DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

FY 2025-26 JOINT BUDGET COMMITTEE HEARING AGENDA

Monday, December 16, 2024

1:30 pm – 5:00 pm

1:30-1:50 Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind

Main Presenter: Tera Spangler, Superintendent

Supporting Presenters:

- Beth Oliver, Controller
- Mike Nero, Director of Facilities

Topics:

- R10 - CSDB Inflationary Increase: Slides 7-8
- West Hall Renovation & Addition: Slides 9-12

1:50-2:20 Office of State Planning and Budgeting

Mark Ferrandino: OSPB, Director

Topics:

- R1 School Finance Proposal: Page 1, Questions 3-7 in the packet (see separate OSPB package for responses and presentation)

2:20-2:40 Department of Education Introductions and Opening Comments

Main Presenters:

- Susana Córdova, Commissioner
- Wayne Peel, Chief Financial Officer

2:40-3:10 Administration and Management, Common and General Questions

Department Grants Project and Postsecondary Workforce Readiness Report

Main Presenters:

- Susana Córdova, Commissioner
- Wayne Peel, Chief Financial Officer

Supporting Presenter:

- Shelbie Konkel, Senior Legislative Advisor

Topic:

- Department Grants Project and Postsecondary Workforce Readiness Report: Page 2, Questions 9-11 in the packet, Slides 9-12

HB 24-1364 & HB 24-1393 Cost Study

Main Presenters:

- Susana Córdova, Commissioner
- Wayne Peel, Chief Financial Officer

Supporting Presenter:

- Danielle Ongart, Assistant Commissioner of Student Pathways and Engagement

Topic:

- HB 24-1364 & HB 24-1393 Cost Study: Page 6, Questions 12-13 in the packet, Slides 13-19

3:10-3:30 Budget Requests for Programs Managed Within the Department of Education

Main Presenters:

- Susana Córdova, Commissioner
- Wayne Peel, Chief Financial Officer

Supporting Presenters:

- Lindsey Jaeckel, Assistant Commissioner of School Quality and Supports
- Danielle Ongart, Assistant Commissioner of Student Pathways and Engagement
- Joanna Bruno, Chief Academic Officer

Topics:

- R4 - Supporting Instructional Coherence: Page 8, Question 14 in the packet, Slide 21
- School Transformation Grant: Page 10, Questions 15-16 in the packet, Slide 22
- R5 - Student Engagement: Page 13, Questions 17-18 in the packet, Slide 23
- R6 - READ Act Training Support: Page 14, Questions 19-22 in the packet, Slide 24
- R7 - Colorado Talking Book Library: No page/question, Slide 25
- R8 - National Student Clearinghouse: Page 18, Question 23 in the packet, Slide 26
- R9 - Statewide Student Information System: Page 19, Questions 24-27 in the packet, Slide 27

3:30-3:45 Offsets

Main Presenters:

- Susana Córdova, Commissioner
- Wayne Peel, Chief Financial Officer

Supporting Presenters:

- Danielle Ongart, Assistant Commissioner of Student Pathways and Engagement

Topics:
- R11 - Career Training and Basic Skills Reduction: Page 22, Question 28, Slide 29
- Offsets: Page 24, Questions 29-31 in the packet, Slide 29

3:45-4:15 Nutrition Programs

Main Presenters:

- Susana Córdova, Commissioner
- Wayne Peel, Chief Financial Officer

Supporting Presenters:

- Brehan Riley, Executive Director - School Nutrition Unit

Topics:
- Healthy School Meals: Page 25, Questions 32-34 in the packet, Slide 31

4:15 - 4:40 School District Operations

Main Presenters:

- Susana Córdova, Commissioner
- Wayne Peel, Chief Financial Officer

Supporting Presenters:

- Sheldon Rosenkrance, Chief District Operating Officer
- Joanna Bruno, Chief Academic Officer
- Jennifer Okes, Special Advisor - District Operations
- Andy Stine, Director of Capital Construction - Building Excellent Schools Today

Topics:
- Supports for ELL: Page 27, Questions 35 -37 in the packet, Slide 33
- Public School Capital Construction: Page 29, Questions 38, 40 & 41 in the packet, Slide 34
- Public School Finance and Categorical Programs: Page 32, Questions 42-44, Slides 35-37

4:40-5:00 Charter School Institute

Main Presenters:

- Dr. Terry Croy Lewis, Executive Director

Supporting Presenters:

- Janet Dinnen, Chief of Staff

Topic:

- R3 CSI Mill Levy Equalization Budget Request: Pages 38-41, Questions 43-45 in the packet, Slides 1-12 in CSI presentation

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

FY 2025-26 JOINT BUDGET COMMITTEE HEARING

Monday, December 16, 2024

1:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind

[Note: CSDB requested that they appear first on the agenda]

Common Questions for All Hearings

1 ***Please describe any budget requests that replace one-time General Fund or ARPA funded programs with ongoing appropriations at the CSDB, including the following information:***
   a. Original fund source (General Fund, ARPA, other), amount, and FTE;
   b. Original program time frame;
   c. Original authorization (budget decision, legislation, other);
   d. Requested ongoing fund source, amount, and FTE; and
   e. Requested time frame (one-time extension or ongoing).

R10 CSDB Inflationary Increase

2 ***[Sen. Bridges] Please discuss the request and the rationale for the proposal.***

See CSDB powerpoint slides.

OSPB – R1 School Finance Proposal

R1 Questions for OSPB

3 ***[Sen. Kirkmeyer] Under OSPB projections, what would total program increased by inflation be from FY 2023-24 to FY 2024-25, and FY 2024-25 to FY 2025-26. (Staff note – please comment on how the Amendment 23 increase applies only to the base per pupil funding.)***

4 ***[Rep. Bird] Under your projections, what would the cost of total program (show state/local share) be for FY 2025-26 using the old formula (assuming no 1448/no R1)? Compare that to FY 2024-25.***

5 ***[Rep. Taggart] When we come back to the student averaging, what does each of the Governor's proposed changes represent as part of the $186.4 million change as a result of the R1 request? (Andrea clarified $42.0 million attributable to the implementation percentage reduction). Provide a further breakdown of the $144.4 million of savings associated with eliminating averaging in the new formula, eliminating averaging in the***

old formula for hold harmless, and eliminating the extra 0.5% for hold harmless. (LCS will also respond to this at a later date.)

6 ***[Sen. Kirkmeyer] Requested a General Fund overview scenario. (Not sure exactly what this should include, but staff suggests showing assumptions for General Fund for state share past FY 2026-27.)***

7 ***[Sen. Marchman] Which districts are using the 2, 3, and 4-year average, and how does this proposal impact them? (OSPB answer if you can; LCS will also respond at a later date).***

Administration and Management and General

Common Questions for All Hearings

8 ***Please describe any budget requests that replace one-time General Fund or ARPA funded programs with ongoing appropriations, including the following information:***

a. Original fund source (General Fund, ARPA, other), amount, and FTE;
b. Original program time frame;
c. Original authorization (budget decision, legislation, other);
d. Requested ongoing fund source, amount, and FTE; and
e. Requested time frame (one-time extension or ongoing).

The Department's FY 2025-26 requests do not include any previously one-time funded ARPA or general funded programs.

DEPARTMENT GRANTS PROJECT AND POSTSECONDARY WORKFORCE READINESS REPORT

9 ***[Rep. Bird] Discuss key findings from your grants project. Could you tell anything from the project about the usefulness of the grant programs? How many of those grants are helpful? Are they oversubscribed? Undersubscribed? Have they achieved the desired policy goals?***

CDE initiated the 2024 State Competitive Grants Project, through a contract with Dillinger Research and Applied Data, to create a comprehensive inventory of the current set of competitive state grants, collect input from internal and external stakeholders, and make recommendations that would:

- Leverage grant funding and activities to best target high-leverage and/or evidence-based activities;
- Tie grant funding to identified state and district needs;
- Streamline grant opportunities and administration internally and externally.

The project conducted extensive research, compiled, reviewed, and analyzed grant data, and engaged CDE subject matter experts, grant administrators, and more than 200 Local Education Providers (LEPs).

Overall, the project found that grants serve an important purpose in our state, and there is an opportunity to strengthen coherence within the system by streamlining and targeting grants to provide greater support and resources to better meet the needs of the students in Colorado. The 2024 State Competitive Grant Project Report outlined five specific findings:

1. ***"CDE's current grant structures are meeting some level of need.***
   In general, LEP leaders expressed that state-competitive grant funding provided critical resources. The demand for these grants remains substantial as demonstrated by the volume of applications received by CDE each year.

2. ***The current grant landscape is varying and unique– rendering it difficult to develop coherence to effectively and strategically serve the field.***
   Several core challenges with CDE's competitive state grant system flow from the way it was created incrementally over decades, resulting in many grants of varying sizes, overlapping purposes, and with application and reporting requirements that can be duplicative and overly burdensome. From the sheer number of grants to each one's unique design, the result is a system that lacks coherence and creates undue complexity for grantees.

3. ***A lack of system-wide coordination across grants has contributed to potential gaps in funding or misalignment of resources.***
   The current competitive grant system operates on a grant-by-grant basis, with each grant's creation, implementation, application, and awarding process occurring independently. This siloed approach, combined with the infrastructure of the grants system itself, creates a patchwork where some strategies are implemented, but only in some places.

4. ***Administrative burden creates barriers for LEPs to access grants.***
   LEPs perceive grant application and reporting requirements to be burdensome and sometimes prohibitive, representing a barrier to entry for many small and rural organizations. CDE's use of multiple systems of reporting, due to the incremental addition of the grants over time, creates frustration among many grantees.

5. ***Formal evaluation/outcome data is difficult because of data limitations.***
   The current systems that are in place to identify, collect, and analyze grant data do not work in a comprehensive manner, rendering it impossible to evaluate the full landscape of grants."

Additionally, the study revealed that a number of districts are relying on grants as part of an overall strategy to provide support for students. As a result, the report suggests developing:

"An intentional, phased-in [multi-year] plan to consolidate the current system…[to] create coherence within the state competitive grant system while minimizing disruption to current grants and grantees."

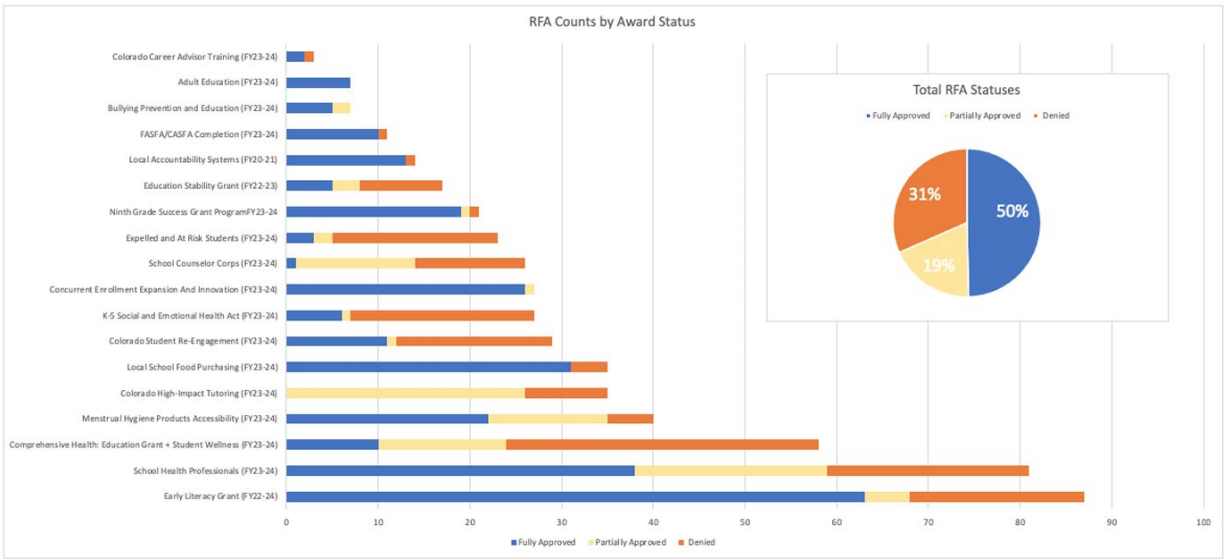
10 ***[Sen. Bridges] Do we know if the districts that didn't receive grants actually applied for them?***

Demand for competitive grants from Local Education Providers (LEPs) is consistently high, as shown by the number of applications received annually. However, because each grant has different levels of information collected/retained, comprehensive data on applications and denials is only partially available for 18 grants.

The study highlighted that during the 2022-23 Request for Applications (RFA) cycle for these 18 grants:

- **548 RFAs were submitted**, with 375 (69%) either fully or partially funded.
- Denial rates varied significantly across the 18 grants. Some grants awarded the full amount requested, fully funding all RFAs, while others denied over 80% of applications/requests.
- Overall,about **one-third of RFAs were completely denied**, highlighting unmet demand among applicants.

Denial rates serve as an imperfect measure of demand, reflecting only the needs of LEPs that applied. Conversations with stakeholders indicate that some LEPs with unmet needs may not apply for grants due to capacity challenges, lack of awareness, or other barriers. This suggests that actual demand may exceed what is captured through applications alone. A chart outlining the data available is below.



11 ***[Rep. Taggart]: How much administration do these grant programs drive? How many positions could we eliminate (and how much money could we save) by reducing/consolidating the Department's current grant programs?***

The Department administers more than 30 state-funded grants that have been created and sustained by the legislature over the last three decades. Over time, as grants have been incrementally created, the administration of competitive grant programs has been incorporated into the existing infrastructure of the Department.

Administrative support is typically provided through small, statutory set-asides that fund partial program staff and financial management. Additionally, these amounts vary widely across grants in their scope and utilization.

A comprehensive review of fiscal notes, administrative set-asides, and payroll data of the 31 grants analyzed by the study revealed that approximately 29.6 FTE attribute some level of time and effort to administer state-funded grants; however, the 29.6 FTE were spread across nearly 75 unique employees.

The study found that these FTE typically provide unique subject matter expertise and technical assistance that otherwise would not be available to the state, such as advising districts and policymakers on best practices for the implementation of policies related to specific programs, like dropout prevention or credential attainment. The partial nature, coupled with the unique expertise provided, creates trade-offs and challenges when eliminating staff funding.

The intertwined staffing model further demonstrates the need to take an incremental and intentional approach to change management.

12 ***[Sen. Bridges] Discuss the new postsecondary/workforce readiness report required by H.B. 24-1464. What are the options for streamlining funding within existing resources to achieve postsecondary and workforce readiness goals, including creating a new/expanded categorical or "categorical-like" program to support district postsecondary workforce readiness. If the General Assembly decides to combine/modify/eliminate existing postsecondary workforce readiness programs in favor of a new, more consolidated approach to supporting these programs, what should the transition look like, including the timeline?***

The State Board of Education will consider what specific recommendations may be necessary for implementing the HB24-1364 and HB24-1393 recommendations during the January board meeting.

Similar to the recommendations from the 2024 State Competitive Grants Project, it is likely that any consolidation effort would need to include an intentional, phased-in

multi-year plan. The transition, timeline, and change management process would likely depend on a number of factors, including but not limited to:

- ***Current program obligations*** – depending on what programs/fund sources are included, the legislature may want to factor existing obligations into the timing/planning. For example, some of the programs included in the recommendations, such as the School Counselor Corps Grant Program, award grants on a multi-year cycle, so rather than ending the grant early and reducing funds from districts, the legislature may want to phase in consolidation over time.
- ***Distribution model and timeline*** – the manner in which funds are distributed along with eligible expenses/intended uses may also determine timing. For example, start-up/seed funding would likely need to be forward-funded at the beginning of a school year, whereas a reimbursement-based model would likely be distributed after the school year has ended.
- ***Data availability –*** because there is significant lag time between districts' collecting date and then reporting it to CDE, time may be needed to establish the collection if new data is required.

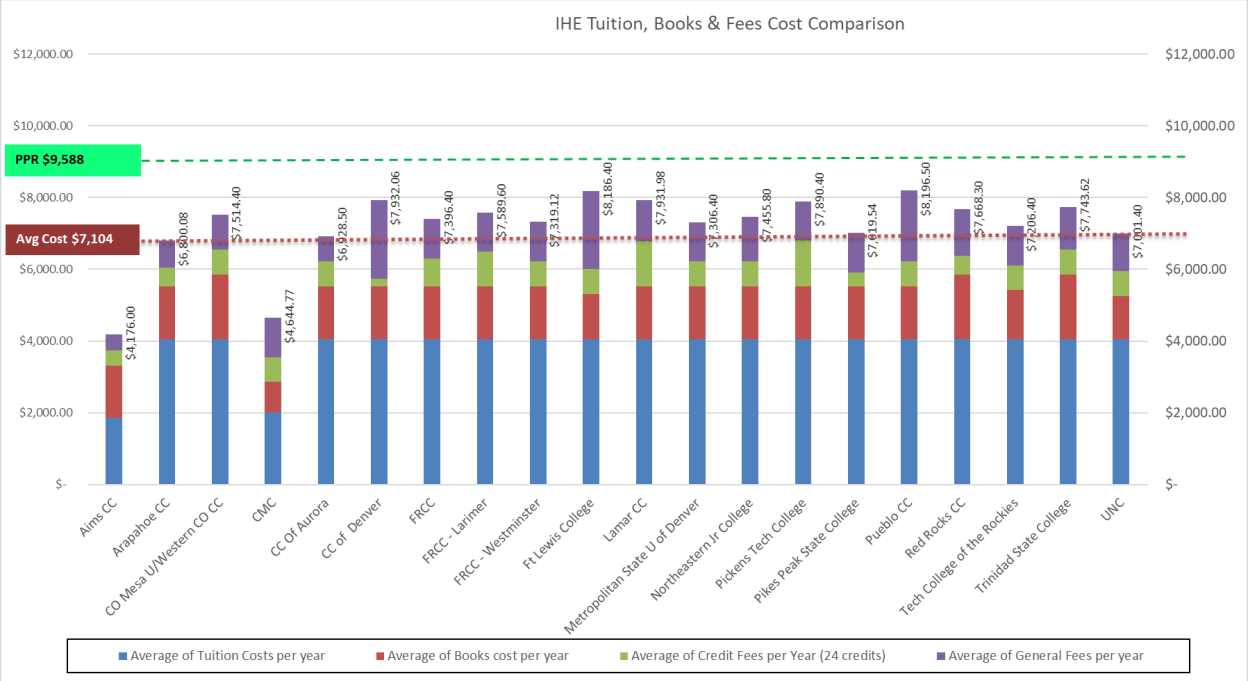
13 ***[Rep. Taggart] The ASCENT program makes no sense from a state funding perspective. Discuss the results of the H.B. 24-1393 study on ASCENT and the options for phasing it out.***

The ASCENT program, which was designed to support postsecondary readiness through an additional year of academic coursework for high school graduates, has grown significantly, reaching an estimated 2,017 participants in FY24-25. The third-party evaluator that analyzed the ASCENT program pursuant to the study required by H.B. 24-1393 and HB24-1364, offered the following observations regarding ASCENT:

- **Cost and Scale Disparities:** For FY24-25, ASCENT is projected to cost $18 million for fewer than 2,000 students, compared to the approximately $25 million allocated for CDE funded PWR grant and incentive programs serving the overall 9th -12th grade population of approximately 282,903 students. This imbalance raises concerns about the equitable distribution of state resources, particularly when ASCENT's reach remains relatively limited.
- **Funding vs. Actual Cost:** The ASCENT program's current funding model allocates a fixed PPR rate to LEPs for each participating student, regardless of the actual costs associated with enrollment. However, a closer analysis reveals a discrepancy between the PPR allocation and the average actual costs per student incurred. Tuition and fees for in-state students vary by institution but generally range between $2,000 and $4,058 annually. Fees, textbook and related material costs add an additional $3,300 on average, with some LEPs opting to cover these

expenses while others require students to bear these costs. *(The chart below outlines actual cost vs. PPR funding).*

- **Student Outcomes Unclear:** Despite its financial investment, ASCENT lacks robust data demonstrating clear, measurable outcomes, such as increased degree attainment or reduced time to credential completion. Enrollment trends show growing participation among students not eligible for FRL, suggesting a drift from its original intent to prioritize underserved populations.
- **Program Popularity vs. Equity:** ASCENT's flexibility and financial benefits have made it popular in urban and suburban districts, which account for over 91.5% of total enrollment in FY 2023-24, although they only account for 88% of State funding and enrollment. Conversely, rural districts face logistical challenges, including limited partnerships with Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) and transportation barriers, restricting their ability to benefit from the program.



The study recommended three mutually exclusive options for modifications to the program:

1. **Reallocate ASCENT Funds to Broader PWR Initiatives:** Given ASCENT's limited reach, high cost, and lack of clear outcomes, the program could be discontinued. Redirecting the $18 million currently allocated for ASCENT into broader PWR initiatives would support a larger student population and ensure a more equitable use of state resources.
2. **Reform ASCENT:** If the program is retained, it should be realigned with its original objectives under HB09-1319, focusing on low-income, at-risk students requiring 15 or fewer credit hours to complete a credential. A district-level cap

proportional across non-rural, rural, and small rural districts should also be reinstated.

3. **Adopt a Reimbursement Model:** Transition ASCENT to a reimbursement-based funding model, ensuring resources are directly tied to actual program costs. LEPs would pay IHE invoices per cooperative agreements and then submit them to CDE for reimbursement.

The report, which was published on December 1st, was reviewed with the State Board of Education (SBE) last week. The SBE will consider next steps on the report's recommendations during the January board meeting.

SCHOOL QUALITY AND SUPPORT

R4 Supporting Instructional Coherence

14 ***[Rep. Bird/Sen. Bridges/Sen. Kirkmeyer] How much of the request is related to developing the list of coherent instructional materials versus supporting a cohort of turnaround districts? Why does it cost this much? Don't districts have other forums in which to share ideas about materials?***

CDE's strategic plan is rooted in strategies that the Department, from its statewide lens, is structurally positioned to support. One key lever to support change in a local control state is convening learning cohorts, which are communities of schools and districts learning together with subject matter expertise, accessing professional development, technical assistance and planning support. These strategies are responsive to the needs districts have expressed to the Department. As one district leader recently shared during a feedback session for the new strategic plan:

> *"We appreciate and want CDE to be an arbiter for sharing our best practices, getting people together to make sure that what's working well in one district can be accessible or learned by another district."*

In terms of the R4 request:

- The department will continue to refine the list of instructional materials, but the requested resources would primarily be used to contract with an external provider to provide professional development. The Department will leverage already existing sources to improve the list of instructional resources for use by districts.
- The requested term-limited funding would be focused on providing dedicated direct support to districts, focusing on instructional leadership and capacity building to use existing high-quality materials with fidelity throughout their system to drive improved student outcomes.

Districts, particularly those in turnaround status, have expressed a strong need for deep instructional support. This funding enables:

1. **Support for Instructional Leaders:** Providing targeted professional development for district-level instructional leaders and principals, who are instrumental in driving instructional improvement, to use high quality instructional materials (HQIM) with fidelity for all students, including those who historically are underserved and not accessing quality, grade-level materials.
2. **Cohort Model Benefits:** The learning cohort structure fosters collaboration among multiple districts, creating an **economy of scale** that reduces costs while allowing districts to share best practices and learn from one another.

Addressing Alternative Forums:
While districts have access to other forums for sharing ideas about instructional materials, this initiative emphasizes **implementation support** and tailored guidance to ensure districts can effectively adopt and utilize coherent instructional materials to drive improved student outcomes.

