colorado READ Act, we can report that schools and districts value the READ Act and have taken many efforts to implement it. These efforts include greater literacy instructional time for all students using various strategies; a data-driven MTSS approach for struggling readers; and greater emphasis on attempts to hire teachers who are well-versed in the scientifically based reading components.

- **Instructional coaches, reading specialists, and other personnel dedicated to supporting reading instruction and interventions are crucial to training and supporting classroom teachers. However, these positions are difficult to maintain in the absence of additional grant funding.**

- **Schools and districts report the need for additional support in identifying specific needs and literacy strategies for English learners.**

- **Fewer than five percent of students identified with a significant reading deficiency (SRD) achieve third-grade proficiency on the Colorado Measure of Academic Success English Language Arts assessment.**

In this first year of the evaluation of the Colorado READ Act, we can report that schools and districts value the READ Act and have taken efforts to implement it. These efforts include greater literacy instructional time for all students using various strategies; a data-driven MTSS approach for struggling readers; and greater emphasis on attempts to hire teachers who are well-versed in the scientifically based reading components. School and district leaders appreciate the identification of curricular and reading intervention programs, assessments, and professional development programs that have a research base to support their use. Despite these, however, **fewer than five percent of students identified with a significant reading deficiency (SRD) achieve third-grade proficiency on the Colorado Measure of Academic Success (CMAS) English Language Arts (ELA) assessment.** Patterns of SRD designation indicate that more students are identified with SRD than are removed from that designation each year.

School interviews identified several challenges that schools and districts face. Primary among these challenges are several human capital-related issues. **Schools and districts report that, while they would like to recruit teachers who are well-versed in the science of reading, these teachers are hard to find; neither new graduates of schools of education nor experienced teachers possess the deep understanding of reading needed.** As a result, schools and districts must expend significant resources to train and support newly hired teachers even if they had already taught reading in another school or district (given the plethora of available instructional and intervention programs). To sustain those training efforts, school leaders indicated the important of instructional coaches, reading specialists, and other personnel dedicated to supporting reading instruction and interventions. The funding needed for these positions and for in-depth professional development required is beyond the means of most districts and schools. The Early Literacy Grants are valued for their ability to support these activities but are difficult to sustain once the grant ends.

- *Given these challenges, we recommend that Year 2 of the evaluation include an additional focus on the effective human capital strategies to effectively recruit, train, and retain key instructional personnel as well as to sustain existing investments supported by per-pupil and ELG funding.*

An additional challenge that the virtual site visits identified is that of the needs of English learners (ELs). **Schools and districts report needing more information about correct identification procedures – that is, when is it appropriate to identify an EL with an SRD and how to correctly attribute challenges with reading to language unfamiliarity or to reading deficiencies.** Furthermore, schools and districts indicated that they need better understanding how to address the needs of ELs with SRDs. Currently schools use dual language approaches, co-teaching models, and other strategies to serve EL students. Additional guidance on the efficacy of these approaches and key implementation considerations would be valuable.

- *Given these challenges, we recommend that Year 2 of the evaluation include a specific focus on the EL experience as it relates to READ Act implementation.*

Additionally, there are multiple K-2 reading assessments in use by school districts and each of these assessment systems measures reading at grade level differently and uses different scales. Furthermore, school districts may change assessment systems, especially in years when CDE reviews assessment systems. Thus, **schools and districts as well as the state may struggle to effectively growth to standard**.

- *Given these challenges, we recommend convening a psychometric panel consisting of experts from WestEd, CDE, school districts, and test vendors in Year 2 of the evaluation to inform CDE and the evaluation team as to how to best operationalize growth to standard.*

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Appendix 1: The Foundations of Scientifically Based Reading

Decades of research have demonstrated the importance of reading proficiency in the early elementary grades. Around third grade, students transition from developing foundational reading skills ("learning to read"), to using reading as a tool for acquiring information ("reading to learn") (Adams, 1990). These early years are a critical time for intervening to support struggling readers, since students who do not have the ability to read independently by third grade are at risk of falling behind academically in subsequent grades. Longitudinal studies have shown that students with low reading test scores in third grade are less likely to complete high school (Lloyd, 1978), failing to graduate on time at a rate four times higher than their proficient peers (Hernandez, 2012).

Recognizing the importance of reading in the early grades, the United States Congress asked the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development to establish a National Reading Panel (NRP) that would perform a comprehensive and informed synthesis of the research around effective methods for teaching children to read. In 2000, the 14-member Panel released its report, identifying five instructional components that are essential for early-grade reading development: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension (Langenberg et al., 2000). In a minority view included with the report, Panel member Joanne Yatvin cautioned Congress in interpreting the NRP findings as definitive, claiming that the scope of topics that NRP examined was biased and narrow, and that the Panel had neither the time nor resources to conduct analyses with the rigor required to answer their research questions with certainty. Still, the NRP findings have had substantial influence on both policy and practice, as the five essential components of reading have become widely accepted as best practices in reading instruction.

Following the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001, and its emphasis on increased instructional time for reading, numerous funding and

policy initiatives emerged aimed at raising early-grade reading proficiency rates. At the federal level, Reading First provided roughly one billion dollars in grants each year from 2002 through 2008 to support the instructional practices recommended by the NRP (US Department of Education, 2015). At the state level, at least 26 states have passed reading laws since 2000 that are aimed at promoting financial support, accountability measures, procedural requirements, and interventions that will improve third grade reading proficiency rates (Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes, 2019). Most of these laws reference or require "scientifically based" reading instruction, interventions, and curricula, although by the time many of these laws were passed the five essential components of reading had already been adopted by major publishers and teacher training programs in response to the NRP Report (Herlihy et al., 2009).

With the proliferation of curricula, interventions, teacher professional development programs, and assessments centered around these five essential components has come a large body of empirical research aimed at determining the efficacy of targeting these components. In fact, there have been so many studies on early reading instruction and intervention, that researchers have been able to conduct meta-analyses, whereby the authors attempt to identify all high-quality studies on a given topic and use statistical modeling to produce a more accurate impact estimate than any one study alone could provide. What follows is a short summary of recent meta-analytic findings on each of the five essential components of reading for Pre-K through third grade students.

Phonemic Awareness. Phonemic awareness – the ability to notice, distinguish, and manipulate the individual sounds in spoken words (Liberman et al., 1974) (e.g., the word "juice" has three phonemes, "j-," "ooo", and "sss") – is a strong predictor of students' later reading abilities (e.g., Share et al., 1984; Snider, 1997). Research indicates that explicit instruction on phonemic awareness is highly effective in promoting the development of the skill itself, and leads to moderate improvements in reading overall (Bus & Van Ijzendoorn, 1999; Ehri, Nunes, Willows, et al., 2001). Longitudinal studies have shown that

interventions focused specifically on supporting phonemic awareness were found to have lasting impacts on student reading proficiency, showing a greater effect one year after the end of the interventions than interventions focused more on phonics (Suggate, 2016).

Phonics. Phonics is an instructional approach where students learn to sound out and blend letters in order to decode a word (which is a different skill than understanding what that word means). Explicit and systematic teaching of phonics has been shown to improve student decoding, spelling, and comprehension to a statistically greater degree than instruction without a focus on phonics (Ehri, Nunes, Stahl, et al., 2001; Jeynes, 2008). Research on phonics instruction specifically for low-performing readers similarly finds systematic phonics instruction to improve reading outcomes (Mcarthur et al., 2018). Explicit phonics instruction was found to have a smaller effect over time than instruction focusing on phonemic awareness and comprehension (Suggate, 2016).