This approach maximizes the impact of the funding by addressing critical gaps in instructional capacity and leveraging shared learning to improve outcomes for turnaround districts.

15 ***[Sen. Bridges] Describe the School Turnaround Program and how the $8.1 million appropriated for this program, plus related federal funding, is currently used.***

The School Transformation Grant provides grant funding and access to support programs to schools and districts implementing Priority Improvement or Turnaround plans. Districts, BOCES, and the Charter School Institute apply for School Transformation Grant funds through the Empowering Action for School Improvement (EASI) application. The EASI application was created to streamline multiple school improvement opportunities into a single application and use a needs-based approach to award services and funding. Ultimately, the intent is to develop a robust process of matching schools' needs with rigorous, evidence-based strategies and adequate resources. The application braids state School Transformation Grant funds with federal school improvement funds allocated through the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to maximize resources available for students and minimize grant applications.

The support available to districts and schools are grounded in research in effective supports for school and district improvement. CDE continuously monitors the effectiveness of each support route and service offered through EASI, including working with external evaluation partners. CDE has maintained an external evaluation partnership for school turnaround work with the University of Colorado's Center for Assessment, Design, Research, and Evaluation (CADRE) since 2020. In the first evaluation, CADRE found that supports available through EASI, particularly the School Transformation Network, had a positive effect on student achievement. CADRE found

participation in the Network had “small, positive effects on student achievement in math and ELA. The small positive trends observed in the data are still consistent with positive, educationally meaningful improvements in student achievement for schools receiving supports.” CADRE also noted that “the majority of schools that participated (in the Transformation Network and STLD) earned Performance or Improvement SPF ratings, the two highest ratings. Taken together, we believe the results present promising…evidence about the efficacy of these supports.”

CDE has started an updated evaluation with CADRE with an evaluation report expected in June 2025.

How Funds Are Awarded through EASI

In fiscal year 2024-2025, the School Transformation Grant received an annual appropriation of $8.1 million, a $500,000 increase over FY 2023-2024. Of the $8.1 million, 10% of funds are reserved for CDE FTE and operating costs and the remainder of funds are allocated to schools and districts. The summaries of awards described below reference the 2023-2024 application year and do not reflect the increased allocation for FY 2024-25.

Districts apply for up to three years of grant activities (for multi-year supports and interventions), and thus each year some of the annual allocation is obligated to previously made grant awards because of the multi-year nature of the grants, and some is obligated to new awards. As it has in previous years, CDE also made awards in the 2023 funding cycle for future years, contingent on available funds. Thus, $6.5 million was made available in awards for School Transformation Grant funding in fiscal year 2024-25 (this application is currently being reviewed for funding recommendations). As noted before, federal funding through ESSA is also made available via the EASI application to schools that have been identified under the federal accountability system. These schools are often also identified under Colorado’s state accountability system, but are not required to be in order to obtain federal funding. In fiscal year 2024-25, $9.45 million in federal funding (compared with $8.9 million in FY 2023-24) was made available in awards for federal ESSA school improvement funding.

Below is a summary of how funds were awarded in FY 2023-24. The FY2024-25 application is currently being reviewed.

2023-2024 EASI Application Summary

CDE received a total of $25.2 million in requests for improvement funding via the 2023-24 EASI Application. CDE was able to award $6.9 million in School Transformation Grant funding to schools and districts identified by the state accountability system, and $8.9 million in federal ESSA improvement funding to schools and districts identified by the federal accountability system. This $15.8 million was awarded to districts to participate in the following supports and services:

1. **District-Led Initiatives:**
    - Comprehensive needs assessments, planning, and implementation of improvement strategies.
    - Expansion of successful interventions based on prior results.
2. **Exploration and Diagnostic Services:**
    - **School Holistic Reviews:** Comprehensive diagnostics by trained providers to identify improvement opportunities.
    - **Alternative Education Campus/Online School Reviews:** Tailored diagnostics for AECs and online schools.
    - **District Strategic Planning:** Strengthening district systems to support school improvement.
3. **CDE-Provided Services:**
    - **Accountability Pathways:** Support for implementing statutory turnaround pathways for sites with State Board of Education directed action.
    - **Colorado Multi-Tiered System of Supports (COMTSS):** A prevention framework for improving student outcomes.
    - **Connect for Success:** Best practice sharing for implementation from high-performing schools.
    - **School Transformation Network:** Enhanced diagnostic reviews and planning support; personalized, professional learning opportunities with a cohort of peer schools; and additional resources through supplemental grant funding.
    - **Rigorous Action through Redesign:** Research-based school redesign to address systemic issues.
    - **School Transformation Leadership Development:** Training programs for leadership in low-performing schools.
    - **Facilitated Board Training:** Governance and turnaround best practices for local school boards.

Demand Exceeds Available Resources: For the FY 2023-24 EASI application, the Department was only able to meet approximately 63% of the requests from districts. Districts requested a total of $25.2 million in funding, far exceeding the available $15.8 million (state and federal). These funds supported a variety of services designed to meet district and school needs while addressing resource gaps in school improvement efforts. While application reviews for FY2024-25 are underway, the trend that requests for funding and support outpaces resources continues.

16 ***[Rep. Bird/Sen. Bridges/Sen. Kirkmeyer] Why isn't supporting instructional coherence already part of what this program does? Can the program absorb the cost?***

Following direction from the JBC, the Department has reviewed options to integrate support for instructional coherence into the School Transformation Grant program. The Department believes this could be possible without additional funding and without cuts to existing supports/pathways if a modification to existing statute were made to enable the department to leverage administrative funds for cross-district support. The change would allow the department to leverage economies of scale by contracting for services directly, rather than granting resources to districts to then contract individually for similar services. Under this proposed model, CDE would contract with a provider who would facilitate multi-district professional learning opportunities.
This approach would not only minimize the administrative burden on districts for grant-related activities, it would also result in some level of savings that could be reinvested into supporting an instructional coherence cohort for professional development.

Student Pathways

R5 Student engagement/dropout prevention

17 ***[Rep. Bird] Have the districts asked for this support related to dropout prevention? It seems like the reasons for absenteeism could be very diverse across the state. What could 2.0 FTE at the state level do to address this?***

Yes, districts across Colorado have expressed a strong need for state-level support to address chronic absenteeism and dropout prevention. Chronic absenteeism impacts more than **1 in 4 students statewide**, with rates significantly elevated since the pandemic. Districts—rural, suburban, urban, and remote—have all reported an urgent need for resources and tools to tackle absenteeism, noting its direct impact on student performance and long-term outcomes. Nearly a quarter of districts (24 out of 101 districts that needed to update their improvement plans in 2024-25) identified student engagement (e.g. attendance, mobility, chronic absenteeism) as a major area of focus for the district. This is particularly noteworthy as this hasn't been an observed area of need across the state in the past. In addition, in a survey of 218 district staff members in Spring 2024 of potential topics for learning cohorts, chronic absenteeism/student engagement was the most requested item with 50% (131) of respondents indicating interest.

District leaders have emphasized challenges in post-pandemic absenteeism and the need for collaborative problem-solving and resources to help students and families re-engage with school. Smaller districts, where attendance efforts may be led by a principal or superintendent, often lack dedicated resources to address these complex issues. Larger districts may have teams in place but often the numbers of students missing school are so large that it is overwhelming current systems. Districts of all sizes have requested guidance and tools to optimize their efforts.

There is variation in attendance rates across student groups and grades. Kindergarten and grades 8-12 show the highest rates of chronic absenteeism across grade level.

Students experiencing homelessness, multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and migrant students show substantially higher rates of chronic absenteeism than the statewide average. Additionally there are many different reasons why students are not attending school- from physical or mental health challenges to transportation barriers.

The requested 2.0 FTE would enable the Department to provide essential support tailored to these diverse district needs, including:

1. **Facilitating Learning Cohorts and Trainings:**
    - Organize cohorts for districts to share effective practices, learn from each other, and problem-solve collaboratively.
    - Provide formal training on evidence-based attendance improvement and engagement strategies.
2. **Developing Tools and Resources:**
    - Circulate and/or create research-based adaptable templates for family, student, and school communications, tailored to various regional and community contexts.
    - Build user-friendly guidance on data usage, attendance program implementation, and family engagement strategies.
3. **Highlighting Exemplars and Promising Practices:**
    - Elevate and share Colorado-based success stories to inspire and guide other districts in addressing attendance challenges.
4. **Improving Cross-Agency Coordination:**
    - Work with other state agencies to address systemic barriers to attendance, such as health, transportation, and academic engagement.

18 ***[Sen. Kirkmeyer] Are there any school districts that are addressing chronic absenteeism through their collaborative management programs?***

Yes, some school districts are addressing specific, intensive cases of chronic absenteeism through their participation in the Collaborative Management Program (CMP). While CMP's primary focus is on students with the most significant needs, absenteeism has emerged as a broader issue impacting a wide range of student situations – many of which may not be appropriate for or require such extensive resources as those within a CMP.

Part of the dedicated FTE will focus on best practices/collaboration with other state and local agencies – like those who are a part of a CMP. However, more broadly, the Department's request is designed to focus on earlier interventions/supports to address chronic absenteeism.

STUDENT LEARNING

R6 READ Act training support

19 ***[Rep. Bird] Why does CDE need to develop this training for subgroups of students with significant reading deficiencies (English language learners, students with dyslexia, and students with IEPs) as opposed to obtaining it from existing sources? Isn't there training out there?***

While there are existing training programs available and they do not fully meet the needs of Colorado educators for several reasons:

1. Limited Applicability: Most existing programs are designed for general intervention and do not address the unique needs of specific student populations, such as multilingual learners, students with dyslexia, and students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).
2. Proprietary Limitations: Many high-quality training programs are proprietary and require ongoing payments for use. Developing a Colorado-specific training would allow the Department to own the content, ensuring it can be used sustainably without recurring licensing costs.
3. Integration of Science of Reading: Few existing options combine evidence-based literacy practices with targeted strategies for these student groups, creating a significant gap in available resources.

Data-Driven Need:
The need for this training is grounded in:

- READ Act Evaluations: Multiple years of external evaluations of the READ Act have highlighted gaps in addressing specific student group needs and the need for specific training to schools and districts to address these needs.
- Dyslexia Working Group recommendations: multiple years of recommendations have highlighted the need for teacher training around how to understand the dyslexia data, strategies for supporting students, and the evidence-based interventions to support improved outcomes.
- Low Third Grade Reading Scores: Persistently low CMAS scores in 3rd grade reading, particularly among these student populations, underscore the urgency of addressing this issue.
- Strategic Priorities: Supporting multilingual learners and other student groups aligns with the Department's strategic plan to improve early literacy outcomes for all students.

Benefits of Developing Colorado-Specific Training:

- Customization: The training will be designed specifically to address the needs of Colorado educators and students, ensuring alignment with state standards and the science of reading.
- Sustainability: By owning the training, CDE can leverage internal staff to provide ongoing professional development, reducing long-term costs.
- Equity and Accessibility: Targeted support for historically underserved student populations will help close literacy gaps and improve overall educational outcomes.

20 ***[Sen. Bridges] How many cohorts of teachers – and how many teachers – would this amount of money train? How would the Department roll it out? Where would the Department expect those teachers to be?***

This funding is designed to provide comprehensive, statewide training available for all K-3 teachers, approximately 21,000 teachers, through a regional delivery model. By focusing on K-3 educators and leveraging existing regional structures and partnerships, the Department aims to maximize impact and support early literacy efforts across Colorado.

How Many Teachers Will Be Trained?
This funding is intended to provide training to **K-3 teachers statewide (approximately 21,000)**, rather than being limited to a set number of cohorts. The approach is designed to maximize reach and ensure that every K-3 teacher, regardless of location, has access to this professional development opportunity. Once the department owns the training, it can also be targeted to other grades to support upper-elementary and middle school students and used in future years as well.

Rollout Plan:

1. **Regional Implementation:**
    - The training will be delivered regionally, leveraging the Department's existing Elementary Literacy and School Readiness regional support structure to provide localized support.
    - The Department will also partner with Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) where appropriate to extend capacity and ensure accessibility for rural districts.
2. **Focus Areas:**
    - The regional model ensures that **rural districts** are prioritized for access to training, recognizing the unique challenges faced by educators in these areas.

- Teachers along the **Front Range** will also be served through this model, ensuring statewide coverage.

Expected Teacher Participation:

- **K-3 Teachers:** The funding is aimed at training as many K-3 teachers in public elementary schools as possible, addressing the literacy needs of students in these critical early years. This training would be available in addition to the required training about the science of teaching reading. The goal would be to have upwards of 75% of the 21,000 teachers take the training in the first few years.
- **Target Regions:** Teachers in both rural and urban settings will be included, ensuring equitable access to high-quality professional development.

21 ***[Sen. Kirkmeyer] Does the Department have buy-in from school districts on this?***

Yes, the Department has received clear and consistent feedback from districts, educators, and stakeholders supporting the need for this targeted training. This initiative reflects a direct response to their requests and aligns with efforts to improve outcomes for diverse student populations.

District leaders and members of the Commissioner's Teachers Cabinet have consistently expressed a need for training that builds on the science of reading by focusing on how to support specific student populations, including students with disabilities, English language learners, and students exhibiting indicators of dyslexia. The Dyslexia Working Group and other educators also have highlighted the importance of addressing these gaps in their professional development. Additionally, findings from program evaluations and discussions during district learning cohorts and meetings frequently emphasize the need for targeted support for these learner groups.

22 ***[Sen. Marchman] Discuss request/cost components in more detail, addressing: (1) software costs and ongoing software expenses; (2) why the Department proposes hybrid instruction and the choice between virtual, in person, and hybrid training (costs & effectiveness); and (3) What is the assumption about the number of teachers per trainer?***

The proposed funding supports the development and deployment of tailored, high-quality training to improve literacy outcomes for key student populations. By balancing virtual and in-person delivery options and using Early Literacy Grant funds to encourage participation, the Department aims to ensure accessibility, cost-effectiveness, and sustained impact. Below is a detailed breakdown of the cost components and approach:

1. Software Costs and Ongoing Software Expenses

- Development Costs:
    - Training Program Development: $801,000 to design Colorado-specific training content, ensuring alignment with the Science of Reading and tailored for the specified student populations.
    - Temporary Staffing: $249,590 to fund 2.0 term-limited FTE positions to oversee content development in collaboration with a vendor and roll out the training.
- Ongoing Software Costs:
    - Content Hosting: $305,000 to integrate and maintain the training within a learning management system, providing statewide access to virtual training resources.
    - Training Materials: $6,000 for physical and digital resources to support participants.
    - In the future, these costs will be absorbed into the department's regular READ Act Appropriation, with content hosting amounts decreasing over time as the number of teachers receiving training will decrease.

2. Hybrid, Virtual, and In-Person Training: Cost and Effectiveness

The Department plans to deliver the training either in-person or remotely but not in a hybrid format. This decision is based on:

- Feedback from Educators and Evaluation: Stakeholders prefer focused delivery formats—either fully in-person or fully virtual.
- Cost Considerations: Virtual delivery allows for broader access at lower costs, especially for rural districts, while in-person training offers greater engagement and interaction. Hosting both formats ensures flexibility and greater access to the training.

3. Assumptions About Educator Participation per Trainer

- Trainer-to-Participant Ratio: The training assumes 35 participants per trainer to ensure individualized attention and effective professional development.
- Target Audience: K-3 teachers in Colorado, with a focus on reaching the majority of educators within the first two years.

Incentives to Encourage Participation

- Early Literacy Grant (ELG) Funds: $2,000,000 will be used to incentivize districts and teachers to attend, as the training is voluntary. This ensures robust participation and helps meet the goal of training most K-3 teachers within the initial funding period. Providing supplemental ELG funding for the purpose of

getting teachers trained in these specific areas, takes the pressure off districts to find money for training, as well as provides incentives for the training (funding for travel, continuing education credits, paying for substitute teachers, etc.).

Sustainability After Initial Training Phase

- After the initial rollout, ongoing costs for virtual trainings are expected to be minimal, thus the Department will integrate these into its existing budget, ensuring long-term sustainability without additional funding requests.

R8 NATIONAL STUDENT CLEARINGHOUSE

23 ***[Sen. Bridges] Why have costs increased so dramatically?***

Under C.R.S. 22-11-204(1)(b) and (4)(a)(IV), the Department must annually evaluate school and district performance through the School and District Performance Frameworks. For high schools, this includes a Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness (PWR) indicator, which uses metrics like graduation and dropout rates, plus the percentage of students enrolling in career and technical education, community colleges, or four-year colleges immediately after graduation. The National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) is the only provider of this matriculation data (through exclusive agreements with universities and colleges nationwide), essential for calculating the PWR indicator, meeting state reporting requirements, and informing statewide PWR assessments recommended by recent task forces (HB22-1215, HB23-1241).

Recently, NSC transitioned to version 3.0 of their platform. Colorado has been operating on the outdated 1.0 version, which is no longer available. The updated platform brings significant enhancements, including:

- **Improved reporting capabilities:** Customized reports on matriculation data over time, accessible at the school level, support more precise and actionable analysis.
- **Enhanced data security:** The new platform incorporates modern, robust security measures to better protect sensitive information.

The department understands that the increased costs charged by the contractor reflect the investment required to create and maintain this new platform. Adoption of the new NSC platform will continue the state's access to vital matriculation data while also meeting updated security and reporting standards. ***Without access to the necessary matriculation data, the Department would not be able to fully calculate the PWR indicator within the state accountability frameworks as required under current statute.***

R9 STATEWIDE STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

24 ***[Sen. Bridges] Explain what a Statewide Student Information System would provide.***

Currently, each Local Education Provider (LEP) or school district independently purchases and manages its own Student Information System (SIS), such as Infinite Campus or PowerSchool. Across Colorado, approximately 10 different SIS platforms are currently in use. These systems enable districts to store, secure, and manage student data (e.g., October Count) and fulfill state and federal reporting requirements by extracting data for submission to the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) via the Data Pipeline.

An optional Statewide Student Information System (SIS) would streamline and standardize this process by functioning similarly to district-level systems but with added capabilities for CDE access. Key features could include:

- Centralized Data Access: Districts would store, secure, and manage their data within the statewide system while controlling which datasets are authorized for CDE access.
- Streamlined Reporting and Improved Data Quality: The system could eliminate the need for districts to extract data from their local SIS and upload it into the Data Pipeline, as CDE could directly pull authorized data for state and federal reporting. This automated exchange of data could improve data quality by eliminating a manual step in the process.
- Increased Efficiency: By removing redundant steps and ensuring consistency in data formats, the goal of a statewide SIS would be to reduce administrative burdens for districts and improve the accuracy and timeliness of reporting.

Any system selected would be envisioned to create economies of scale both in price and efficiencies while also providing districts and the Department with a secure and less labor-intensive system while enhancing data quality.

25 ***[Sen. Bridges] How much does the State already spend every year on the Data Pipeline? How does this proposal fit into that?***

The state currently spends about $1.4 million on vendor maintenance and support contracts as well as up to $2.5 million on salaries directly and indirectly involved in data collection (number will depend on how the Data Pipeline work is defined). This system supports approximately 50 data collections requiring significant coordination with Local Education Providers (LEPs).

Over the past four years, the legislature has required 32 new or amended data collections – nearly a third of which have occurred in the last two years. This growth

not only reflects the increasing complexity of statutory data requirements but also an increasing cost at the local level. Typically, any new or modified collections require the state to invest resources to modify Data Pipeline, which in turn requires districts to modify their systems accordingly – oftentimes at a cost to the LEP. Beyond the system modifications, there is also an increased cost on both LEP's and the Department's workforce/capacity. Part of the study will evaluate the financial impact these changes have at the local level and if an SIS would reduce those costs.

While the study would recommend the best design/structure of a statewide SIS in Colorado, the likely outcome is that any system would be an opt-in model for LEPs (at least for the first few years), allowing them to choose whether to adopt the new system. Thus, CDE would likely need to maintain the Data Pipeline, at least initially, and the statewide SIS, which could place a greater burden on the Department. Therefore, the cost and burden of any statewide SIS would need to be outweighed by allowing the state to leverage economies of scale and create efficiencies at the local level, reducing the overall cost associated at the local level for maintaining individual Student Information Systems and completing statutorily required reporting. Please note that the economies of scale to be recognized by implementing a statewide SIS, as well as the return on investment calculations, will be across all components of the education ecosystem, i.e., state government, districts and CDE, and a long term investment to save taxpayers' money.

26 ***[Rep. Bird] There is lots of costly data gathering happening at the district level. Are district concerns alleviated or exacerbated by the request? Is this district-driven or state-driven?***

Districts currently rely on their own independently purchased and managed Student Information Systems (SIS) to collect and store student data. A statewide SIS would not reduce the amount of data districts are required to gather but could streamline processes by enabling the state to pull required data directly from a centralized system. This would require designing and developing robust data protections and district control over access and permissions.

In a prior assessment, districts expressed **support** for a statewide SIS but also voiced concerns regarding:

- **Transition & Data Migration:** Districts were hesitant to replace their existing systems due to significant prior investments and the disruption a transition might cause.

- **Cost Skepticism:** While the statewide system was projected to lower costs, districts were skeptical of overall pricing and reluctant to contribute to a statewide fund, even if it reduced their long-term expenditures.

Since then, **data collection requirements have increased**, while districts simultaneously report shrinking workforce capacity to manage these growing demands. This has intensified the administrative burden at the local level and created a need for more efficient solutions.

Districts have consistently reported the increasing pressures that data collections place on their overall capacity. **Instead of hiring staff for classrooms, districts are often faced with the need to focus their limited budgets on data support instead.** Revisiting the proposal with updated cost models and input from districts could provide a collaborative path forward.

27 ***[Rep. Taggart] If the State moves forward with a statewide Student Information System, what would be the costs of implementing such a system?***

The costs of implementing a statewide SIS depend on several variables, including:

- **System Options:** The number of systems districts can choose from and the level of customization allowed.
- **Additional Features:** Whether the system includes integrated functions such as finance, HR, or transportation.
- **Participation & Financing Model:** Whether the system is mandatory or optional for districts, and if/how costs may be shared between the state and LEPs.
- **Infrastructure and Transition:** The scope of support required for implementation and ongoing maintenance.

The **$200,000 evaluation** has been requested to identify the recommended structure for the system and provide a detailed cost estimate. This study will clarify the specific requirements, potential configurations, and associated financial implications. However, a more precise figure, as well as what cost will be directly paid by the state, will depend on the outcomes of the evaluation and decisions about the system's design and implementation approach (such as cost-sharing models, what, if any, offsets/efficiencies might be available, etc.).

Reductions

28 ***[Rep. Sirota] How do you propose to use the $500,000 that would remain in the appropriation for career advisor training after the reduction? Is $500,000 needed to maintain a website?***

Since the 2022-23 program year, the state investment in the Colorado Career Advisor Training Program (CCATP) resulted in the development of the Colorado Career Advising Tool and 80+ trainings about career advising and using the tool. With the CCATP ongoing funding support, in-person, virtual, and online trainings Meaningful Career Conversations, a beginner's training to increasing career advising skills, are available upon request as well. Maintaining a $500,000 investment will enable Colorado to build on the foundational work of the CCATP and sustain critical initiatives that extend beyond maintaining initial trainings and resources. The efforts listed below would ensure that career advising professionals across sectors (K12, higher education, and workforce) can develop aligned career advising skills, to advance statewide workforce readiness goals.

Ongoing and Future Use of $500,000

1. Current Activities Underway Using Existing Funds:
The program has already developed robust resources, including the **Colorado Career Advising (CCA) Tool** and training opportunities, which have seen:

- **3,800+ learners** utilizing the tool as of September 2024.
- **15+ districts** piloting dashboard features for Individual Career and Academic Planning (ICAP).
- **78 trainings with 1,115 attendees** held to date, with ongoing availability of in-person and online training options.

The remaining funds will continue supporting initiatives underway, including:

- **Landscape Review:** Analyzing career advising resources across sectors.
- **Stakeholder Forums:** Gathering input for a statewide ICAP/career pathways platform (aligned with House Bill 1215 Task Force recommendation #5).
- **ICAP Framework Development:** Establishing a career advising framework as part of a voluntary statewide ICAP model.
- **Credential Recommendations:** Exploring a Colorado Career Advisor Credential aligned with national standards.
- **Statewide Career Advising Conference:** Hosting a 500+ attendee event in February 2025 to engage career advisors across sectors.

2. Proposed Future Uses of $500,000:
Once the results of the current projects are available (expected January 2025), the remaining on-going funding will support initiatives such as:

- **Advising Conferences:** Hosting annual, regional conferences to strengthen career advising across sectors.

- **Credential Development:** Creating and maintaining a Colorado Career Advisor Credential or pathways to national certification for career advisors and licensed educators.
- **Tool Refinement:** Further developing free online tools for schools and students to support required ICAP elements and enhance career pathways (aligned with the 1215 Task Force recommendation #5).
- **Targeted Training:** Offering specific professional development tailored to emerging needs, such as FAFSA/CASFA completion, Unified Improvement Plan strategies, or expanding work-based learning opportunities.

Why $500,000 is Needed Beyond Maintaining the Website

The Colorado Career Advising Program encompasses more than a website. The funds ensure:

- Sustained development and delivery of training and resources for school counselors, career advisors, and other educators.
- Support for strategic initiatives like ICAP refinement, credential creation, and stakeholder engagement.
- Capacity to host impactful conferences and respond to statewide data-driven needs.

29 ***[Sen. Bridges] Which programs does the Department think we should/should not cut? Discuss the options on the JBC Staff list and any other options the JBC should look at.***

The State Board of Education has not taken a formal position on specific program reductions other than those that were included in the original budget submission. However, the Department's submitted budget requests and offsets have been guided by its strategic plan.

30 ***[Sen. Bridges] How many students are served annually by the Colorado Student Leaders Institute?***

The Colorado Student Leaders Institute (COSLI) serves up to **100 students annually.** Per the records CDE was able to access from the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE), approximately 60 students were served, on average, between 2016 and 2022. Established in 2012 and codified by Senate Bill 15-290, COSLI provides students with

three hours of college credit through a month-long summer program focused on leadership and academic experience.

Annual Costs

- **Total Program Cost:** $290,000
  - **Cost per Student (based on 100 students):** $2,900
- **Long Bill Appropriation (2023-24):** $250,000
  - $2500/student at 100 students or $4167/student at 60 students
- **Student and/or Sponsor Contribution Fee:** $400 per student, generating up to an additional $40,000 annually.

31 ***[Staff] Please comment on staff's proposal to eliminate funding for the following two line items and provide a list of distribution by district for the most recent available year:***

At-risk Supplemental Aid - The State Board of Education has not taken a position on the elimination of this funding source for districts. The FY 2023-24 Supplemental At-Risk Aid distributions for School Districts and Charter Schools is available at this link.

At-risk Per Pupil Additional Funding - The State Board of Education has not taken a position on the elimination of this funding source for districts. The FY 2023-24 Additional At-risk Funding distributions is available at this link.

School District Operations – Nutrition Programs

Healthy School Meals for All

32 ***[Sen. Bridges] Does the Department have any additional information on projected expenses and revenue for the Healthy School Meals for All Program? When do you expect more to be available?***

Since the beginning of the Healthy School Meals for All (HSMA) program, revenue was only an estimate based upon projections published by the Governor's Office of State Planning and Budgeting. Tax year 2023 was the first year of the HSMA add-back of deductions for those with over $300,000 of adjusted gross income. Given that many of the impacted filers would not finalize their tax returns until October 2024, all revenue from tax year 2023 was an estimate until October filings information was available on December 2nd, 2024.

Previous estimates from the September forecast indicated revenue would be approximately $127 million for the current fiscal year. If revenue estimates had proven correct at $127 million and if voters approved keeping the full funding, revenue would have been sufficient to cover the projected meal costs in FY 2024-25. However, with

actual revenue being significantly lower than anticipated and voters not yet approving the state to keep the previous accruals above the Blue Book estimate, there will be a shortfall between current available revenue and projected expenditures in FY 2024-25.

CDE has preliminary estimates of $124 million for meal reimbursements for FY 2024-25. This is based upon meal claim data through September 2024. The Department will have better estimates in January 2025, which will include meal reimbursement data through October of the current school year, along with updated revenue estimates from the December 19th forecast.

Based on current data, there is a funding gap of approximately $8 million over and above the $22 million in State Education Fund dollars already appropriated to fully cover HSMA meals in fiscal year 2024-25.

33 ***[Sen. Bridges] Provide more information on the community eligibility provision and the federal decision to change the threshold for participation in the community eligibility provision from 40 percent to 25 percent. How much does fully using the CEP provision seem to be saving us in FY 2024-25? Who made the decision—USDA? If that policy were to be changed again under a new administration, how quickly could that happen?***

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Services issued a Final Rule on September 26, 2023, reducing the minimum Identified Student Percentage (ISP) for CEP participation from 40% to 25%. This change allows more schools to participate in CEP, which provides free meals to all students without requiring household applications, streamlining access and reducing administrative burdens. However, the flexibility of federal rulemaking means this policy could change under a new administration. CDE has reached out to the USDA for clarification on the process and timeframe for potential revisions to this Final Rule. USDA has stated that a notice and comment rulemaking process generally takes several months. CDE will continue monitoring and reporting on any developments that could impact CEP implementation.

Financial Impact in FY 2024-25:
Preliminary estimates indicate that fully utilizing the CEP provision will result in **$40 million in savings for Colorado in FY 2024-25** compared to FY 2023-24. These savings are driven by:

- Expanded eligibility due to the lower ISP threshold.
- Increased ISP rates from Medicaid data matching.
- Implementation of recommendations from **HB 24-1390**, which directed the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to help school districts optimize federal reimbursement opportunities.

It is unclear what percentage of the $40 million is made up by each of these components. CDE has contracted for additional modeling to estimate the amount that is coming from the reduction in CEP eligibility from 40% to 25%. When these estimates are available, they will be shared with the Joint Budget Committee.

34 ***[Rep. Bird] Please clarify an excerpt included in the JBC staff document from the Healthy School Meals for All Technical Advisory Group report: Did stakeholders who provided input to the TAG believe grant programs should be prioritized above meals for students or were they simply advocating for FY 2025-26 grant programs in addition to fully funding meals?***

Stakeholders who provided input to the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) did not prioritize HSMA grant programs above providing universal meals for students. Instead, while clearly indicating maintaining universal meals to all was their top priority, they advocated for both:

- **Grant Programs in Addition to Fully Funding Meals:** Stakeholders emphasized that grant programs are a critical component of the Healthy School Meals for All initiative, supporting the infrastructure and resources necessary to provide nutritious meals to students effectively.
- **Continuity of Grant Programs:** Stakeholders also stressed the importance of ensuring the grant programs continue beyond single-year increments, advocating for stability and long-term funding to maximize their impact.

SCHOOL DISTRICT OPERATIONS – SUPPORTS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

35 ***[Sen. Bridges/Staff]: Are there better measures that would allow us to better track the outcomes for English Language Learners? What outcomes are being measured to determine successful English Language Development education practices now? How are those outcomes being measured and tracked?***

In response to the JBC issue briefing regarding *"English Language Learner Funding and Performance,"* CDE would caution against using current expenditure data to evaluate or compare outcomes for English Language Learners for a few reasons:

- **Data Purpose** – As the memo referenced, *"...expenditure reporting is entirely dependent on individual district systems with little oversight from the Department.*" This is because expenditure reporting to the Department is primarily intended for financial budgeting, accounting, and reporting purposes.
- **Data Quality** - Because of the administrative burden, districts may not report all ELL-related expenditures to the grant program. For example, one former superintendent recently shared that if they had $2 million in ELL-related expenses but only received $1 million in ELPA funds, they would provide detailed

level reporting on $1 million as required for ELPA reporting but would report the remaining balance as general education expenses. How districts classify expenses varies at the local level.

- **Data Specificity -** The categories within expenditure reporting are designed for budget, accounting, and reporting purposes rather than around student outcomes and, therefore, do not provide granular enough data to make solid conclusions about student outcomes.

The Department publishes insights into how districts are using funding resources at the school level on a per-pupil basis. In the future, as a result of HB24-1448, the Department will start reporting School Finance revenues on a per-pupil basis.

There are a number of other measures the state uses to understand **outcomes for multilingual learners**, including:

- Colorado school and district performance frameworks include the following data:
  - English language proficiency data from the ACCESS assessment for multilingual learners (developed by the WIDA Consortium). This includes data in reading, writing, speaking and listening. There are five levels of performance assigned to describe students' proficiency. Using the ACCESS results, schools, districts, and CDE can analyze different components of outcomes for multilingual learners, including:
    - The growth students are making in acquiring English compared to similar peers, and
    - Whether the students are on track to reach English proficiency within a designated time frame.
  - Achievement and growth on the CMAS English language arts, CMAS math assessments, the PSAT, SAT, and applicable alternative assessments for multilingual learners as a disaggregated group.
  - Finally, the frameworks include dropout rates and graduation rates (4-7 year).
- The state also disaggregates many other data points, including attendance and chronic absenteeism data. This data provides information about the amount of time students are not in school and not receiving instruction.
- CMAS assessment data in English language arts is also used to monitor the progress of multilingual learners who have been redesignated into monitor or exited status and the department intends to use this data point to inform targeted support.

36 ***[Rep. Taggart] What is the Department doing to support best practices for serving ELL students, e.g., around dual language schools?***

The Department provides a variety of supports to districts to serve multilingual learners, including:

- Targeted guidance on the various programs districts could use for language development, including ESL programming, dual language instruction, and other research-based approaches to English language acquisition,
- Professional development for district staff and teachers around instructional programming, compliance indicators, and data analysis,
- On-site program evaluations at the request of districts,
- Learning cohorts to bring districts together to learn from each other and to identify bright spots across the state.

One area the Department has identified as requiring greater support is within the READ Act. This was also identified by JBC staff's analysis:

- *"An additional area that should be supporting ELLs is the state's READ Act. Since the implementation of requirements to instruct students in the science of reading, English Learners have been continually over-identified as having a significant reading deficiency. Various analyses by education researchers suggest that this gap may be a result of a deepened focus on phonetics that fails to emphasize meaning for students whose first language is not English. While most of the strategies encompassed in the science of reading do support reading development in ELLs, they lack a focus on comprehension, particularly at younger ages when English Learners might need more explicit instruction on basic vocabulary and syntax that would not be emphasized in a reading lesson for native English speakers (e.g. explicitly identifying the multiple meanings of "run" in an English sentence outside of the phonetic pronunciation of the word). These findings suggest a need to emphasize increased training on strategies to support ELLs alongside their English-speaking peers."*

The Department's READ Act request (R6) expands on the existing supports and creates a training specific to educating multilingual learners.

37 [Staff] What *compulsory* supports and practices are being offered to struggling districts?

Given the nature of local control in Colorado, there are very few *compulsory* supports or practices; however, there are some limited instances, primarily driven by the Office of Civil Rights. The Department provides several other optional supports, such as:

- Technical assistance and/or professional learning support, as requested, if the district received a Federal Office of Civil Rights (OCR) finding with required corrective actions.
- Targeted support through learning cohorts to allow for district-to-district learning of implementation of best practices to serve multilingual learners.

- Training to districts on federal law compulsory district practices, including providing a home language survey for parents, initial screening to determine language proficiency, and program placement.
- Specific trainings requested by the field, i.e., long-term multilingual learners, supporting secondary multilingual learners, instructional practice to support language learning in the content classrooms.
- On-site program audits as requested by the district to review their programming and intake processes and discuss gaps or improvement needs.
- Office hours to support district leaders with specific problems of practice.

Further, when a student is dual-identified as a multilingual learner and a student with a disability, then federal IDEA compulsory supports, such as FAPE, must follow this student.

While not at the district level, compulsory requirements exist for teachers. Effective Sept 1. 2025, teachers renewing licenses with an endorsement in elementary education, English language arts, math, science, social studies, or any middle-level subject must complete English Learner Professional Development (ELPD). In addition, CDE works with higher education programs to make sure their teacher programs are aligned with requirements for teachers.

School District Operations – Public School Capital Construction

38 ***[Sen. Bridges] Provide information on the distribution of BEST funding across the State. How much has gone to the Front Range versus other areas? How much of the need that exists has BEST met in rural/small rural versus non-rural districts?***

The table below shows the amount of BEST funding that has been awarded to Rural, Small Rural, and Urban projects over the lifetime of the BEST program (FY 2008-09 through FY 2024-25).

Total Projects Funded FY09 - FY25		BEST Grant Contribution	Total Project Funded		Projected Assessed Need Through FY29
Small Rural	233	$ 1,327,257,226	$ 1,904,694,008	49%	$ 1,846,554,557
Rural	170	$ 474,278,890	$ 920,572,795	24%	$ 3,029,279,651
Urban	173	$ 534,188,106	$ 1,042,573,614	27%	$ 15,106,902,425
BOCES/CSDB	9	$ 34,779,195	$ 44,398,356	1%	$ 60,920,396
	585	$ 2,370,503,418	$ 3,912,238,774		$ 20,043,657,029

As this table illustrates, BEST has had a larger proportional investment in rural/small rural districts than larger urban districts, though significant dollars have been awarded to both. The total amount of dollars awarded to each district over the life of the program does not necessarily indicate the amount of total capital needs being met, as there are other mechanisms for districts to address their needs beyond the BEST program. BEST grants have been and are awarded to address current requests (or immediate needs); only projects that meet priority level of health, life, and safety have historically been awarded. Meanwhile, outstanding capital maintenance costs (assessed needs) continue to grow each year as facilities deteriorate and inflation increases the cost to repair deficiencies.

The table also shows the currently projected five-year assessed need in each of these geographic regions. Again, while the BEST program has awarded and will continue to award significant funds to resolve health, safety, and security deficiencies throughout the state, the program cannot immediately address all outstanding capital maintenance costs (assessed needs) in Colorado's school facilities.

39 ***[Staff] What is the anticipated impact of the proposal in R1 over the longer term? Has there been any related forecasting?***

The Department has referred this question to the Governor's Office as the Department has not been involved in the details of this proposal.

40 ***[Staff] What do cash grants offer BEST recipients? What do the proceeds of COPs provide? What is a reasonable balance between the two? What constitutes "adequate" funding for public school capital construction?***

Cash Grants for BEST Recipients:
Cash grants play a critical role in providing an equalizing factor for school districts that lack the capacity to raise sufficient local funds to address health, safety, and security issues in school facilities.

Proceeds of COPs:
The proceeds from Certificates of Participation (COPs) are used to fund large-scale projects, including major renovations, additions, and complete school replacements. By leveraging COPs, the program preserves limited cash grant appropriations for smaller but equally critical projects, enabling a more strategic allocation of resources to address both immediate and long-term infrastructure needs.

Finding a Balance:
The Colorado Department of Education (CDE), in collaboration with the Capital Construction Assistance Board (CCAB) and the Treasury, works to strike a reasonable balance between cash grants and COP proceeds. This balance is informed by factors such as available debt capacity, existing debt, market rates, fund balances, current and projected revenues, and the size and scope of projects being requested. The goal is to maximize impact while ensuring fiscal sustainability and compliance with debt limitations.

Adequate Funding for Public School Capital Construction:
The industry standard for adequate capital renewal funding is 2-4% of the total Current Replacement Value (CRV) of school facilities. For Colorado's schools, with an estimated replacement value of $43.4 billion, this equates to $867.4 million to $1.7 billion annually.

Recognizing the State's inability to meet this benchmark, the Office of the State Architect recommends a 1% CRV annual reinvestment rate for controlled maintenance.

41 ***[Staff] What is the BEST program's current plan for issuing new COPs as authorized under H.B. 24-1448? What is the expectation for supporting charter school facilities after FY 2028-29, when increases provided under H.B. 24-1448 end?***

The BEST program, in collaboration with the Capital Construction Assistance Board (CCAB) and the Treasury, will analyze the estimated value of new Certificates of Participation (COPs) authorized under HB24-1448. This analysis will balance the type and dollar value of requests from districts and charter schools during the FY 2026 grant round, while also considering current budget discussions and projected revenues. Treasury is currently finalizing a Request for Proposals for a financial advisor to support this process, so detailed discussions on the timing and size of COP issuances have not yet begun.

Historically, when allowable debt was increased, the CCAB has opted to issue COPs over multiple grant cycles rather than issuing all debt at once. This phased approach provides flexibility and ensures that funds are aligned with evolving project needs and priorities.

Per pupil funding for charter school facilities is based on a statutory formula. Following the passage of HB24-1448, one-time annual funding amounts were added through FY 2028-29, along with statutory direction for CDE to apply to the Federal Charter School Program – State Facilities Incentive Grant.

After FY 2028-29, and assuming no other legislative action, the state funding for charter school facilities will revert to the amount specified by the pre-HB24-1448 formula.

CDE was awarded the Federal State Facilities Incentive Grant in October of 2024. The grant is scheduled to end in September of 2029. Any funding requirements for the Federal award will end with the grant period.

This measured approach aims to maximize the program's impact while maintaining fiscal responsibility and addressing the diverse capital construction needs of Colorado's schools and charters.

School District Operations – Public School Finance and Categorical Programs

School Finance (non-R1) Questions:

42 ***[Staff] Provide an update on implementation of the H.B. 22-1202 At-risk Student Measure.***

HB22-1202 created a new, at-risk measure that included the use of:

- Direct certification data or an Identified Student Percentage (ISP) through programs such as Temporary Aid to Needy Families, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and Medicaid; and
- A neighborhood socioeconomic-status (SES) index based on a student's census block group, that weights need based on socioeconomic-status index factors for each census block group.

Pursuant to SB24-188, the socioeconomic status (SES) index is set to be incorporated into school finance calculations starting with the 2025-2026 school year. In preparation for implementation of this new measure, districts were required to report student-level census block data in the 2024 Student October collection. Specifically, districts were required to submit the following census block data associated with each student's primary physical address:

- State - This field contains the two-digit state code, as defined by the US census bureau.
- County -This field contains the three-digit county code that identifies each county.
- Tract - This field contains the six-digit tract number, which is a small relatively permanent statistical subdivision of a county.
- Block codes - This field contains the four-digit block number, which is a statistical area bounded by both visible and nonvisible features and is small in area (i.e. a smaller location found within a given tract).

This data can be obtained from the Census Geocode Tool or a district's GIS system based upon each student's address.

In the event that the district has no census block data for a given student, districts were able to provide coding to indicate the following:

- Address on File-Did Not Attempt to Obtain Census Block Data: The district has a primary physical address on file but did NOT attempt to obtain census block data using the geocode tool.
- Address on File-No Census Block Data Returned: The district confirmed that the primary physical address is valid using USPS but the geocode tool did not return census block data.
- Confidentiality Program: No census block data was provided because the district has confirmed the student is participating in a confidentiality program.
- No Physical Primary Address on File- Identified Group: The district does not have a primary physical address on file and the student is confirmed homeless, migrant, foster child, or attending a detention center.
- No Physical Primary Address on File-No Identified Group: The district does not have a primary physical address on file and the student is not confirmed homeless, migrant, foster child, or attending a detention center.
- Out of State codes: The district has a primary physical address on file that is not in Colorado.

Similar to the findings of the pilot conducted in the summer 2023, implementation of the new at-risk measure was extremely burdensome and challenging for rural and small rural districts. These districts struggled to utilize the tools provided for the work and typically fell short of collecting the required data for their district. Statewide, districts obtained data for 94.64% of students. Of the 5.36% of students without census block data, the following is the breakdown of the reasons for the lack of data:

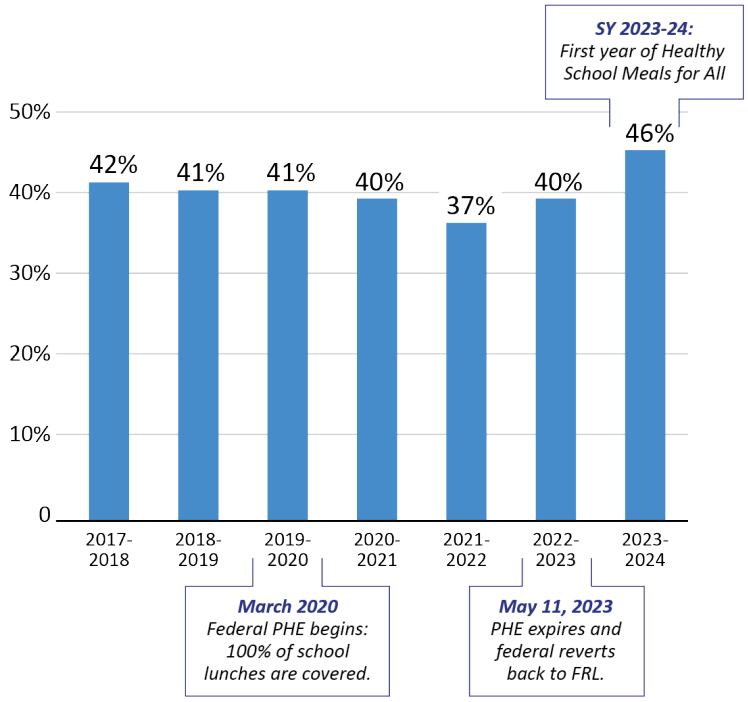
- Did Not Attempt to Obtain Census Block Data: 1.10%
- No Census Block Data Returned: 3.94%
- Confidentiality Program: 0.04%
- No Address on File- Identified Group: 0.05%
- No Address on File- No Identified Group: 0.19%
- Out of State: 0.05%

While larger districts obtained data for almost 97% of their students, many rural and small rural districts typically acquired the needed data for approximately 81% of their student population. The following is a summary of the district collection rates:

- 100% of students with valid data: 30 districts (16.8% of districts)
- 75%-100% of students with valid data: 98 districts (54.7% of districts)
- 50-75% of students with valid data: 33 districts (18.4% of districts)

- 25-50% of students with valid data: 4 districts (2.2% of districts)
- 1-25% of students with valid data: 5 districts (2.8% of districts)
- 0% of students with valid data: 9 districts (5.0% of districts)

It is important to note that last year, as part of the report on the pilot program, the Department conducted an analysis of FRL rates overtime and found that in the first year of the Healthy School Meals for All program, the incorporation of the Medicaid data raised at-risk identification to the highest rate in nearly seven years as outline in the chart below.



The department anticipates the FY24-25 at-risk student count could be slightly lower than it was last year, but small amounts of fluctuation are likely normal year-to-year. Additionally, there are several one-time factors that could cause a slight drop in identified students, such as:

- The final portion of Medicaid recertification rolloff required after the end of the federal public health emergency,
- The new requirements around participation in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) as a condition for eligibility for the Healthy School Meals for All (HSMA) program, which impacted up to 135 new districts. Those new districts had to comply with requirements that were new to them and may have impacted the overall collection.