Fluency. Fluency refers to the relative degree of ease and automaticity with which letters are understood as words, words are understood for their meaning, and comprehension of a subject is derived from that meaning (Wolf & Katzir-Cohen, 2009). At higher levels of reading fluency, mental attention can be devoted to comprehension rather than the mechanics of reading, and fluency is therefore considered a critical link between word analysis and text comprehension. The developmental definition of fluency makes it difficult to study empirically, and evidence around the effectiveness of interventions and approaches to support fluency is mixed. There is some evidence that repeated reading and the modeling of reading (either in person, or via audiobook) can improve fluency and comprehension (Chard et al., 2002; Stevens et al., 2017), but more rigorous empirical research is needed to understand how to best improve reading fluency in the early grades.

Vocabulary. Understanding text requires the construction of meaning from known words (Kamil, 2004), making vocabulary an important component of reading comprehension. There is strong consensus that size of a student's

vocabulary is predictive of how well they will understand what they read (e.g., Scarborough, 2001). Recent research indicates that interventions supporting vocabulary development are effective in improving expressive and receptive vocabulary (Marulis & Neuman, 2010). There is evidence that such interventions are also effective in improving comprehension of texts aligned with the intervention, but there are fewer studies finding that these interventions improve generalized reading comprehension (Elleman et al., 2009; Wright & Cervetti, 2017). Multidimensional approaches to learning words (e.g., providing contextual information around a set of words) tend to have a stronger impact on student reading comprehension than instruction focused on definitions (Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986; Wright & Cervetti, 2017).

Text comprehension. Text comprehension is the overall goal of reading instruction and occurs when students can process the text they read, derive meaning from it, and integrate that meaning with what they already know. Gough and Tunmer's (1986) influential model of reading comprehension describes successful reading comprehension as dependent upon two foundational components: decoding and linguistic comprehension. Others have argued that fluency is a third critical component for supporting text comprehension (Joshi & Aaron, 2000; Solari et al., 2018). While some meta-analytic reviews show that decoding (García & Cain, 2014) and linguistic comprehension are each important predictors of reading comprehension, others found the effects to be small or inconclusive (Mcarthur et al., 2018). Part of the challenge in studying the effect of foundational components on reading comprehension is that the most important components for reading change with students' age. In elementary school, for example, reading ability is largely based on print knowledge and phonological awareness, whereas in middle school reading accuracy and linguistic comprehension play a larger role in overall comprehension (Storch & Whitehurst, 2002). It is not surprising then that studies show interventions focused on phonemic awareness to be most appropriate for students entering elementary school, interventions focused on phonics and fluency to have greatest effects in

first and second grade, and interventions targeting comprehension overall to be most effective for third grade and beyond (Suggate, 2016).

Effective reading comprehension is dependent upon a complex and not entirely understood network of foundational skills that shift in their importance with a student's age and individual learning needs. In other words, when it comes to reading instruction one size does not fit all – and certain groups that have historically struggled with reading in the early grades require support and intervention beyond the typical reading curriculum. Effective reading instruction for ELs and students with disabilities, for example, shares many elements of reading instruction for proficient readers, but also includes additional practices and supports for these groups. Research shows that ELs benefit from frequent and intentional instruction focused on oral language development – in other words, including modifications and support to ensure that students understand the words and concepts they read (Goldenberg, 2020). Additionally, multiple systematic reviews of research have found that models focused on simultaneously strengthening students' home language and their English skills have been more effective than models that focus on English alone (Greene, 1998; Slavin & Cheung, 2005). Consequently, we would expect effective reading instruction for young ELs to include modifications that help them understand a language that is new to them, likely by utilizing native language supports or bilingual resources. While students with disabilities comprise a heterogenous group with different challenges and needs, research has shown certain instructional strategies to benefit reading outcomes for many students in this group, including sustained multi-year interventions, one-one-one or small group instruction, systematic instruction on foundational reading components, and abundant opportunities for practice and feedback (Berkeley et al., 2010; Vaughn & Wanzek, 2014). We would expect effective reading instruction for young students with disabilities to incorporate personalized, targeted reading interventions that allow for supported practice of foundational skills.