Given that the current mechanisms in place appear to be identifying at-risk students more effectively than they had previously, coupled with the significant data burden on districts, the State Board of Education voted on December 12th that the legislature remove the census block requirements for identification of at-risk students.

If the General Assembly would like to move forward with incorporating the new measure, the Department would need clarification on how to calculate the census block data, including:

- How to calculate/weight the quintiles in the SES indicator.
- How to weight the combined SES indicator and at-risk counts in calculating the new at-risk measure.
- What, if any other identification mechanisms (such as Free-Reduced Lunch applications or Family Economic Data forms, etc.) should remain in place.

43 ***[Staff] Provide an update on the status of the two school finance adequacy studies provided by S.B. 23-287.***

Senate Bill 23-287 requires the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to contract with two independent entities to conduct a study and publish a report on the components and costs necessary to adequately provide Colorado students a free and uniform public education. The parameters for these studies were developed by the Public School Finance Task Force.

One of the studies was an input focused financial adequacy study utilizing professional judgment (PJ) and evidenced-based (EB) methods to create a prototypical school and determine costs of all elements necessary for success and to meet state academic standards and for success. This study was performed by Augenblick, Palaich and Associates, Inc. (APA), in partnership with Picus, Odden & Associates (POA), Afton Partners (Afton), and the Colorado School Finance Project. The website for the input based financial adequacy study conducted by APA is located at: Colorado Financial Adequacy Study | APA Consulting.

The other study was an outcome focused financial adequacy study using a method of statistical analysis known as cost function modeling to identify the funding levels needed to achieve a target level of performance. This study was performed by American Institutes for Research (AIR). The website for the output based financial adequacy study conducted by AIR is located at: Colorado Financial Adequacy Study | American Institutes for Research (air.org).

Both studies are complete and the reports are being finalized. The reports will be provided to the Education Committees of the Senate and the House of Representative and to the Joint Budget Committee on January 3, 2025.

R2 Categoricals:

44 ***[Staff] Please comment on how districts are negatively impacted by ongoing gaps in funding for categorical programs.***

As shown in the following table, districts cover a total of 65.4% of expenditures for categorical programs with local district funding; state funding covers 25.5% of these expenditures while federal funding covers 9.1%. The amount that is covered by districts varies between the categorical programs with a low of 4.2% for Expelled and At-Risk Services Grant Program and a high of 77.8% for Public School Transportation. It may be helpful to note that the transportation funding only covers costs for route transportation (home to school, school to school, and school to home). Therefore, districts are also covering the costs for activity trips including field trips and athletics.

	Special Education Program for Children with Disabilites	English Language Proficiency Programs	Public School Transportation	Career and Technical Education Programs	Gifted and Talented Programs	Expelled and At-Risk Services Grant Program	Small Attendance Center Aid	Compre-hensive Health Education	Total
A. FY 22-23 Total District Expenditures	$1,325,624,999	$255,957,445	$290,292,950	$131,582,165	$44,722,101	$9,209,453	$1,619,968	$1,126,461	$2,060,135,542
B. FY 22-23 Total State / Federal Distributions	-511,220,830	-79,430,123	-64,439,895	-34,385,324	-12,538,874	-8,820,400	-1,314,250	-699,412	-712,849,108
C. FY 22-23 Funding Gap Between District Expenditures and State / Federal Revenues	$814,404,170	$176,527,321	$225,853,055	$97,196,841	$32,183,227	$389,053	$305,718	$427,049	$1,347,286,433
Portion of Expenditures Covered by Local District Funding	61.4%	69.0%	77.8%	73.9%	72.0%	4.2%	18.9%	37.9%	65.4%
Portion of Expenditures Covered by State and Federal Funding	38.6%	31.0%	22.2%	26.1%	28.0%	95.8%	81.1%	62.1%	34.6%

In total, based upon expenditure data reported by districts, the funding gap between district categorical expenditures and state and federal revenues is $1.35 Billion. (Note: districts may not report all expenditures related to these categorical programs. Therefore, the reported gap in funding may be understated. The reported gap represents approximately 10% of districts total operating expenditures of $13.29 Billion in FY 2022-23.

Charter School Institute

R3 CSI Mill Levy Equalization

45 ***[Rep. Bird/Sen. Bridges] Review what you do/don't know at this point about the cost for CSI Mill Levy Equalization for FY 2024-25 and FY 2025-26.***

Our budget request seeks to maintain the commitment made by the legislature to ensure CSI charter public school students have the same level of funding as their district peers. However, the calculation for determining the dollar amount is based on several factors, some of which are not yet available.

- The Governor's November 1st budget request of $1.7M was based on available data.
    - This included CSI projected enrollment for FY26.
    - However, it would not have included FY26 district enrollment projections, any MLOs based off of the November elections, or updates to assessed valuations.
- CSI provided an estimate to JBC Staff Amanda Bickel that was $7.7M on top of the $1.7M included in the Governor's November 1st budget, based on available data.
    - This estimate used CSI enrollment projections for FY26 as well as the MLOs that passed in November.
    - However, it still would not have included updated district enrollment projections, updates to assessed valuations, or impacts from the property tax legislation.
    - As JBC Staff Amanda Bickel shared at the Briefing, CSI's estimate may be a significant over projection as it doesn't consider assessed values and implications of property tax legislation.
- CSI plans to work closely with Legislative Council Staff and JBC Staff to provide this Committee an updated estimate in January.

Cuts Options

46 ***[Staff] Discuss the option of removing multi-district online schools from the CSI mill levy equalization calculation and the option of capping funding for CSI mill levy equalization again.***

Currently, statute includes a provision whereby the district may, but is not required, to choose to distribute a portion of the additional mill levy revenue to a multi-district online school. CSI would be open to having CSI statutory language align with this district language, which would allow CSI to choose whether to extend mill levy equalization fund dollars to the one multi-district online school serving roughly 400 students within CSI. If CSI chose not to fund MLEs for multi-district online schools, it would save roughly $1.7M in FY26, thereby offsetting the Governor's R3 CSI Mill Levy Equalization budget item.

An option was shared to cap funding for the CSI MLE Fund. CSI strongly opposes this option.

- Reinforces Systemic Inequity: Capping the CSI MLE Fund would undo progress toward equity, perpetuating historical funding disparities that unfairly disadvantage CSI public school students. This is the first year the legislature has committed to fully fund the MLE fund. Capping the fund now would go back on the promise legislators made just a few

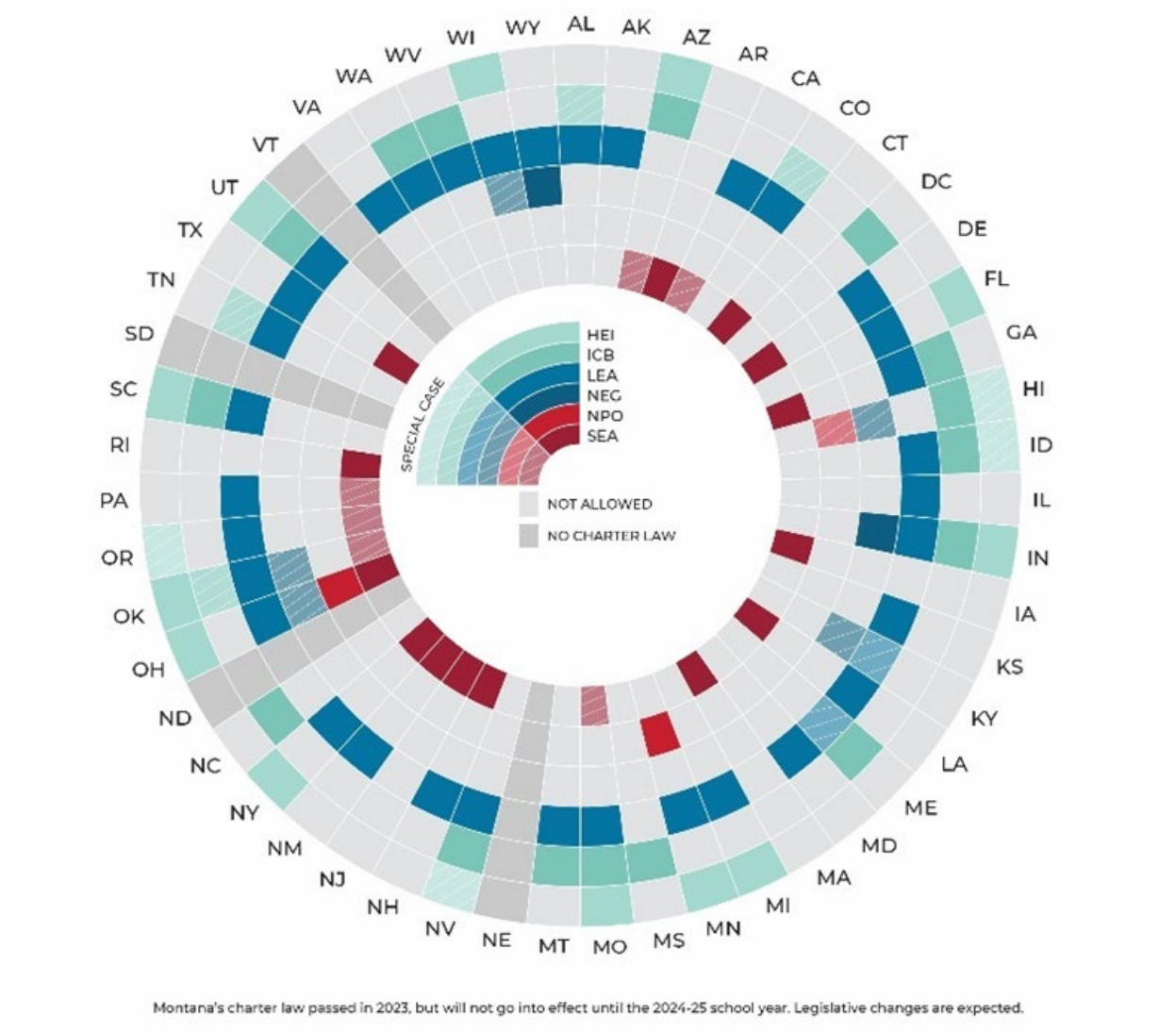
months ago to treat CSI students the same as every other public school student in Colorado. CSI views this result as untenable.

- Ignores Broader Efforts Toward Equity: While the state's Mill Levy Match Working Group is addressing funding inequities for districts, capping the CSI MLE Fund would ignore disparities for over 20,000 CSI students.
- Disincentivizes High-Quality School Options in High-Need Areas: A capped fund discourages CSI from authorizing schools in underserved communities, where equitable funding is crucial for supporting innovation and addressing student needs.
- Punishes Students for Authorizer Choice: CSI students should not face reduced funding opportunities simply because their families chose schools authorized by a statewide entity.
- Undermines Legislative Intent: Capping the fund contradicts the legislature's original intent to provide equity for CSI students and undermines progress toward parity with district-authorized schools.
- Ignores Long-Term Cost of Inequity: Limiting funding today leads to compounded inequities that have direct impacts on 20,000 students attending CSI schools.
- Reduces Transparency and Accountability: A capped fund obscures the actual needs of CSI schools, mismatches resources with enrollment growth, and creates unnecessary confusion about funding allocation.

47 ***[Sen. Marchman] Do other states have statewide authorizers like CSI? If so, how are the schools that are overseen by the statewide authorizer funded? How does the funding amount, source, and structure compare to funding for local school districts?***

The authorization landscape differs vastly across the nation. Nearly 90 percent of authorizers across the country are local school districts, but they can also be state education agencies, independent boards (like the Charter School Institute), universities, mayors and municipalities, and non-profit organizations. In Colorado, school districts can authorize schools, and in limited cases, CSI can authorize schools.

The graphic from NACSA visualizes the vast differences in authorization contexts across the nation. Alabama and Tennessee are the only two states that mirror Colorado in that both districts and a special independent chartering board may authorize charter schools. Still, the authorizing landscape is very different in Colorado compared to these states.



Similarly, there are radically different funding models nationwide. However, according to the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, there are about 20 states that are using a variety of mechanisms to provide additional funding to charter schools authorized by statewide entities to make up for the lack of access to local revenue.

Excellence and Service

COLORADO SCHOOL

FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND

Established 1874

CSDB MISSION

The Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB), in collaboration with families, school districts and community partners, educates and inspires learners throughout the state, birth through age 21, to achieve their full potential through comprehensive, individualized academic, transition, residential and outreach programs and resources.

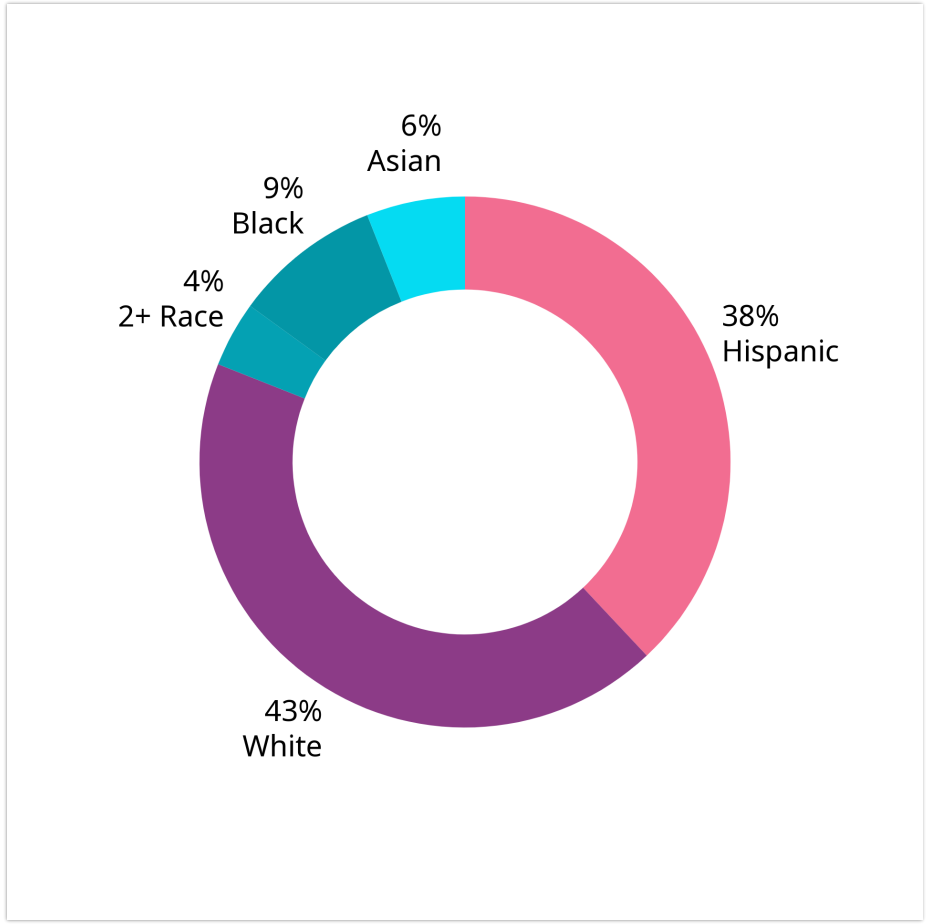
Celebrating 150 Years

1874 - 2024

CSDB

CSDB Demographics

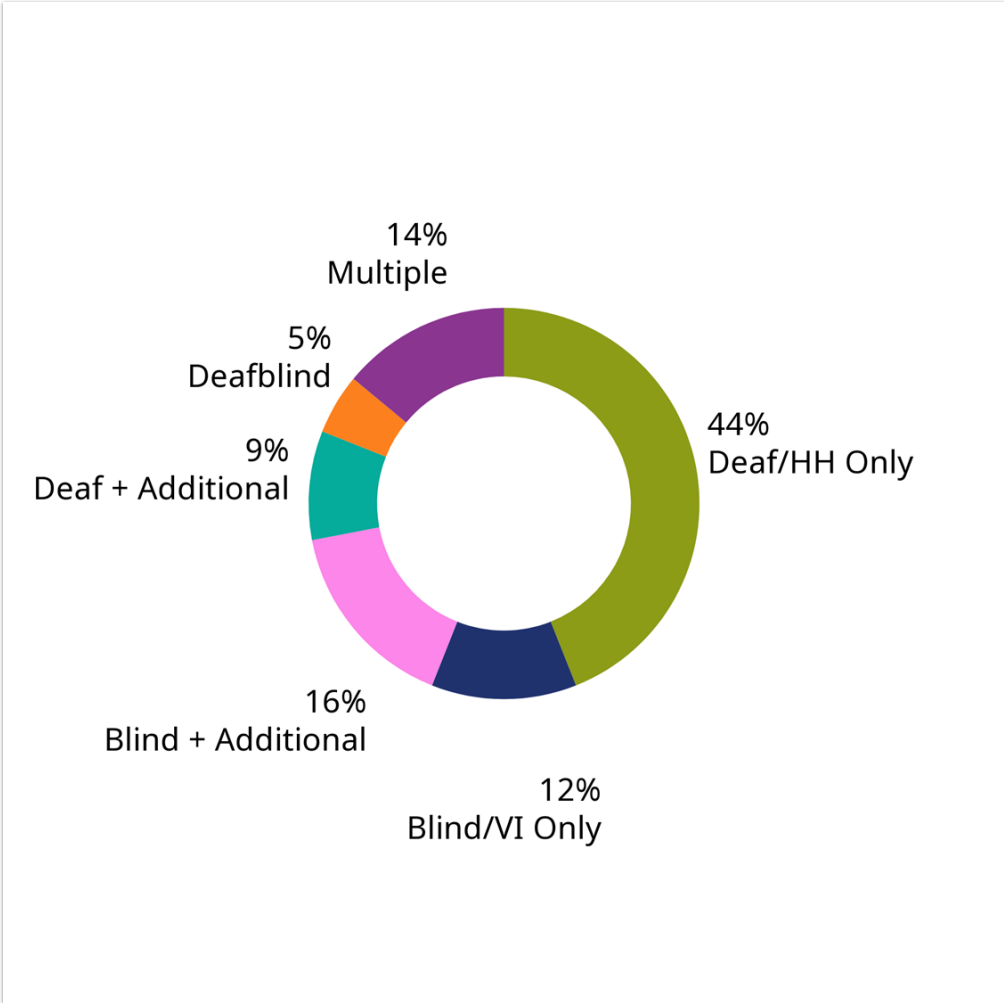
Student Demographics



Our Student Body

- Average length of stay 4.8 years
- Eligible for free/reduced lunch 67.5%
- Student contact days 185 scheduled
- Female Students 55%
- Male Student 45%

On-Campus Primary Disability Category



CSDB Programs and Services

On-Campus Programs

- School for the Deaf
- School for the Blind
- Preschool
- Residential
- Bridges to Life
- Athletics

Statewide Programs

- School-Age
- Early Education
- Professional Development
- ASL Classes
- Colorado Instructional Materials Center

R10 CSDB
Inflationary Increase

PROBLEM:

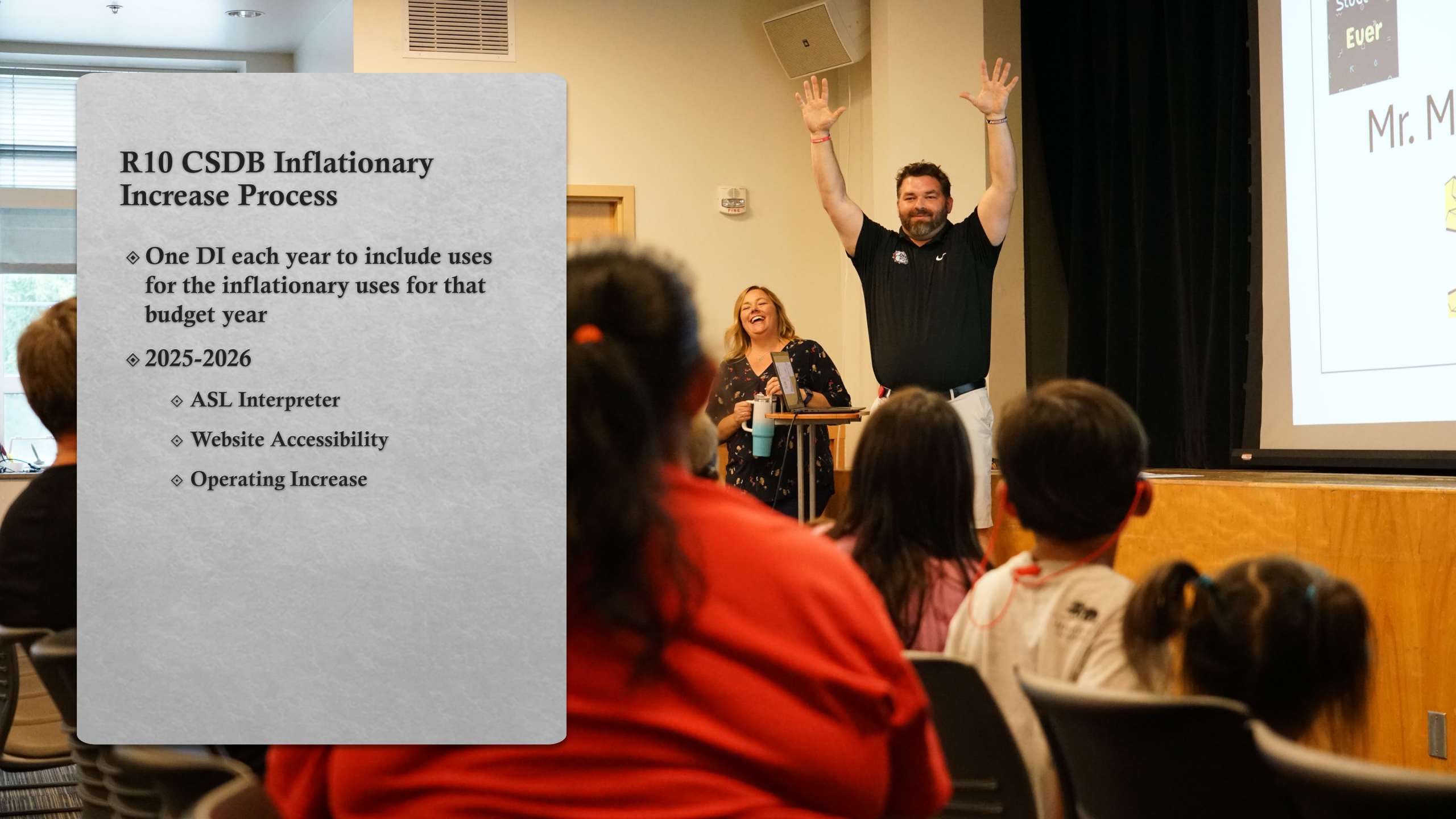
- Annual teacher salary request (statute)
- Staffing needs vary each year, and direct services are determined by the IEP
- Administrative burden

PROPOSED SOLUTION:

- Annual inflationary increase
- Inflationary rate or teacher salary request, whichever is higher

FISCAL IMPACT:

- 2025-2026 Inflation rate 2.5%
- $377,809
- Inflation rate will vary



R10 CSDB Inflationary Increase Process

- One DI each year to include uses for the inflationary uses for that budget year
- 2025-2026
  - ASL Interpreter
  - Website Accessibility
  - Operating Increase

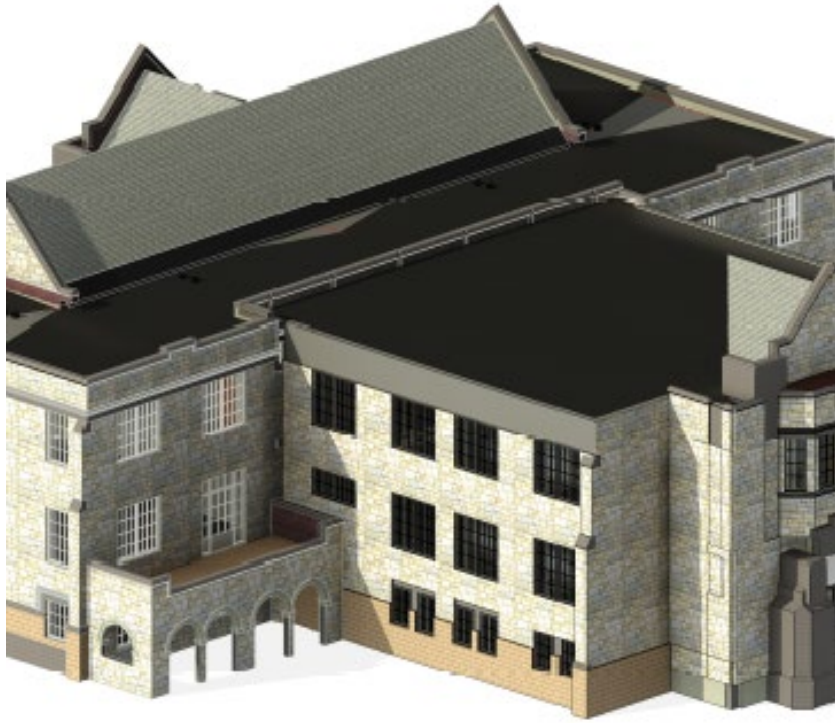
West Hall Renovation & Addition Project

- Move Blind School and Early Education Programs into West Hall
- Restore Historical Landmark - renovate three-story, 17,256 sf building
- Construct 10,000 sf addition (total square footage 27,256)
- Make accessibility & security improvements by adding elevator and secure entry vestibule
- Construct new Preschool compliant, ADA accessible playground
- Expand Chiller Plant to bring cooling to West Hall
- Install solar panels & EV charging stations to meet State energy goals
- Install backup power generator to provide emergency power to Steam Plant and Chiller Plant

West Hall Renovation & Addition

The Need – Blind School

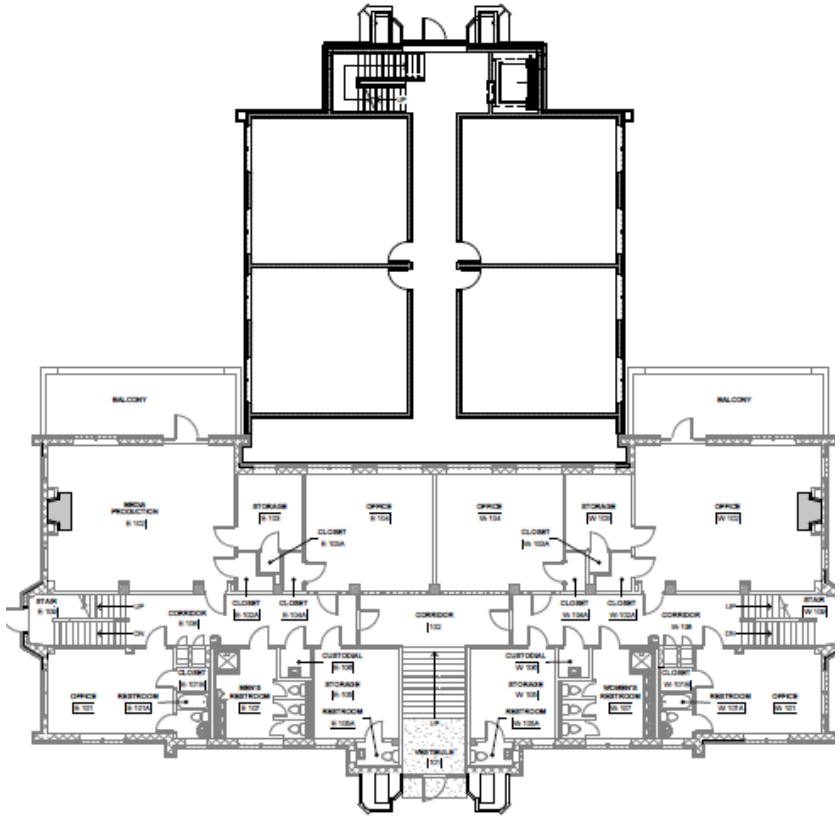
- Meet ADA, accessibility, & safety concerns
- Accommodate growing student population
- Separate spaces for Elementary, Middle, High School
- Provide better and safer academic experience with larger classrooms
- Design new spaces with blind/visually impaired needs in mind
- Provide adequate support spaces – assessment, planning, meeting
- Improve environment to drive better student outcomes, staff recruitment & retention
- Improve operational efficiency



West Hall Renovation & Addition

The Need – Early Education Program

- Meet ADA, accessibility, & safety concerns
- Accommodate growing student population
- Separate spaces for different ages and abilities
- Design new spaces with blind/visually impaired & deaf/hard-hearing needs in mind
- Improve environment to drive better student outcomes, staff recruitment & retention
- Improve operational efficiency



West Hall Funding Strategy

Total project cost $39,536,736

- Phase 1 FY25-26 - $12,773,031
  - Design & CM/GC fees
  - EV Charging Stations
  - Public Art
  - Solar Panels
  - Chiller Plant Expansion
- Phase 2 FY26-27 - 55% State ($14,720,038) & 45% BEST Grant ($12,043,667)
  - Asbestos Abatement
  - Renovate 17,256 sf & 10,000 sf Addition
  - ADA Accessibility (elevator, entrances, etc.)
  - Preschool Playground
- Apply for $12,043,667 BEST Grant February 2026 for award in July 2026
- Project Meets Governor's Accessibility, Energy and Preschool Goals and Restores a State Historical Building!

Colorado Department of Education

JBC Hearing

December 16, 2024

COLORADO
Department of Education

In alignment with our vision and values, CDE developed strategies to address state education priorities

Our Role

To improve student outcomes and ensure students and families across Colorado have access to high-quality schools, we will:

> SERVE

Provide actionable support to local educational agencies

> GUIDE

Implement policy and legislation in an effective way

> ELEVATE

Share the experiences of local educational agencies and students

Our Core Values:

INTEGRITY | EQUITY | ACCOUNTABILITY | TRUST | SERVICE

Our Priorities:

- Increase Student Engagement
- Accelerate Student Outcomes
- Strengthen the Educator Workforce
- Provide Operational Excellence

We have identified "*Big Bet Strategies*" across all four priorities.

SERVE

- Convene educators for peer learning
- Provide professional development and support
- Leverage state data for insights on best practices
- Ensure coherence in CDE policy and implementation

GUIDE

- Support implementation of high-impact requirements
- Communicate policy opportunities and requirements
- Use state data to identify support needs

ELEVATE

- Highlight "bright spots" using state data
- Leverage insights from students and families to support continuous improvement
- Collaborate to elevate the educator profession

Colorado students learn best when they stay engaged in safe and supportive learning environments.

WILDLY IMPORTANT GOAL (WIG)

Increasing Student Engagement

Reduce K-12 student chronic absenteeism by over 50% from its pandemic high of 35.5% in 2022 to 15% in 2028.

Sample Strategies

- Strengthen capacity to boost attendance across all grade levels
- Highlight and scale effective instructional practices
- Launch a statewide campaign to boost attendance with community support

Colorado students start strong with effective literacy instruction and support.

3rd GRADE

WILDLY IMPORTANT GOAL (WIG)

Accelerating Student Outcomes

Increase the percentage of third graders meeting or exceeding expectations on ELA CMAS from 42% in 2024 to 60% by 2028.

Sample Elementary Strategies

- Support districts to build instructional coherence through high-quality curriculum, assessments, interventions, and training
- Expand math and literacy training to improve core instruction and consistency

Colorado high school graduates leave ready with work-based learning experiences and post-secondary credentials.

HS PWR

WILDLY IMPORTANT GOAL (WIG)

Accelerating Student Outcomes

Starting with the anticipated year of graduation of 2029, 100% of graduates will have achieved at least one of the following.

- Earned a quality, in-demand non-degree credential
- Earned 12 college credits that count toward a postsecondary credential
- Participated in one high-quality work-based learning (WBL) opportunity (from the Learning Through Work and Learning at Work on the Work-based Learning Continuum)

Sample Secondary Strategies

- Support district-level efforts to provide multiple pathway options for postsecondary workforce readiness (PWR) aligned to student interests and goals
- Review policies to address barriers, opening up new pathways for relevant secondary education
- Create models for rural districts to expand access and enable cross-district collaboration on best practices

Colorado students thrive when educators stay engaged because they feel prepared, supported, and valued.

WILDLY IMPORTANT GOAL (WIG)

Strengthening the Educator Workforce

By 2027-28, 98% of teacher positions are filled with educators who either:

1) hold a professional teaching license or

2) are in a teacher preparation program, have demonstrated content knowledge in their teaching endorsement, and are supported by a trained mentor, an increase from 94.2% in 2023-24.

Sample Strategies

- Strengthen state-level support for educator recruitment and retention
- Increase aspiring educator participation in preparation and licensure pathways
- Improve educator working conditions through leadership development programs
- Promote the profession to attract and retain educators

Colorado's Department of Education provides exceptional service through improved efficiencies and a growth-oriented culture.

WILDLY IMPORTANT GOAL (WIG)

Providing Operational Excellence

Over the next three years, increase the percentage of employees who indicate that the department is proactively addressing the critical factors that impact the employee experience (from a baseline to be set Jan. 30, 2025).

Sample Strategies

- Develop a culture of employee growth and opportunities
- Analyze internal systems for efficiencies and automation opportunities
- Identify ways to improve efficiency and automation to enhance support for schools, districts, and grantees
- Implement state grant project recommendations

Grant Project

Our grants project is designed to better align funding to district needs, streamline grant processes, and invest in the highest-leverage programs and activities.

- Created a comprehensive inventory of the current set of competitive state grants
- Included 31 state funded grants, totaling ~$81 million in grant awards
- Collected feedback from 200+ grantee and non-grantee Local Education Providers through surveys, focus groups, data requests and interview

While state grants meet local needs, requirements create administrative burdens on a local level.

1. CDE's current grant structures are meeting some level of need.
2. The current grant landscape is varying and unique – rendering it difficult to develop coherence to effectively and strategically serve the field.
3. The current landscape and composition of grants, along with lack of comprehensive review, has resulted in a fragmented allocation of resources that creates gaps in funding.
4. Administrative burden creates barriers for Local Education Providers (LEPs) to access grants.
5. Formal evaluation/ outcome data is difficult because of data limitations.

The project recommended three frameworks for grants

Grant Category	Focus Area(s)	Duration of Funding	Distribution
Innovation/Proof of concept	Strategic plan priority area	One-time	Competitive
Needs-based formula (targeted)	Strategic plan priority area	Short-term	“Opt-in” based on pre-identified eligibility based on needs (such as attendance, performance, etc.)
Core services	Universal needs	Ongoing	Distributions on a per pupil basis or that leverage economies of scale

HB24-1364 & HB24-1393 Financial Study

Task Forces have identified the “Big Three” goals for Colorado students and a path forward.

The HB22-1215 Task Force recommended that all students have access to:

1. In-demand industry credentials
2. College credit attainment
3. High-quality work-based learning (WBL) opportunities

The HB23-1241 Task Force recommended mirroring these goals in our accountability system.

The HB24-1364 Cost Study provided recommendations for how to utilizing existing resources to fund these opportunities for students.

The 1364 Cost Study highlighted three major challenges with the existing system.

Inequitable Access

Access to programs supporting the Big Three outcomes is uneven, influenced by district resources and geographic location. Rural and remote students participate less than those in urban and suburban areas, which benefit from larger populations and industry proximity. Despite innovative partnerships to address this, funding challenges persist statewide.

Complex Funding Mechanisms

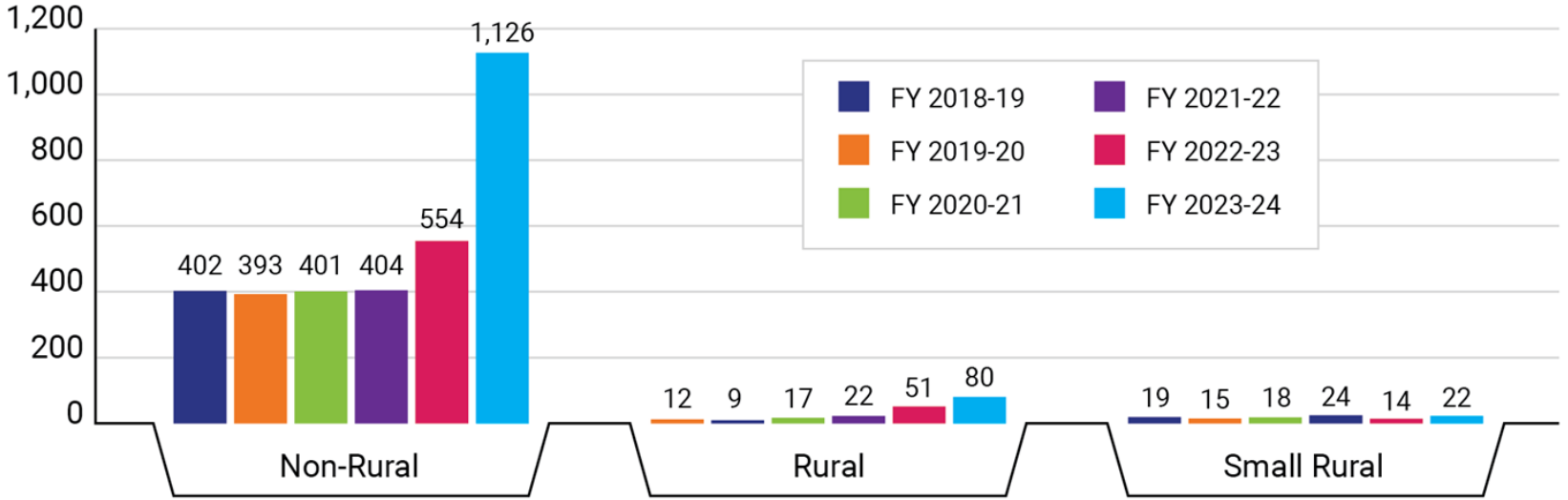
The multitude of funding sources, each with its own requirements, leads to administrative inefficiencies. LEPs spend considerable time and resources navigating these complexities, detracting from their ability to focus on student support and program development.

Administrative Burden

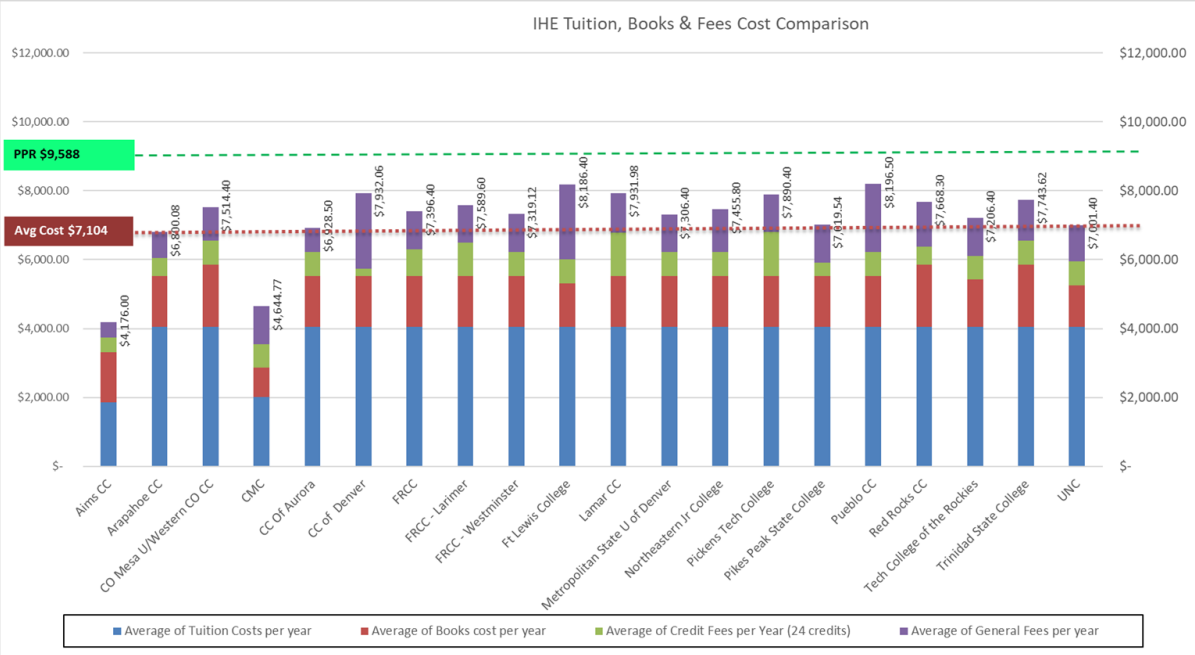
LEPs with limited staffing struggle to manage the administrative demands of programs supporting Big Three outcomes. Effective delivery requires a team effort, with school counselors, teachers, academic advisors, and program coordinators playing key roles. Supporting LEPs in these administrative tasks is crucial for the success of PWR programs statewide.

Underscoring all these issues is a lack of detailed, student-level data that limits the ability to fully assess program effectiveness and make informed policy decisions.

ASCENT participation grew significantly in 2023-24.

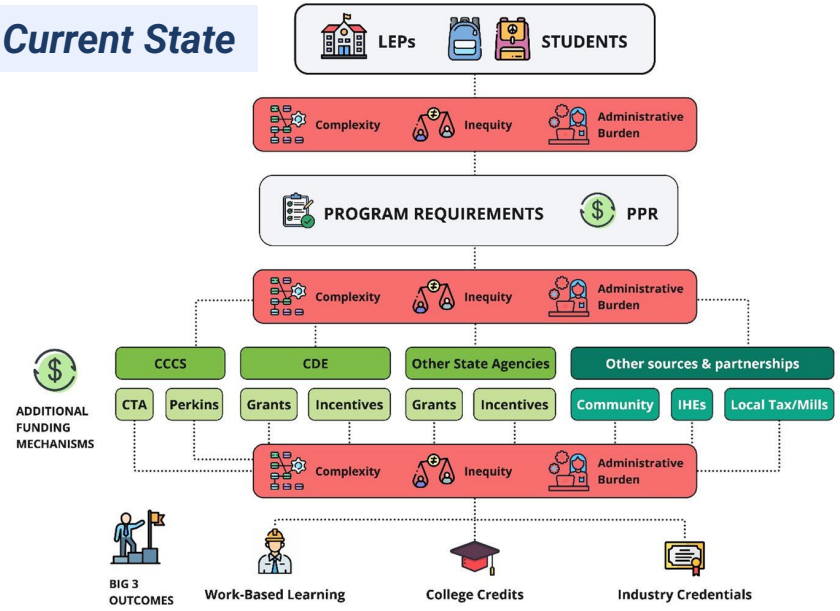


Funding provided for ASCENT exceeds the actual program costs



The current state of our Postsecondary Workforce Readiness (PWR) programs requires navigating multiple levels of bureaucracy.

Current State

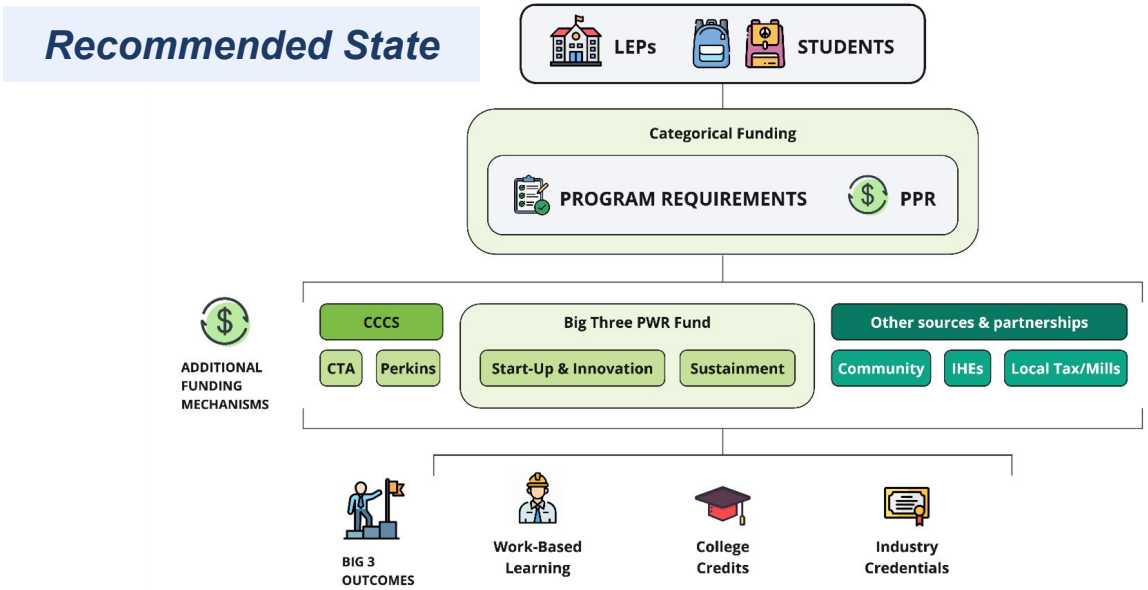


Graphic created by Slalom, Inc. as part of the PWR Financial Study Report.

Programs Included:

- School Counselor Corps Grant
- Accelerated College Opportunity Exam Fee
- Automatic Enrollment in Advanced Course Grant Program
- Colorado Career Advisor Training Program
- Concurrent Enrollment Expansion and Innovation Grant Program
- Career Development Incentive Program
- P-TECH
- ASCENT
- T-REP

The recommend changes streamline the process and reduce administrative burdens.



Graphic created by Slalom, Inc. as part of the PWR Financial Study Report.

CDE Requests

To Accelerate Student Outcomes, we need to build instructional coherence

The request would enable the Department to:

Serve: Convene districts to learn together and from each other

Guide: Provide professional development on research-based instructional practices

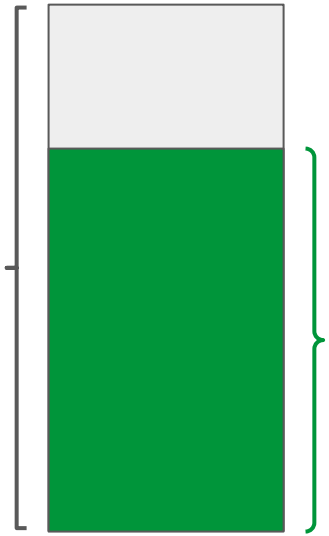
Elevate: Address instructional needs shared by families, educators and leaders

"We appreciate and want CDE to be an arbiter for sharing out best practices, getting people together to make sure that what's working well in one district can be accessible or learned by another district."