Despite efforts to tailor instruction and improve reading outcomes for at-risk groups like ELs and students with disabilities, national reading outcomes for these groups have not improved in the last decade: on average, ELs and students with disabilities in fourth grade score far below even the "Basic" reading benchmark as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). Unfortunately, race and socioeconomic background are also predictors of student reading ability. While White and Asian students' fourth grade reading scores have hovered at or around the NAEP "Proficient" benchmark, Black and Hispanic students' scores fall around or below the NAEP "Basic" benchmark. Students who are not classified as economically disadvantaged tend to score near the NAEP "Proficient" benchmark, while students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds score, on average, around the NAEP "Basic" benchmark. These disparities in early elementary reading scores are alarming and the achievement gaps are not narrowing, underscoring the need for effective instruction and resources that work specifically to support at-risk groups.

Even with an ever-expanding body of research on reading mechanics and instructional best practices, most large-scale early literacy interventions have not produced the desired positive impacts on student reading achievement. Only a handful of rigorous impact evaluations have been conducted for large federal and state level reading initiatives, and they present mostly similar findings: some impact on instructional practices, but no impact on student reading performance. Following the Reading First funding initiative, for example, the Department of Education commissioned a study to examine the impact of Reading First on student reading proficiency. While the study found that teachers in Reading First schools received more professional development for reading instruction and spent more instructional minutes on the five essential components of reading, no impact on student reading performance was detected (Gamse et al., 2008). More recently, North Carolina State University evaluated the impact of the state's Read to Achieve program, aimed at grade-level reading mastery for all third-grade

students. The study found no significant impacts on student reading achievement for students altogether, or for demographic subgroups (e.g., low income students or students with a disability) (Weiss et al., 2018).

One exception to these interventions which seemingly failed to impact student reading performance is Oregon's Reading First program, implemented from 2003 through 2009, which was shown by a rigorous multi-year evaluation to have improved student reading scores for students in kindergarten through third grade (Baker et al., 2007). This comprehensive evaluation analyzed data from three different cohorts of students over three years. A staggered implementation rollout (i.e., the first cohort began their Reading First activities in Year 1, the second cohort began in Year 2, etc.) allowed researchers to examine not only year-to-year impact, but also to analyze the magnitude of impact as schools became more experienced with the intervention. The Oregon Reading First evaluation found that schools receiving Reading First funding were more effective in improving student reading outcomes each year they implemented the intervention – in other words, they got better with experience. This finding is consistent with literature on effective educational interventions that has found consistent, sustained interventions to produce impacts of greater magnitude than short interventions (Borman & D'Agostino, 1996). These findings suggest evaluations of state reading policies and programs may need to be focused on longer-term outcomes in order to identify impacts on student reading performance.

Appendix 2: READ Act Resources

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) has provided a number of resources and tools to schools and districts to aid in the successful implementation of the READ Act. Resource formats include professional development, evaluation tools, standards, best practices, fact sheets, and communication guides, among other tools. Specifically, the CDE website includes the following resources:

- **Incorporating the Science of Reading**[14] is a comprehensive reading program that incorporates five essential components: phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. The state has developed several resources to support this program.

- The **Colorado Literacy Framework**[15] defines the parameters for a consistent understanding and approach to literacy among Colorado's educators. The framework presents research-based instructional approaches to foster communication skills (including oral and written language) and promote access, opportunity, and academic achievement.

- The **Elementary Teacher Literacy Standards**[16] are part of the Elementary Education Endorsement (K-6) outlined in the Colorado State Board of Education Rules. In 2016, the endorsement was updated in the State Board Rules to ensure alignment to both to the Colorado Academic Standards as well as the Reading to Ensure Academic Success Act (READ Act). The Elementary Teacher Literacy Standards describe practices and competencies for all K-6 teachers to teach students to read proficiently.

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[14]https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/resources

[15]https://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/documents/coloradoliteracy/clp/downloads/coloradoliteracyframework.pdf

[16]https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/elementaryteacher-literacystandards

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- The **Knowledge Base**[17] provides a centralized source of information on literacy. This includes an overview of the science of reading, a webinar on reading acquisition, a guide to foundational skills for K-3, and several links to professional development resources.