Strategic Plan Survey Response

School Transformation Grants are supporting our highest-need students, schools and districts

FY 2023-24
EASI Applications



District-Led Initiatives:

- Comprehensive needs assessments; planning and implementation of improvement strategies

Exploration and Diagnostic Services:

- Including school holistic reviews; alternative education campus/online school reviews; and district strategic planning

CDE-Provided Services:

- Including Accountability Pathways; Colorado Multi-Tiered System of Supports (COMTSS); School Transformation Network; and Rigorous Action through Redesign

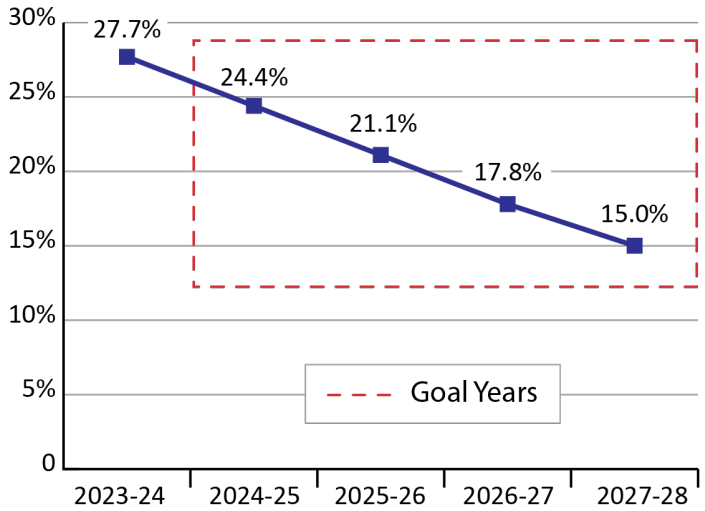
WILDLY IMPORTANT GOAL (WIG)

Reduce K-12 student chronic absenteeism by over 50% from its pandemic high of 35.5% in 2022 to 15% in 2028.

Every School Day Matters!

COLORADO
Department of Education

Colorado Chronic Absenteeism Rate



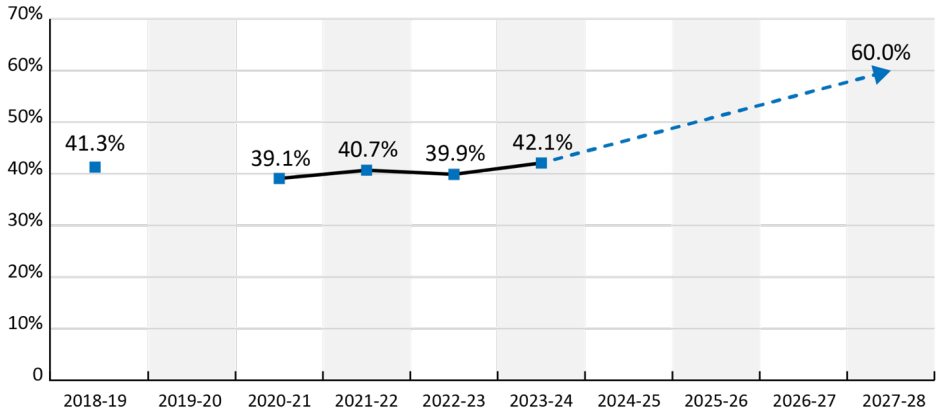
The requested 2.0 FTE would enable the Department to provide targeted support including:

- ***Serve:*** Developing tools and resources
- ***Guide:*** Improving cross-agency coordination
- ***Elevate:*** Facilitating learning cohorts, providing trainings, and sharing exemplars and promising practices

To increase our third grade literacy rates, we need to help educators better serve our struggling readers

WILDLY IMPORTANT GOAL (WIG)

Percent of Grade 3 students Meeting/Exceeding Expectations on CMAS ELA



One time investment of funds to:

- **Serve:** Offer support to 21,000 teachers to better meet their students' needs
- **Guide:** Develop and provide training on best instructional practices for students with dyslexia and disabilities
- **Elevate:** Address persistent student needs

The Colorado Talking Book Library supports readers with special needs across our state.

This request will help keep CTBL patrons and staff safe:

- $72,333 for contracted security

We need additional resources to implement C.R.S. 22-11-204(1)(b) and (4)(a)(IV) with fidelity.

Matriculation data is critical for accurately calculating requirements under C.R.S. 22-11-204(1)(b) and (4)(a)(IV)

Access to the clearinghouse will include:

- **Improved reporting capabilities:** Customized reports on matriculation data over time, accessible at the school level, support more precise and actionable analysis.
- **Enhanced data security:** The new platform incorporates modern, robust security measures to better protect sensitive information.

A statewide student information system could streamline processes across Colorado, and we need to do additional research.

- Centralized Data
- Streamlined Reporting and Improved Data Quality
- Increased Efficiency

Offsets

CDE understands the current budget constraints; JBC staff identified offsets include:

- Colorado Career Advisor Training*
- Out-of-school Time Grant
- High Impact Tutoring
- Computer Science Education Grants
- COSLI
- At-risk Supplemental Aid
- At-risk Per Pupil Additional Funding

**Submitted as part of the SBE approved budget*

Healthy School Meals for All (HSMA)

Funding gaps remain for HSMA implementation

Revenue

Year	September Forecast	Actuals reported in December
Tax Year 2023	~$127 million	~$105 million

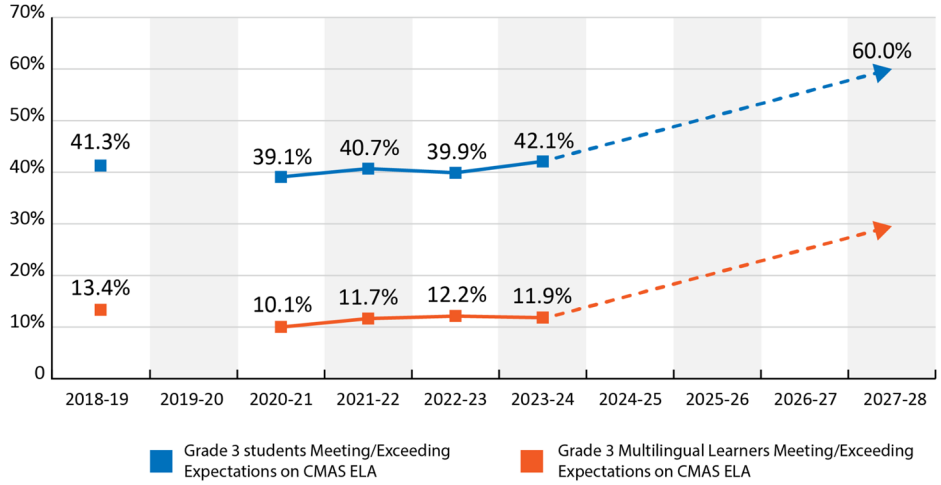
Meal Expenditures

	FY 2023-24 Actual	FY 2024-25 Projected
Costs for Meals	~$162 million	~$124 million

School District Operations

Colorado can improve outcomes for multilingual learners

Percent of Grade 3 Students Meeting/Exceeding Expectations on CMAS ELA



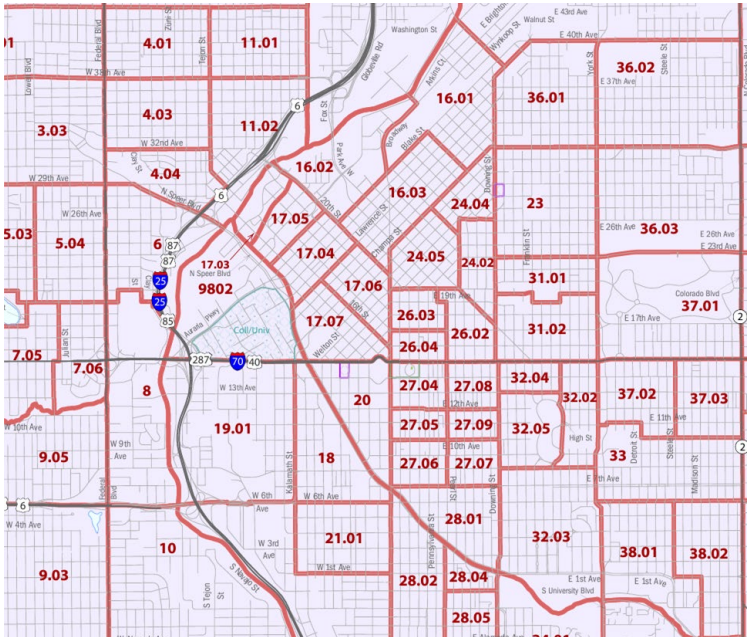
Measures of Multilingual Learner Outcomes Include:

- Growth and progress to English proficiency
- Achievement and growth on content assessments
- Dropout rates and graduation rates
- Attendance and chronic absenteeism data

While BEST investments are significant, gaps remain with assessed needs.

Total Projects Funded FY09 - FY25		BEST Grant Contribution	Total Project Funded		Projected Assessed Need Through FY29
Small Rural	233	$1,327,257,226	$1,904,694,008	49%	$1,846,554,557
Rural	170	$474,278,890	$920,572,795	24%	$3,029,279,651
Urban	173	$534,188,106	$1,042,573,614	27%	$97,196,841
BOCES/CSDB	9	$34,779,195	$44,398,356	1%	$60,920,396
Totals	585	$2,370,503,418	$3,912,238,774	1%	$20,043,657,029

Challenges persist with the proposed at-risk measure census data.



The following is a summary of the district collection rates:

- 75%-100% of students with valid data: 98 districts (54.7% of districts)
- 50-75% of students with valid data: 33 districts (18.4% of districts)
- 25-50% of students with valid data: 4 districts (2.2% of districts)
- 1-25% of students with valid data: 5 districts (2.8% of districts)
- 0% of students with valid data: 9 districts (5.0% of districts)

Legislatively required adequacy studies will be available January 3, 2025.

Input Focused Financial Adequacy Study

- Utilizes professional judgment (PJ) & evidenced-based (EB)
- Conducted by Augenblick, Palaich and Associates, Inc. (APA), in partnership with:
  - Picus, Odden & Associates (POA)
  - Afton Partners (Afton)
  - The Colorado School Finance Project.

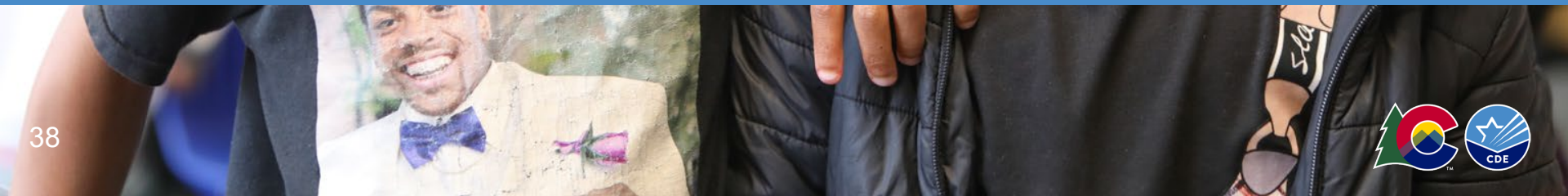
Outcome Focused Financial Adequacy Study

- Utilizes a method of statistical analysis known as cost function modeling
- Conducted by American Institutes for Research (AIR).

District-reported data show a gap between their expenditures and state and federal funding.

	Special Education Program for Children with Disabilities	English Language Proficiency Programs	Public School Transportation	Career & Technical Education Programs	Gifted & Talented Programs	Expelled & At-Risk Service Grant Programs	Small Attendance Center Aid	Comprehensive Health Education	Total
A. FY 22-23 Total District Expenditures	$1,325,624,999	$255,957,445	$290,292,950	$131,582,165	$44,722,101	$9,209,453	$1,619,968	$1,126,461	**$2,060,135,542**
B. FY 22-23 Total State / Federal Distributions	-511,202,830	-79,430,123	-64,439,895	-34,385,324	-12,538,874	-8,820,400	-1,314,250	-699,412	-712,849,108
C. FY 22-23 Funding Gap Between District Expenditures and State / Federal Revenues	$814,404,170	$176,257,321	$225,853,055	$97,196,841	$32,183,227	$389,053	$305,718	$427,049	**$1,347,286,433**
Portion of Expenditures Covered by Local District Funding	61.4%	69.0%	77.8%	73.9%	72.0%	4.2%	18.9%	37.9%	**65.4%**
Portion of Expenditures Covered by State and Federal Funding	38.6%	31.0%	22.2%	26.1%	28.0%	95.8%	81.1%	62.1%	**34.6%**

Questions?



November 13, 2024,

Dear Members of the Joint Budget Committee,

We are grateful for the investments the state has made over the past several years in the Reading to Ensure Academic Development (READ) Act to help ensure that Colorado students have robust and evidence-based literacy instruction. Colorado's READ Act strives to guarantee that every student achieves proficiency in reading by the conclusion of their third-grade year. Since the passage of the READ Act, Colorado has invested significant state funding and Colorado Department of Education (CDE) resources to "provide students with the necessary supports they need to be able to read with proficiency by third grade so that their academic growth and achievement is not hindered by low literacy skills in fourth grade and beyond" (section 22-7-1202(3)(a), C.R.S.).

As you are aware, CDE analyzes K-3 reading data to understand trends in achievement and areas of bright spots and challenges for the state. **The analyses of student outcome data, consistently illustrates that students identified with an SRD are not moving out of that status as rapidly as new students are being identified with an SRD**. That is, each year typically more students are newly diagnosed with an SRD each year than moved out of an SRD designation. Based on data from the department's 2023 READ Act report[1]:

- 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.
- Less than five percent of students who have been diagnosed with an SRD achieved English Language Arts proficiency on the 2019-20 Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) assessment in third grade, while about half of their non-SRD peers did.

A deeper analysis of state data, combined with the results of the multi-year evaluation, indicates that while some positive outcomes are being achieved, students in the lowest score range on approved reading interim assessments, largely consisting of students with IEPs, students with or at-risk for dyslexia, and multilingual learners have persistent reading deficits. **Data are clearly pointing to systemic challenges in supporting these three populations of students to achieve the intended outcome of the READ Act.** Notably, the external evaluation[2] of the READ Act recommended that:

> *CDE and districts should provide additional guidance and supports around how to best support dual-identified students. This could include additional PD [professional development] opportunities and identification of materials that address the diverse needs of all educators. There is also a strong call for in-person refresher trainings to better integrate learning into daily teaching practices.*

[1] https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/2023readactreport
[2] https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/read-act-independent-evaluation-of-colorado-read

To that end, CDE has requested spending authority for the $3,361,590 from the balance of the Early Literacy Fund established under section 22-7-1210 C.R.S. to develop and deliver the evidence-based, intensive reading intervention training program and to provide additional funding for the Early Literacy Grant program. Further, CDE has proposed that this spending authority from the balance of the Early Literacy Fund be used to provide two-year funding for the evidence-based, intensive reading intervention training program to ensure Colorado schools have highly trained, effective educators available to meet the needs of students most at risk of failing to read at grade level be rolled forward and available in FY 2026-27.

We support the department's request as it will build on the success of the existing, required K-3 teacher training and specifically target students identified with markers of dyslexia. Further, with a state-led training and coaching program, more Colorado schools and districts that previously may not have had adequate resources to devote to intensive reading intervention training, will be able to take advantage of or augment these resources to meet the needs of their students.

We look forward to CDE's presentation of this decision item at the department's hearing on December 16th and your evaluation of the request. Thank you again for your leadership, and we look forward to working with you during the 2025 session to ensure that all students have access to high quality literacy instruction.

Sincerely,

Members of the Dyslexia Working Group:

Laura Swanson
Literacy Specialist
Burlington Elementary School
Email: Swanson_Laura@svvsd.org

Patrick McGinty
Special Education Director
Roaring Fork School District
Email: pmcginty@rfschools.com

Dyann Powell
Dyslexia Specialist/CALT
Douglas County School District
Email: dyannpowell@gmail.com

Sarah Huffman
4th Grade Teacher
Las Animas Elementary School
Email: sarah.huffman@la-schools.net

CSI MLO Equalization Budget Request

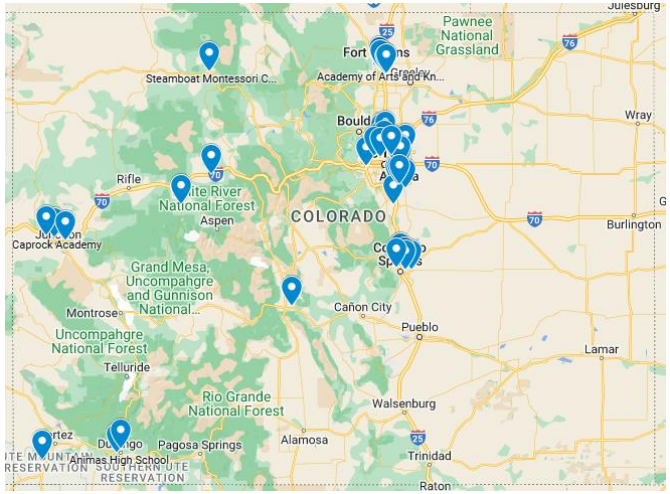
December 16, 2024

COLORADO
CHARTER SCHOOL INSTITUTE

CSI Overview

CSI is a statewide charter authorizer established by the Legislature in 2004.

CSI schools are diverse.



45

schools

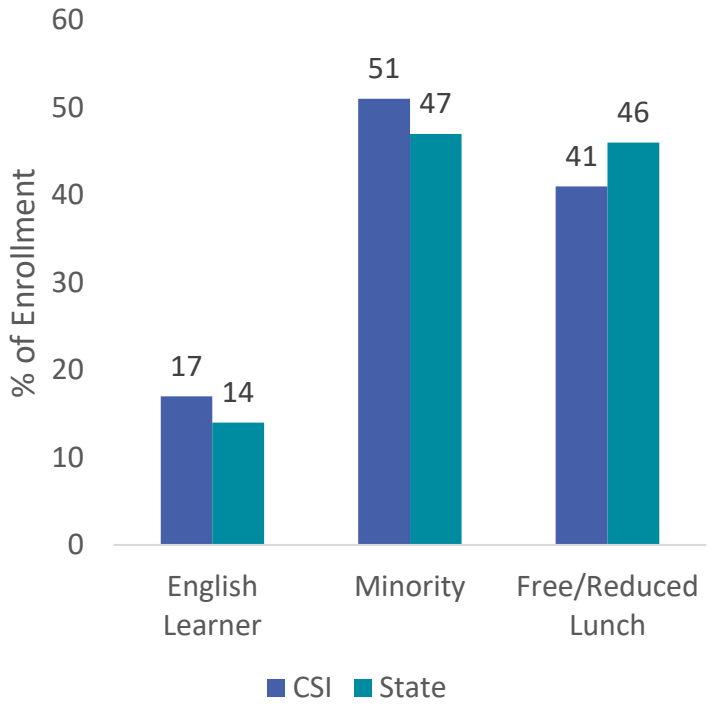
20K

students

17

models

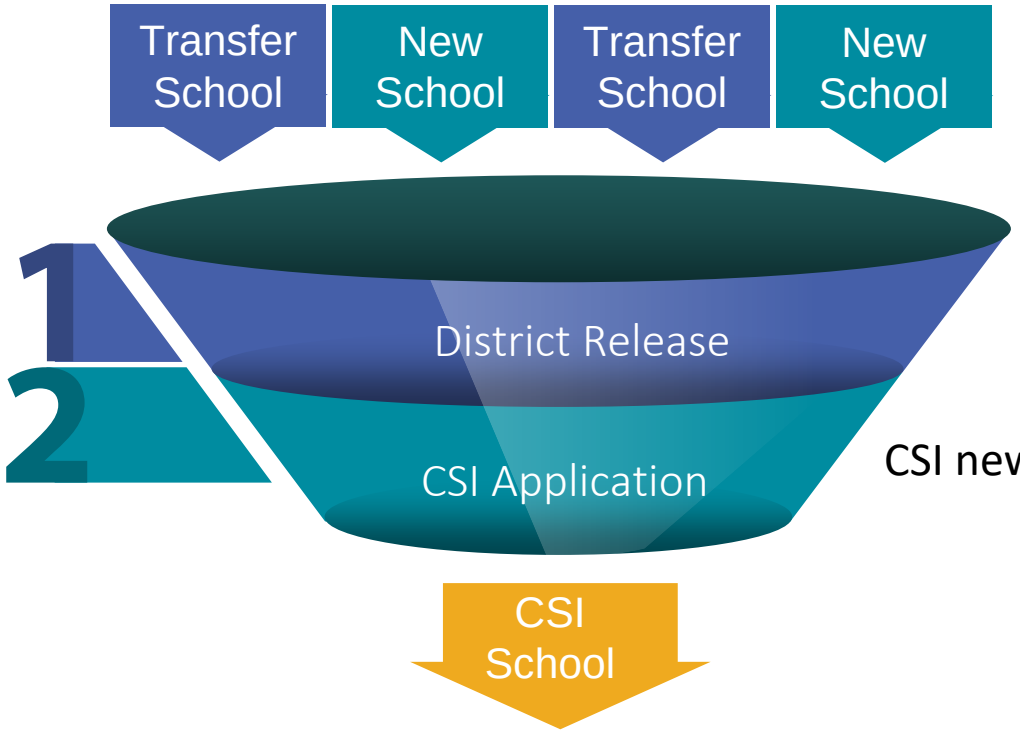
CSI seeks to serve *all* students & serve them well.



3 of **4**

CSI schools earned Performance ratings

How do charter schools get authorized by CSI?



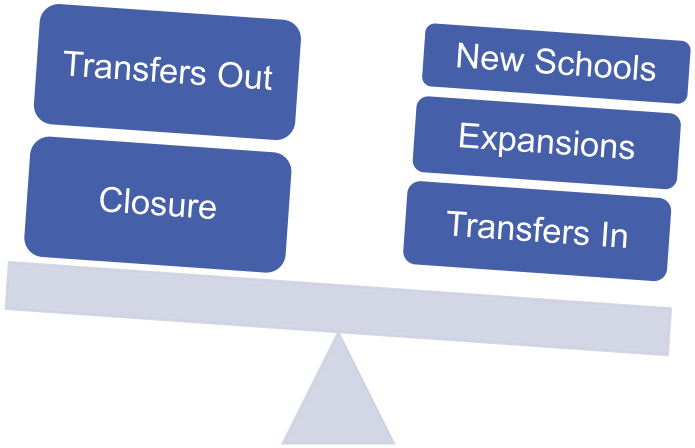
96% of districts have ECA.

CSI new school approval rate: **~50%**

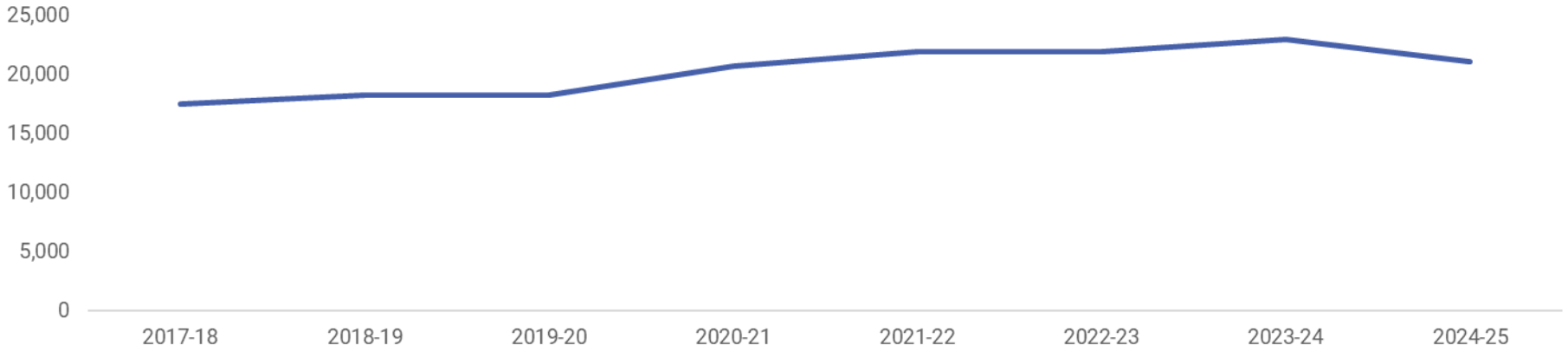
CSI's portfolio is dynamic.

CSI's portfolio continues to see:

- Closures
- New schools
- Expansions of existing schools
- Transfers to district



Enrollment remains steady.



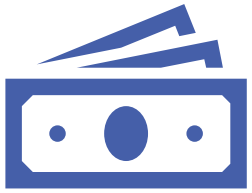
R3 CSI Mill Levy Equalization Budget Request

Since 2017, the Legislature has worked to ensure CSI students have access to equitable resources.

The 2023 School Finance Act committed to full CSI mill levy equalization starting in 2024-25.

CSI requests continued equalization for FY26.

How much is needed?



Governor's November 1st budget included $1.7M.

By January, the estimate will be updated to reflect:

FY26 CSI enrollment projection

Recently passed MLOs

Per pupil MLO based on updated district enrollment

Latest assessed values and implications of recent property tax legislation

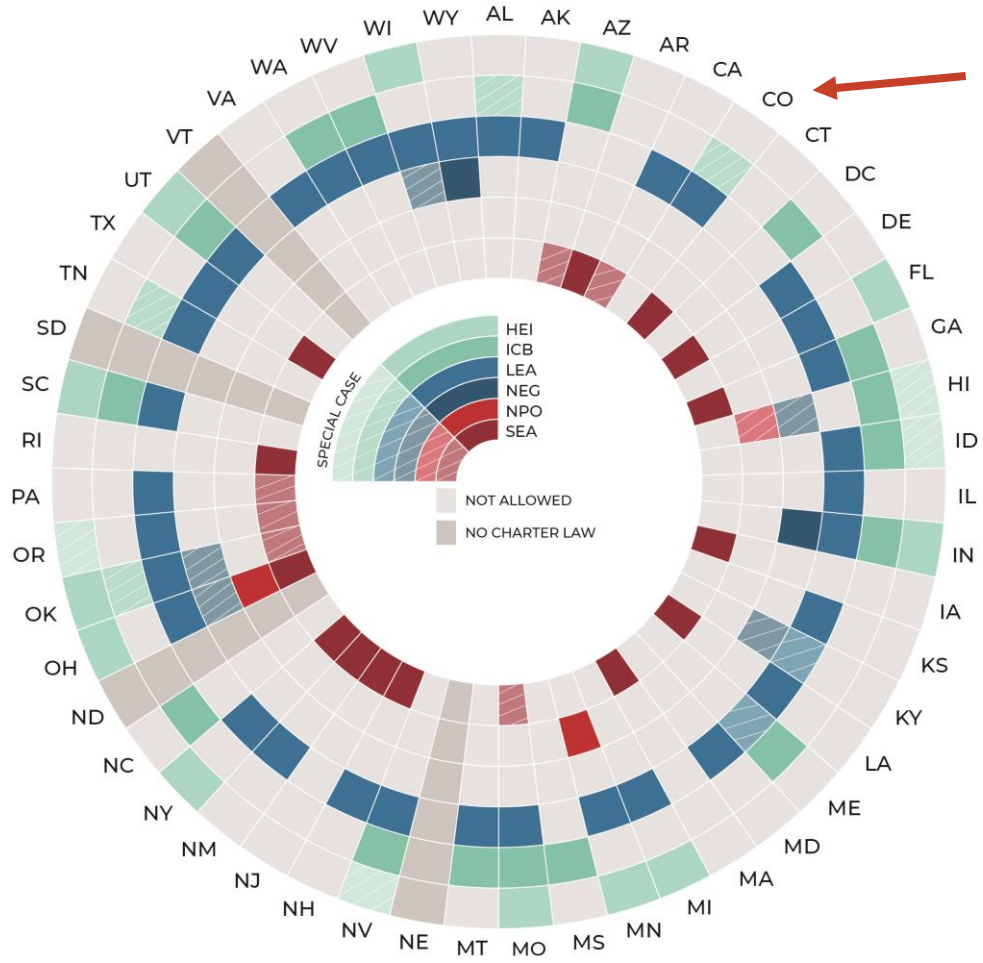
Considerations

CSI is seeking full equalization and is also open to exploring:

Alignment with district MLO sharing language

Opportunities for greater transparency and partnership with districts

CSI in Context: Authorizers & Funding Mechanisms



Montana's charter law passed in 2023, but will not go into effect until the 2024-25 school year. Legislative changes are expected.

Thank you for continuing to make a positive impact in the lives of CSI students and CSI schools.

MLOE has given us the resources to offer competitive salaries and make essential facilities upgrades, ensuring we can better support our staff and students.

Leader, The Academy of Charter Schools

I thought I was only a teen mom, but I know I am so much more! I have peaked in ways I never thought, and the teachers push me to my full potential and motivate me to go to college.

Student, New Legacy Charter School

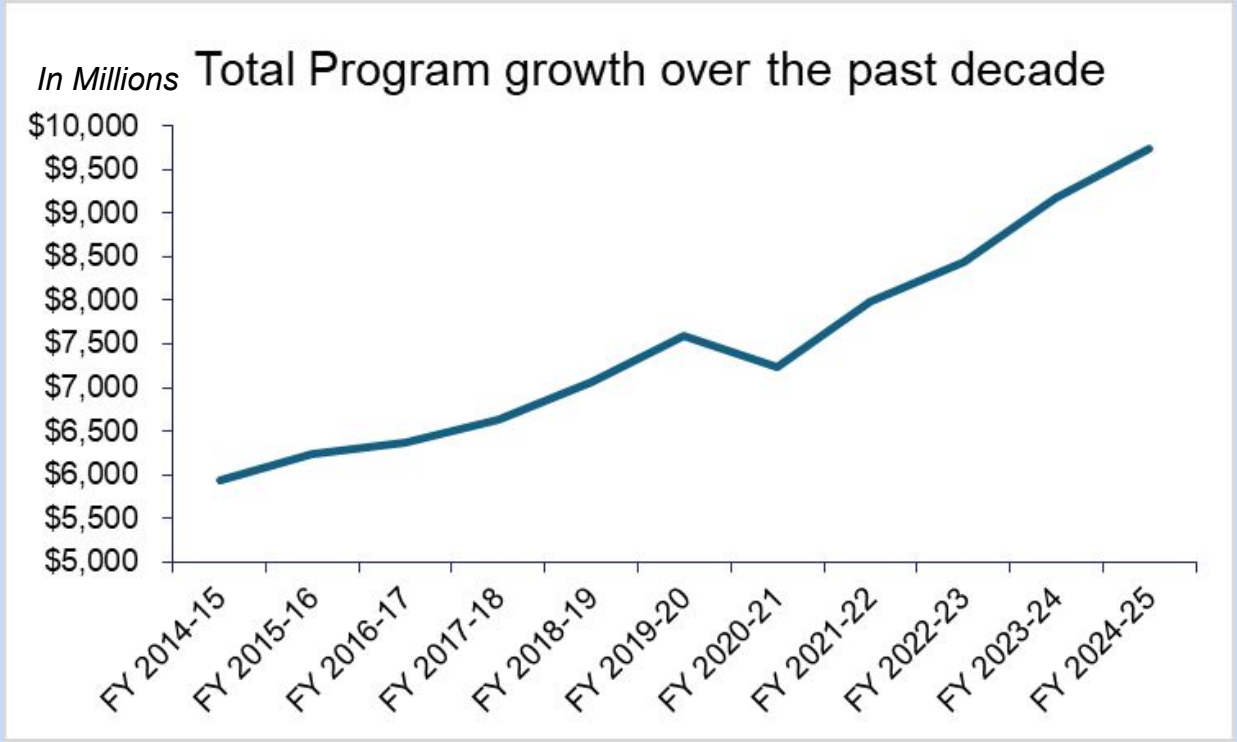
Colorado Department of Education - Department Hearing

OSPB Director Mark Ferrandino

December 16th, 2024

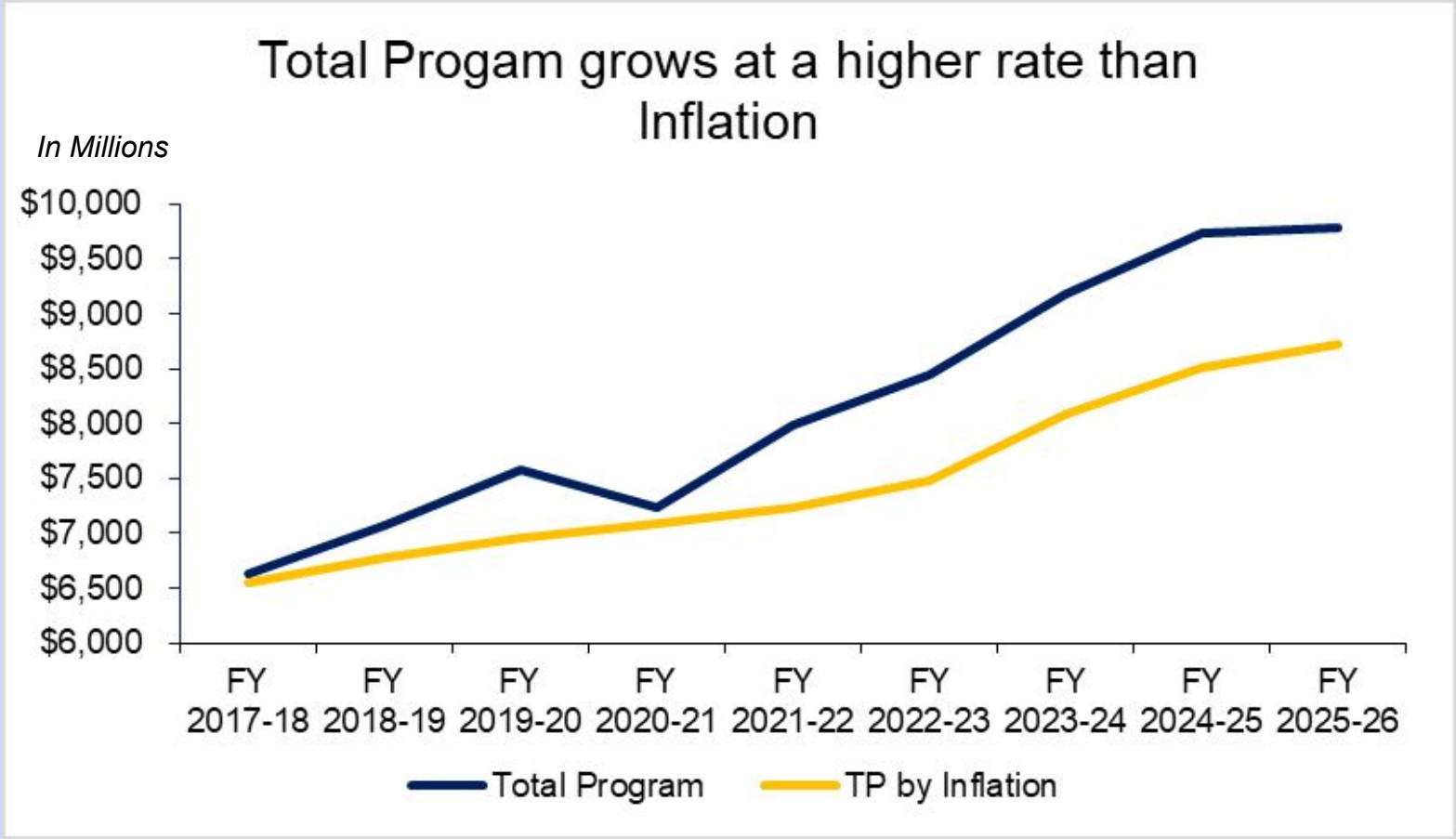
Growth of K-12 Funding - Total Program

- Total Program funding has grown by nearly $4 billion (64%) over the last decade.
- Over those first six years, it grew by $1.3 billion, and over the past 4 years, investments increased substantially, increasing $2.5 billion as the Budget Stabilization Factor was decreased and eventually eliminated in the current fiscal year.
- In FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25, Total Program grew by 8.7 percent ($736M) and 6.1 percent ($561M) respectively as significant investments were made to eliminate the BSF.



Total Program growth in relation to Inflation

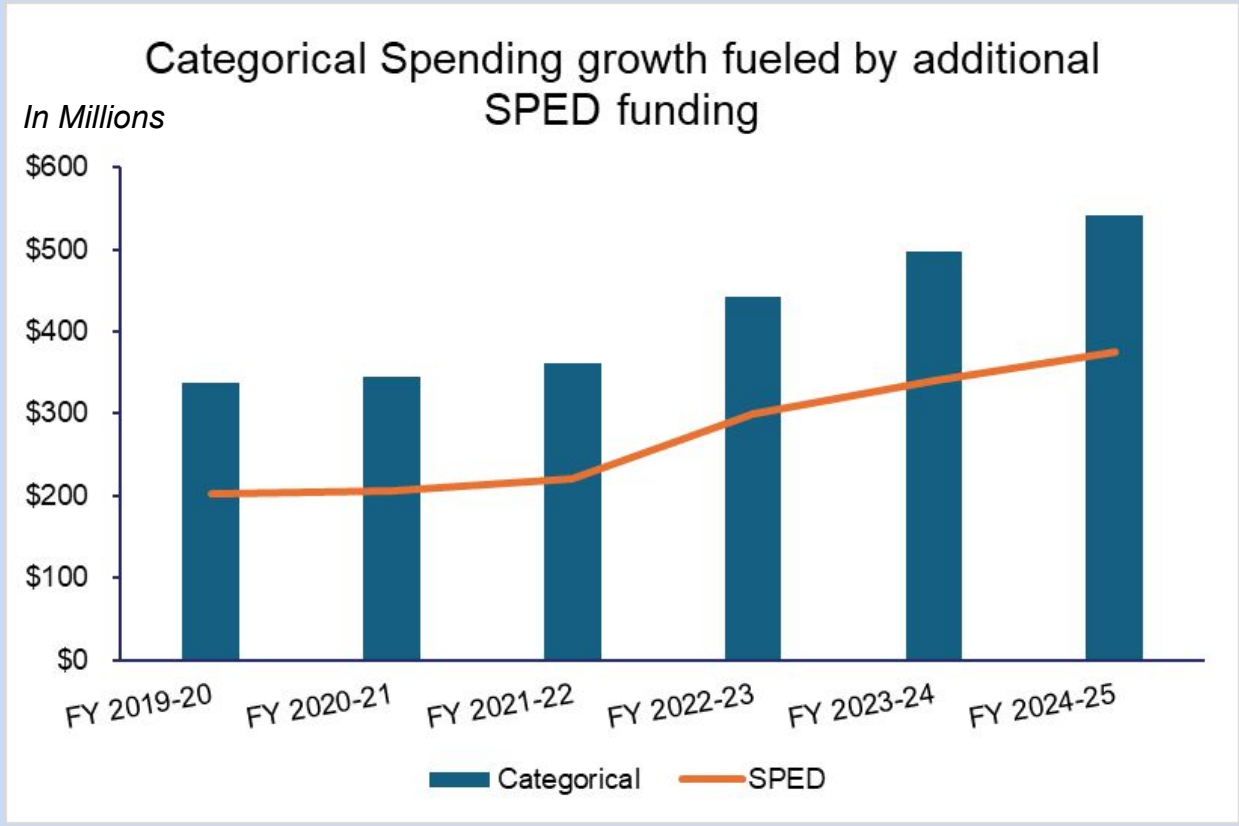
- Total program has grown at a rate higher than inflation as after inflation is applied to the base per pupil funding all other factors are applied to get to total program funding. Further, over recent years, the buydown of the BSF has increased total program funding.



Hearing Question: What would total program increase by inflation be from FY 2023-24 to FY 2024-25, and FY 2024-25 to FY 2025-26 [Senator Kirkmeyer].

Growth of K-12 Funding - Categorical Programs

- Over the past 5 years, categorical funding has grown by $203.4M (60%) to a total of 541.4M, well above the required inflationary increase
- If categoricals had grown at inflation over this time period, they would now total $413.2M - an annual, ongoing difference of $128M
- After enactment of S.B. 22-127, in FY 2022-23 the General Assembly added $80M in SEF for special education programs
- In FY 2023-24, $35.5M was required for categorical increases due to inflation, while the General Assembly allocated $56.1M in state funds to these programs.
- In FY 2024-25, the General Assembly was required to increase state funding by at least $25.9M, but categoricals increased by $43.5M

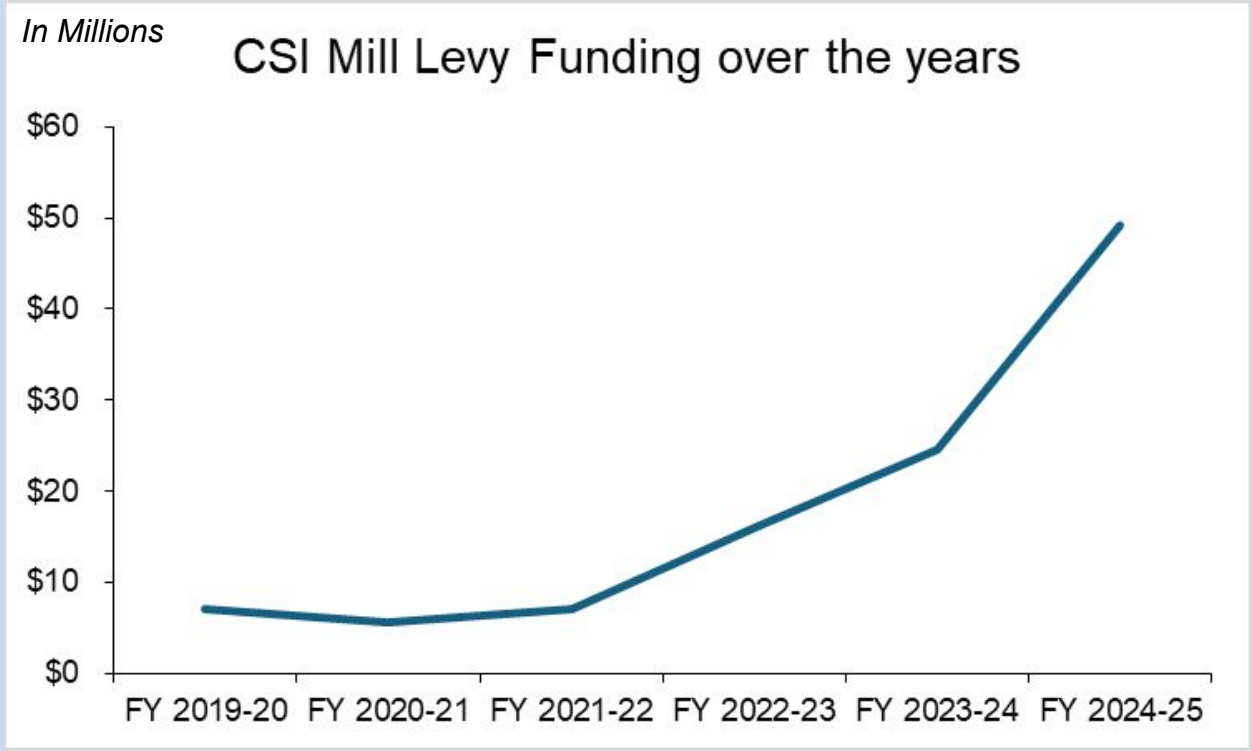


Growth of Other K-12 Funding

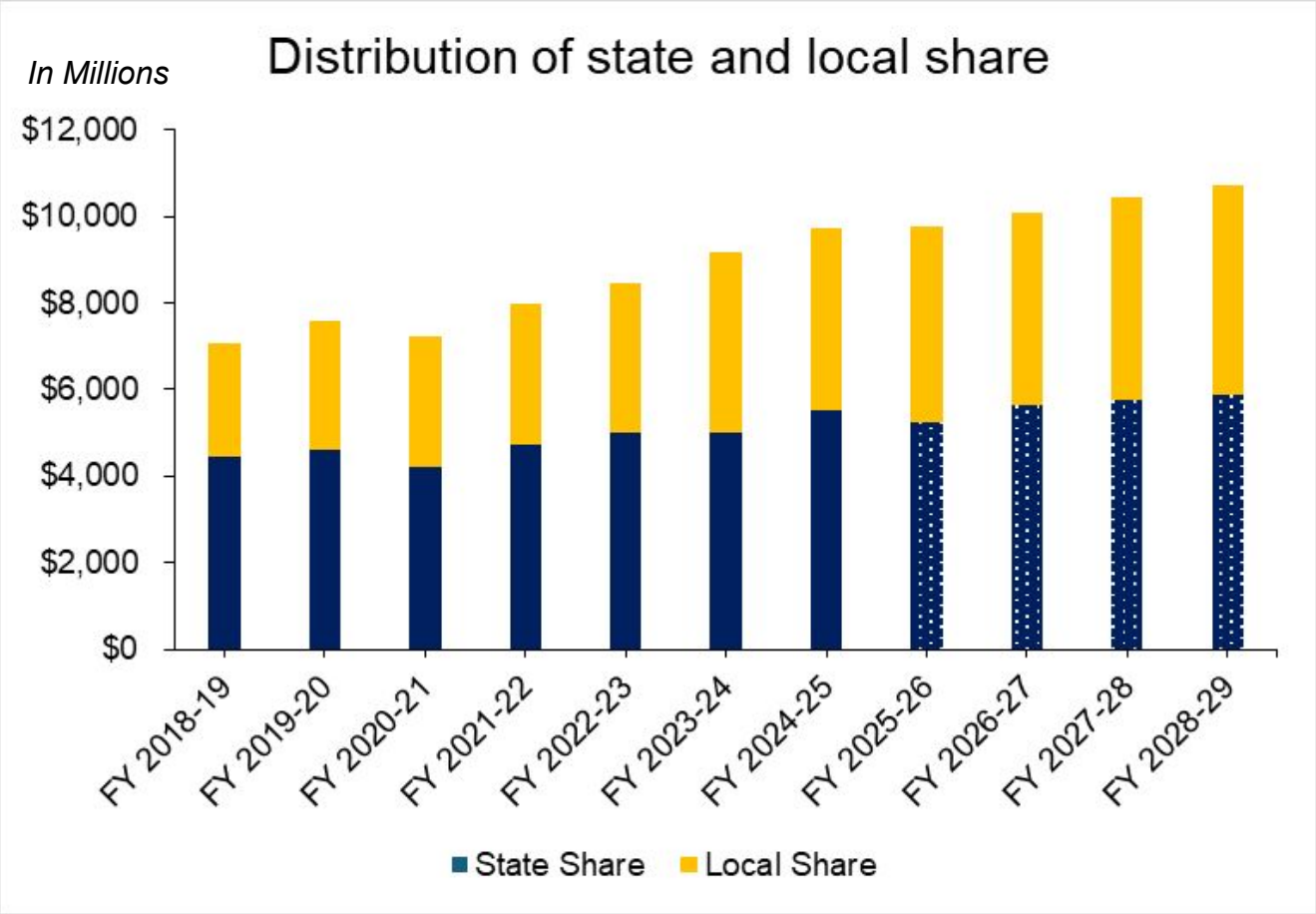
- CSI mill levy equalization has increased nearly $45 million (almost 800%) since FY 2020-21 to a total of nearly $50 million in FY 2024-25 on an annual, ongoing basis, which will continue to increase

- There have been significant state contributions to school districts via PERA Direct Distribution. In FY 2024-25, statewide PERA Direct Distribution payments of $225M included $59.6M for the State's share and $165.4M for the School and Denver Public Schools PERA divisions.