- The **READ Act Communications Toolkit**[18] provides a set of resources designed for district leaders, principals, and teachers to communicate with parents about the Colorado READ Act. All resources can be modified and personalized to meet individual school or district needs. Resources are currently available as fact sheets, videos, drop-in letters, and a sample social media campaign.

- The **READ Act Minimum Skill Competencies**[19] is a set of competencies from the State Board Rules that is used to support classroom instruction and to assist teachers in developing reading goals for students on a READ plan. The READ Act Minimum Reading Competency Skills serve as a guide for the end-of-year skills necessary to indicate that a student is on track for acquiring basic grade-level reading skills. This includes: READ Act Minimum Skill Competencies for grades K-3 from the Colorado Academic Standards and the Minimum Reading Competency Skills matrix for all grades.

CDE also provides a variety of instructional supports[20] that include system- and school-level resources. The Colorado READ Act Rules define attributes for instruction at the universal instruction and targeted intervention levels. These resources can be used to support instruction for all students.

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[17] https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/resources

[18] https://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/tools-readact

[19] https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/resources

[20] https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/resources

Components include a reading universe grid, evaluation tool, tiers of instruction, direct literacy scan, outcomes-driven models, and reading coaches.

Since the onset of COVID-19, CDE also has dedicated a page of resources and guidelines for educators and families.[21] This page includes a Q&A section, school reopening strategies, student assessments, deficiency identification, and a number of other resources.

In addition to instructional and direct impact resources, CDE also provides data under the **Read Act Data Dashboard.**[22] This tool provides state, district, and school literacy financial data.

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[21] https://www.cde.state.co.us/safeschools
[22] https://www.cde.state.co.us/code/readactdashboard

Appendix 3: Data Sources

Data Guidelines and Procedueres

Unless otherwise specified, data analyses followed these guidelines and procedures. Data were received as Excel or comma-separated values (CSV) files and were lightly edited in Excel to remove extraneous rows such as sub-headers. Data were then imported into Stata. All major data manipulations were done in Stata and .do files were produced to document data manipulations and enable replication. Data were cleaned according to a shared set of conventions, which includes guidelines for variable naming and data formatting. Multiple analysts worked on each dataset and reviewed changes to ensure data integrity. Each dataset has an accompanying codebook that documents data values, variable titles, variable labels, and similar elements. Datasets are longitudinal and combine multiple years of data into single files. Preliminary files and codebooks were submitted as part of the Raw Data Deliverable in June 2020. Updated files, including those powering the dashboards to follow in this report, were included in the Raw Data Deliverable in April 2021 and will continue to be updated and submitted throughout the life of the evaluation, although changes will be made annually.

Extant Data

The Common Core of Data enabled the creation of a school-level locale file including every school operating in Colorado between 2014-15 and 2018-19. Analysts combined the datasets into a single contextual data file that included the period 2014-15 through 2019-20, when available. Not all datasets or variables are available at both the school- and district-level for each year; for example, school-level instructional enrollment for some programs is only available from the 2017-18 school year onward, and some race and ethnicity categories changed year to year. Select variables from other datasets were created and added to the contextual files, such as an indicator of whether a school ever received ELG funds.

Each year, CDE collects student-level interim assessment demographic data, including assessment types used to determine student SRD status, scores, and SRD and READ Plan designations. The data span 2013-14 to 2018-19 and include data for students in kindergarten through third grade. However, due to data irregularities in the 2013-14 school year, the first year of data collection for the READ Act, and discussions with CDE, the analysis begins in 2014-15. These data were provided by CDE as a series of year-by-year CSV files. The interim assessment and demographic data were received from CDE and carefully cleaned, using longitudinal codebooks to accurately and consistently name and represent each data element, some of which had changed sources, names, and values over time. For example, the variable indicating a student's gender existed in one source in early years and then changed source midway through the dataset, so a new variable was created to bridge the datasets and contradictory coding values. Many variables add new values over time as, for example, more assessments are used across the state. Year-by-year files were appended into one longitudinal data file.

To evaluate student growth and expand understanding of READ Act interventions' relationship to outcomes, WestEd requested additional data from CDE, in particular student-level data detailing achievement on the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) examination and its alternatives. WestEd requested and received student-level data including but not limited to demographic variables (some of which overlap with the assessment data described above), assessment scores in math and English Language arts, and specific categories of READ Act interventions that students may have received, such as full-day kindergarten and summer school. These data span 2014-15 through 2018-19 and contain students in kindergarten through the third grade. The data were received in a longitudinal CSV file containing multiple years of data. The data were cleaned following the same general procedures described for the interim assessment data. Using the masked student IDs that uniquely identify each student across datasets, these data were merged with the interim

assessment data to create a single student-level longitudinal file describing the characteristics and performance of each student each year. The masked IDs were a perfect match, which is to say that each student present in the interim assessment data was also present in the CMAS data. Overlapping demographic variables between the datasets, such as grade, were checked against one another for consistency and consolidated. Analysts created additional variables to aid analysis- for example, indicators of student movement between districts and schools and more granular categorizations of how students transition between SRD statuses.

School- and district-level data were acquired by aggregating student-level data to show changes throughout the history of the READ Act in assessment use, SRD designation, READ Plan designation, CMAS English Language arts scores, and other indicators of interest to stakeholders. This also allowed for analyses between district- or school-level populations and the sub-population who are tested and belong to the assessment dataset. Masked IDs permit tracking students over time to explore how they transition through SRD and READ Plan statuses.

Inventories of School Districts and Enhanced Literacy Grant Recipients

WestEd received a list of e-mail addresses from CDE and then verified that list through e-mail, telephone, and web searches. The evaluation team began administering the inventories on October 16, 2020 by e-mailing each confirmed respondent a unique link to the inventory (total N surveyed was 174). WestEd sent a reminder e-mail to 162 unfinished respondents on October 23, 2020 and another reminder e-mail to 140 unfinished respondents on October 28, 2020. The evaluation team then sent another reminder on December 14, 2020. On January 29, 2021, the evaluation team submitted a list of nonresponding ELG recipients and LEPs to CDE for final follow-up. Between February 8 and 11, 2021, the ELG Coordinator in CDE followed up with nonresponding ELG recipients. On March 12, 2021, CDE contacted non-responding LEPs. We closed

all surveys on March 23, 2021. Throughout the period, the project coordinator at WestEd fielded e-mail and telephone requests to assist respondents.

Eventually, 151 respondents accessed the LEP inventory and provided some information. Given that the inventory requested retrospective information, the expectation is that accuracy of response declines over time. Under normal circumstances, personnel turnover and recall bias will negatively impact information accuracy. However, administering the inventories during the COVID-19 pandemic as schools and school districts were wrestling with opening and closing decisions and delivering instruction to children through multiple means likely negatively impacted completion of all inventory sections. As a result, throughout this report, we present raw numbers of respondents and caution readers that they should not generalize beyond those counts.

Data source(s)	Enrollment[23]	Race/Ethnicity Distribution[24]	Other enrollments of interest[25]	Mobility Rate[26]	READ Act Funding	Grade Level Distribution of Sample	Race/Ethnicity Distribution of Sample	Free/Reduced Meal Status of Sample	Assessment Usage Percentages	Average Assessment Scores	Student Movement Between SRD Designations	English Language Arts CMAS Proficiency and SRD Status
Publicly Available School Level Pupil Membership Data[27]	X	X	X	X								
READ Act Significant Reading Deficiency and READ Plan Demographic Assessment Data, provided by CDE						X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Colorado Measures of Academic Success English Language Arts Demographic Assessment Data, provided by CDE												X
READ Act Per Pupil Funding data, provided by CDE					X							
Publicly available CDE district revenue[28]					X							

[23] Membership by School and Grade Level (2015-20)

[24] Membership by School, Race/Ethnicity, Gender, Grade (2015-20)

[25] Pupil Membership by Instructional Program (2018-20); Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility by School (2015-20)

[26] School Mobility Rates by Instructional Program Service Type (2015-20)

[27] Data described above are available here: https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/rvprioryearpmdata

File names above are not consistent; they often change slightly by year but can be reasonably matched to the file names found online. When an option was given between K-12 and PK-12 file types, PK-12 was chosen.

[28] Data are available here: https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdefinance/revexp. Annual revenue for the 2019-20 school year was not available at the time these reports were published.

Appendix 4: Site Visit Selection Criteria

Site visit selection in the first year of the evaluation was a two-step data-driven process with a human touch to choose a practical and useful collection of sites to visit. First, analysts ranked schools based on a measure of how many students were moved off SRD designations in the previous three school years (SY 17 to SY 19). Second, analysts created an additional matrix of school-level characteristics in ensure the data selection included a diverse sample of school sites.

The student-level READ Act assessment data provided by CDE enabled analysts to rank schools by calculating the proportion of students that moved off SRD status who were in the same school for at least two years between 2017 and 2019. The aim was to identify those schools who were successful in moving students off SRD status using consistent, sustained set of interventions. Analysts computed proportions for all students as well as for several subsets of interest: ELs, students eligible for free-and-reduced meal (FRLs), and minority (non-white) students. Rates were not calculated if schools had fewer than 10 people in these groups (that is, fewer than 10 students per school with an SRD designation who remained for at least two years, summed across three school years) to increase rate reliability. Schools were percentile-ranked according to these rates. The percentile rankings were averaged for each school to create a single measure of success at moving children out of the SRD designation. It is important to note that the analysts did not assign a value judgement to a school's rate of moving students off SRD status. It is not our view at this time, nor do we have evidence that suggests, that moving students off SRD status more quickly is an indicator of higher quality teaching and learning, student experience, or school success. That is to say, the school rankings should not be considered as a metric to rank "good" or "successful" schools against their lower rank counterparts. It is simply a measurement of movement.

A matrix of school-level characteristics was created and imposed on the ranking data to ensure a diverse set of site visit schools. Data on school-level characteristics came from public sources including School Performance Framework, student demographics, and U.S. Department of Education measures of school locale (urbanicity).

School-level characteristics included in the matrix:

- READ Act Assessment used (a range of assessments are represented)
- Colorado Region (all regions represented)
- Urbanicity (represent cities, suburbs, and towns/rural areas)
- Enrollment- total population (represent school sizes)
- Ethnicity demographics (ensure that schools with a range of demographic compositions are represented)
- FRL (range of FRL rates within high and low movement schools)
- ELs (range of EL rates within high and low movement schools)
- Mobility (range of mobility rates within high and low movement schools)

Analysts used the matrix to choose school sites using the procedure and rules of thumb that follow. The process is rooted in data but also relies on analysts' judgement. If another set of analysts were using the same data and followed the same procedure, we would expect the lists to be similarly composed, but to necessarily include the same schools. One analyst chose school sites for non-ELG schools, and another chose sites for ELG schools, according to the same procedure but comparing each set of schools with one another rather than ELG to the whole or vice versa.

Procedure:

- Remove any schools with fewer than 10 students with SRDs, summed across three years

- Ensure that approximately 75% of the sample should be schools with high rates of student movement off of SRD, approximately 25% should be schools with low rates of movement off of SRD schools
- Include at least one school from each region
- As much as possible include a mix of high and low FRL, EL, and mobility rates in the high and low movement choices
- As much as possible include a range of urbanicities and primary assessments
- For ELG schools, include schools from each grant cohort

The analysis selected 29 sites to visit in the first year, 17 ELG sites and 12 LEP sites. Due to travel restrictions, the site visits were all conducted virtually. In the event that a site was unable to participate, analysts selected an alternative site with similar school characteristics and a similar percentile ranking. One district opted not to participate; the evaluation team conducted 28 virtual site visits.