- SB23-287 transferred $23.4M from the State Education Fund in FY 2023-24 for the mill levy override match program and an additional $15.7M in FY 2024-25 via SB24-188.



Local share growth reduced state share in recent years but local growth expected to flatten



**Estimates for state and local share from FY 2025-26 onwards are based on OSPB's November 1st Proposal.*

- Increasing local share over the past 5 years has helped reduce the budgetary burden on the state share of total program funding.
- However, more recent data suggests that local share is starting to flatten leading to elevated state share needs in the future years.
- After growing by 21.1 percent in FY 2023-24, local share is projected to grow by 0.8 percent in FY 2024-25.
- After recent legislative changes, OSPB expects this local share trend to continue over the next few years.

Breakdown of the School Finance Formula

- **Starting Point: Statewide Base**
  - The calculation of each district's pupil funding starts with a statewide base per pupil funding.
  - Amendment 23 requires that the statewide base per pupil funding increases by inflation each year. The statewide base per pupil funding is the starting point for both the old and new formula for total program, and this is the only place in both formulas that inflation is accounted for.

- **Factors Applied to the Base**
  - After calculating base per pupil funding, other factors such as Cost of living, At-Risk, ELL, etc are applied to determine the total program need.
  - Under HB24-1448 each factor is calculated directly using the base per pupil amount, and then funding for each factor is additively summed to calculate district total program funding.

Fiscal Year	Inflation	Base Per Pupil Funding
FY 2019-20	2.7%	$6,952
FY 2020-21	1.9%	$7,084
FY 2021-22	2.0%	$7,225
FY 2022-23	3.5%	$7,478
FY 2023-24	8.0%	$8,076
FY 2024-25	5.2%	$8,496
FY 2025-26*	2.5%*	$8,700*

**Estimate based on OSPB September forecast for 2024 Denver-Aurora-Lakewood inflation*

Hearing Question: What would total program increase by inflation be from FY 2023-24 to FY 2024-25, and FY 2024-25 to FY 2025-26 [Senator Kirkmeyer].

Total Program Expectations (Old Formula)

- According to current law, HB24-1448 stipulates that the implementation of the new school finance formula is set to begin in FY 2025-26.
- If the old formula is to be used to calculate total program funding in FY 2025-26 instead of our proposal then it would cost approximately $121M more than our proposal.

	FY 2023-24 (Final)	FY 2024-25 (Preliminary)	FY 2025-26 (Old Formula)	FY 2025-26 (Nov. 1 Proposal)
Total Program	$9.174 billion	$9.735 billion	$9.905 billion	$9.783 billion
State Share	$4.996 billion	$5.522 billion	$5.380 billion	$5.258 billion
Local Share	$4.178 billion	$4.212 billion	$4.525 billion	$4.525 billion

Hearing Question: Under your projections, what would cost of total program (state and local share) be for FY 2025-26 [Representative Bird].

November 1st Budget Proposal for Total Program

Components of Gov Office/OSPB R-01 Proposal:

- $42.0 million is attributable to reducing implementation of the new formula from 18.0 to 10.0 percent in the first year.
- $144.4 million of savings comes from eliminating averaging in the new formula and the old formula for the hold harmless calculation, as well as eliminating the extra 0.5 percent in the hold harmless.
- Additionally, there is $58 million freed up in General Fund/State Ed Fund from capping the BEST Cash Grants at $129M (5-year average), which is refinanced to fund total program.

Hearing Question: What does each of the Governor's proposed changes represent as part of the $186.4 million change as a result of the R-01 request? [Representative Taggart].

November 1st Budget Proposal for Total Program

Fund Source assumptions in the November 1st Submission								
	FY 2025-26 (Proposal)	*FY 2025-26 (Change)*	FY 2026-27 (Estimates)	*FY 2026-27 (Change)*	FY 2027-28 (Estimates)	*FY 2027-28 (Change)*	FY 2028-29 (Estimates)	*FY 2028-29 (Change)*
State Share *(In Millions)*	$5,258.3	*-$264.0*	$5,662.4	*$364.1*	$5,742.3	*$119.9*	$5,896.3	*$153.9*
General Fund *(In Millions)*	$4,353.6	*$115.0*	$4,533.6	*$180.0*	$4,708.7	*$175.0*	$4,872.1	*$163.4*
State Education Fund *(In Millions)*	$788.4	*-$420.8*	$997.5	*$209.1*	$941.0	*-$56.5*	$929.7	*-$11.3*
Local Share *(In Millions)*	$4,524.7	*$312.4*	$4,455.0	*-$69.8*	$4,678.9	*$223.9*	$4,822.4	*$143.5*

Hearing Question: A General Fund Overview Scenario for state share in FY 2025-26 and forward. [Senator Kirkmeyer]

State Education Fund: November 1st Budget Proposal

- The Governor's November 1st submission is intended to utilize the State Education Fund in a sustainable way due to various cost pressures from recent legislation and budgetary decisions that have increased costs to the SEF.
- Based on OSPB's September forecast and November 1 submission, the SEF fund balance as of FY 2028-29 is expected to reach a targeted $150 million. These projections are alongside additional General Fund contributions ranging from $115M to $180M over this time period.

Projections of the State Education Fund (SEF) under November 1st Budget Proposal ($millions)						
	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27	FY 2027-28	FY 2028-29
SEF Expenditures	$1,057.1	$1,696.8	$1,365.5	$1,600.8	$1,570.0	$1,584.1
SEF Revenues/Transfers in	$1,264.2	$1,290.7	$1,147.6	$1,199.0	$1,282.9	$1,372.7
SEF Ending Balance	**$1,674.1**	**$1,268.1**	**$1,050.2**	**$648.3**	**$361.3**	**$150.0**

State Education Fund: HB24-1448 is implemented

- If the new formula is implemented as outlined in HB24-1448, then it will put a significantly higher cost burden on the State Ed Fund or General Fund as compared to OSPB's November 1st submission. If the new formula is implemented as planned with the same General Fund contribution assumptions as the November 1st proposal, OSPB projects the SEF ending balance to be -$765.2 million by FY 2028-29.

Projections of the State Education Fund (SEF) under November 1st Budget Proposal ($millions)						
	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27	FY 2027-28	FY 2028-29
SEF Expenditures	$1,057.1	$1,696.8	$1,601.9	$1,852.3	$1,782.9	$1,798.4
SEF Revenues/Transfers in	$1,264.2	$1,290.7	$1,147.6	$1,199.0	$1,282.9	$1,372.7
SEF Ending Balance	**$1,674.1**	**$1,268.1**	**$813.8**	**$160.5**	**-$339.5**	**-$765.2**

Student Averaging

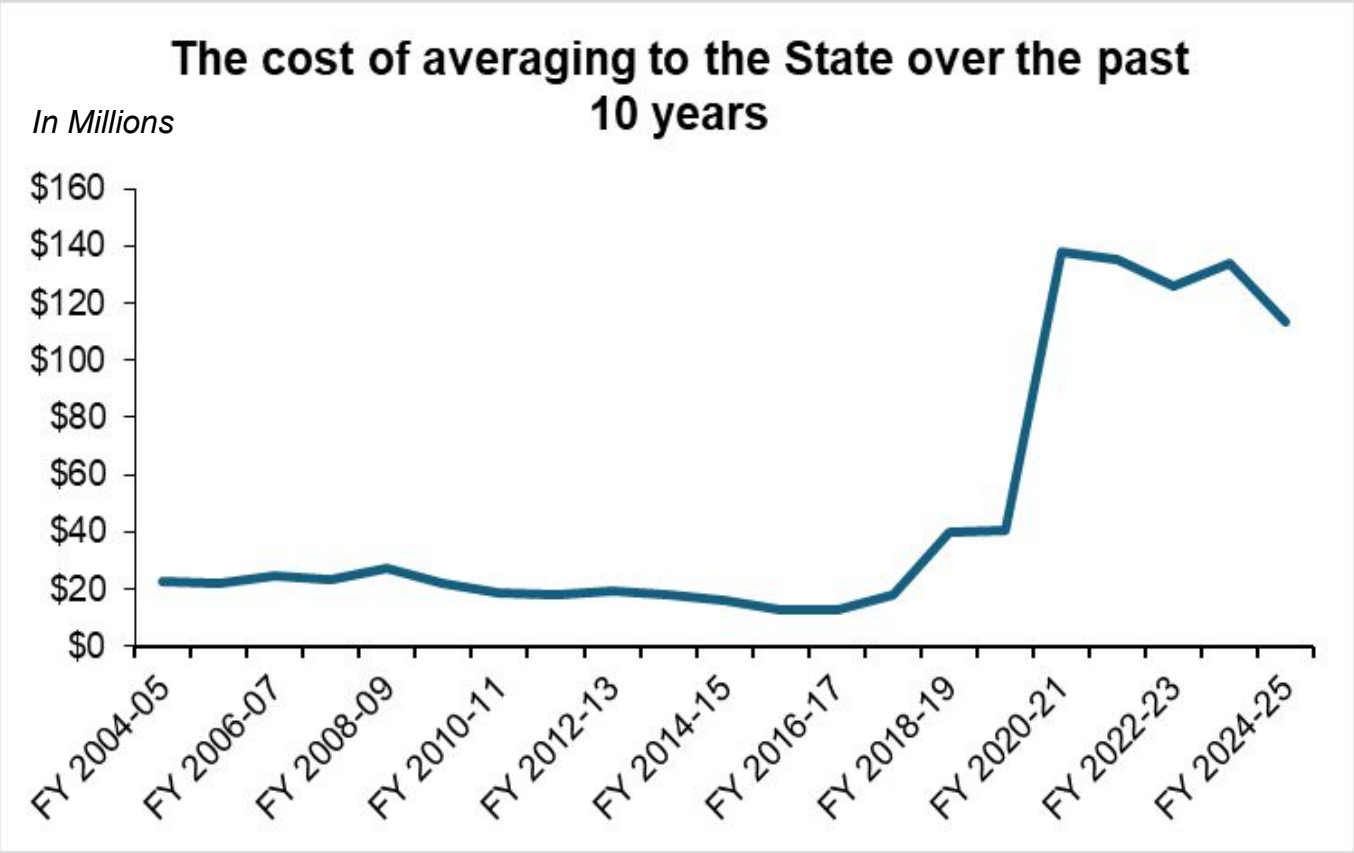
- Prior to HB24-1448, a district's funded pupil count is the greater of a district's current year student count, or two, three, four, or five-year average of student counts. HB 24-1448 eliminated fifth year of averaging, so that funded pupil count is the greatest of the current year student count or the average count over two, three or four years.

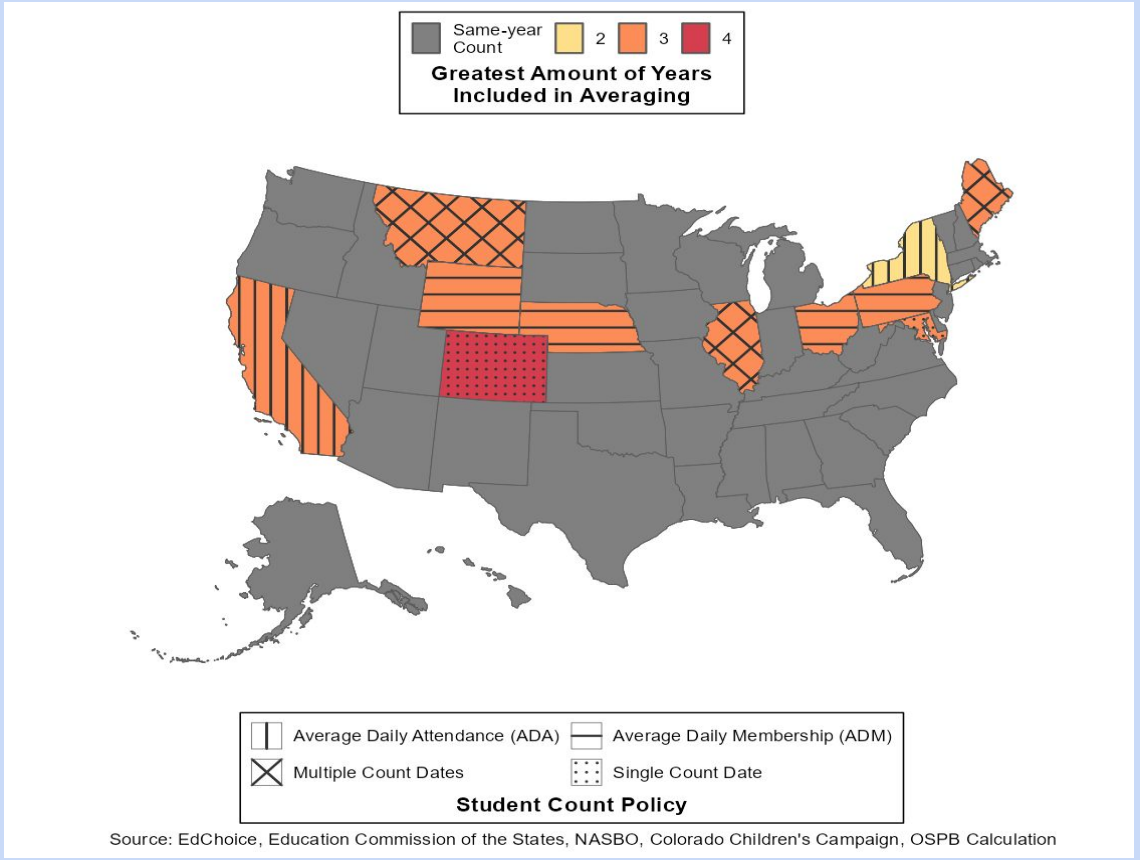
- Currently, 114 out of 178 total school districts (64%) utilize averaging. All but three use a 4-year average. The three exceptions are Buffalo (3-year) with Fowler and Moffat using 2-year averaging.

- <u>OSPB Proposal on Student Averaging:</u>
  - HB24-1448 started movement towards addressing student averaging by moving from a 5-year average to a 4-year average.
  - For districts that are using averaging, their actual student count is lower than prior years, and this proposal would align their funded pupil count with their actual student count.
  - Currently, approximately 12,000-13,000 students included in the funded pupil count are not in the current year count but rather averaged from prior years.

Hearing Question: Which districts are using 2, 3, and 4- year average, and how does this proposal impact them? [Senator Marchman]

Student Averaging

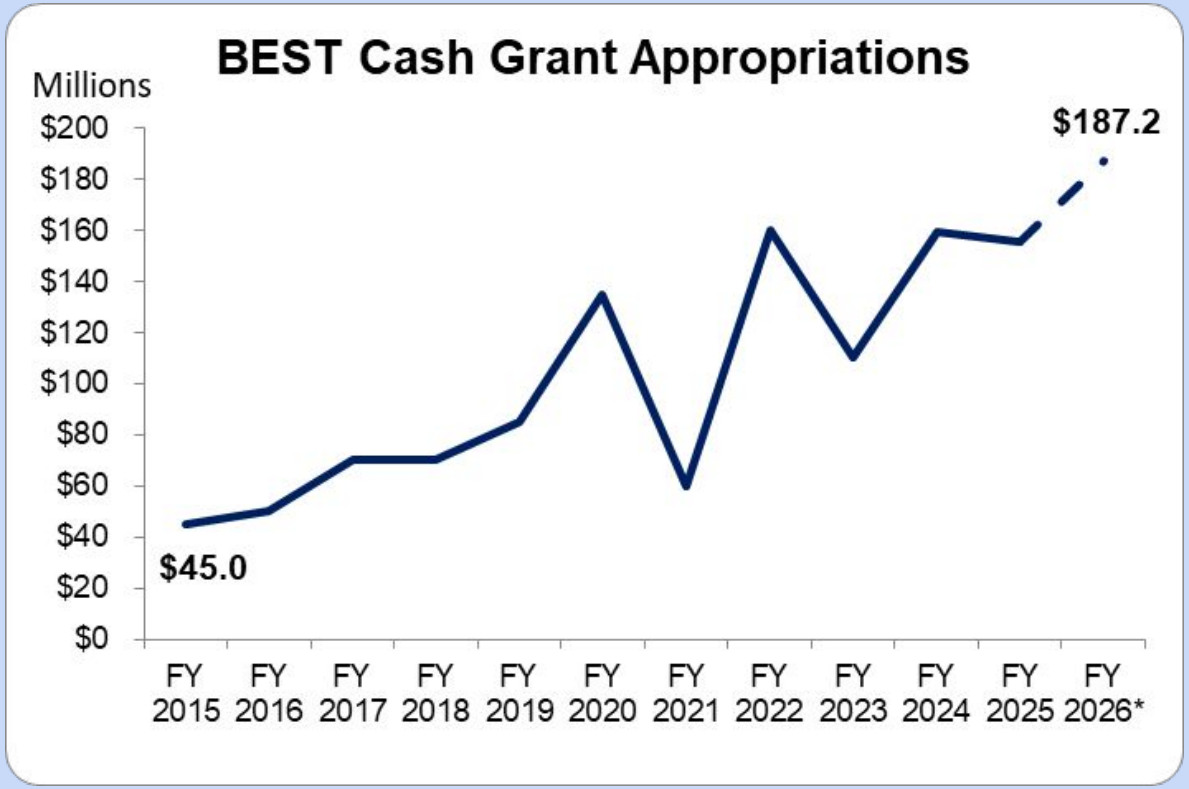




Student averaging has cost the state significantly more in recent years in comparison to 5 years ago. Over the past 10 years averaging has cost the state more that $1 billion dollars, of which 64 percent of the cost was incurred since FY 2020-21. From 2019-20 to FY 2020-21 cost of averaging to the state increased by 238 percent.

The BEST Proposal

- This proposal caps new BEST cash grants at the 5-year average of $129M which would grow at the rate of the TABOR cap. Any funds remaining above the cap would flow to State Public School Fund for school finance (~$58M in FY 2025-26).
- No impact to COPs as it is only a cap on new cash grants - not revenue that would be used for debt service.
- BEST has annual debt service payments of approximately $62M. Combined between debt service and new cash grants, that's nearly $250M in current-law BEST expenses for FY 2025-26.



**FY 2025-26 currently an estimate*

Proposal	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27	FY 2027-28
BEST New Cash Grant Cap	$129.0M (5-yr avg)	$134.0M	$138.7M
Growth Rate	N/A	3.9%	3.5%

All Numbers are Preliminary

A key consideration regarding OSPB's November 1st submission is that all figures are preliminary, contingent upon the availability of the October Pupil Count data and the most recent assessed value estimates, which will be published on Thursday, December 19th in the LCS forecast. As such, the supplemental submission on January 15th should be regarded as the definitive and most accurate representation of K-12 caseload numbers.

Questions?

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

FY 2025-26 JOINT BUDGET COMMITTEE HEARING

WRITTEN RESPONSES ONLY

Common Questions: Please retain the numbering in order to maintain consistent labeling across departments.

1 Provide a list of any legislation with a fiscal impact that the Department has: (a) not implemented, (b) partially implemented, or (c) missed statutory deadlines. Please specifically describe the implementation of ongoing funding established through legislation in the last two legislative sessions. Explain why the Department has not implemented, has only partially implemented, or has missed deadlines for the legislation on this list. Please explain any problems the Department is having implementing any legislation and any suggestions you have to modify legislation.

While CDE has attempted to meet the intent of all statutes through implementation, the department has identified several education statutes that due we have not been able to fully implement due to either the lack of resources for program implementation or other reporting mechanisms. Please find a description of these areas below:

Section 22-27.5-106 (2) requires CDE to provide an annual report on the number and amounts of Dropout Prevention Activity Program grants awarded, a description of the programs that received grants, the number of students participating in each program, and the student dropout rates of the schools at which the programs were operated. CDE has not received funding to administer this grant program for the past 10 years and so has no available data to report. Note that this is different from the Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement Grant authorized under section 22-14-109, C.R.S.

Section 22-69-106 (1) requires CDE to provide a report on the Alternative Teacher Compensation Grant Program, "so long as grant moneys were awarded to at least one school district pursuant to the grant program during the preceding calendar year." CDE has not received funding to administer this grant program for the past 10 years and so has no available data to report.

Section 22-2-108 (4) requires the state board to submit an annual report detailing the total amount of federal funds received by the State Board of Education in the prior fiscal

year, accounting how the funds were used, specifying the federal law or regulation that governs the use of the federal funds, if any, and providing information regarding any flexibility the board has in using the federal funds. To CDE staff's knowledge, this stand-alone report has never been funded or completed. The department's annual budget submission to the JBC does include a schedule that lists out most, if not all, federal funds received and/or distributed by CDE, the authorizing statute, and the purpose of those funds. In addition, the department has provided an update on the use of federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding to the Joint Education Committees as required under section 22-2-146(3), C.R.S. (ESSER Reporting Website)

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

- Strengthening Civic Education Grant (22 -1-104(5)(a), C.R.S.);
- School CPR and AED Training Grant (22-1-129, C.R.S.);
- Funding for Regional Service Areas (22-5.5-106, C.R.S.);
- Parent Involvement in Education Grant Program (22-7-305, C.R.S.);
- Closing the Achievement Gap Program (22-7-611 to 22-7-613, C.R.S.);
- Teacher Development Grant Program (22-7-701 to 22-7-708, C.R.S.)
- Summer School Grant Program (22-7-801 to 22-8-807, C.R.S.);
- Principal Development Scholarship Program (22-9.5-101 to 22-9.5-104, C.R.S.);
- Early Childhood Educator Development Scholarship Program (sections 22-9.7-101 to 22-9.7-104);
- Grant Program for In-School or In-Home Suspension (22-37-101 to 22-37-105, C.R.S.)
- Pilot Schools for Students Expelled from Sixth through Ninth Grade (22-38-101 to 22-38-115, C.R.S.);
- Second Chance Program for Problem Students (22-52-101 to 22-52-107, C.R.S.);
- Science and Technology Education Center Grant (22-81-203 C.R.S.);
- Colorado Information Technology Education Grant Program (22-81.5-101 to 22-81.5-107, C.R.S.); and
- ELPA Excellence Awards (22-24-107, C.R.S.)*.

**The ELPA Excellence Award Program has not been funded for the past three fiscal years. This decision was made in part due to the suspension of statewide assessments for select grades required by HB 21-1161.*

Section 22-7-1006.3(1)(III) requires the department to administer an assessment in social studies. CDE will administer the social studies assessments in spring 2025; however, the tests were not administered between 2022 and 2023. The state legislature paused state assessment administration in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic and adopted modified assessment requirements in 2021. At that time, the Colorado State Board of Education (SBE) was in the process of revising the social studies standards, and the revised standards were approved in November 2022. Because these standards serve as the basis for the assessment, the department further suspended the social studies assessment to give districts time to implement the revised standards, and to allow for the development, adoption, and implementation of the extended evidence outcomes for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. While costs for the administration, scoring and reporting of the two social studies assessments were included in annual contracts, the approximately $750,000 allocated for the social studies assessments was neither invoiced nor paid. These funds were embedded in state reversions that occurred in the years since the pandemic. Social studies assessment funds for the spring 2025 assessments will not be reverted.

Section 22-11-204(1) requires the School and District Performance frameworks to include academic growth, achievement, growth-to-standard, and postsecondary and workforce readiness as performance indicators. The SBE must "set, reaffirm, or revise, as appropriate, ambitious but attainable statewide targets for the measures used to determine the levels of attainment of the performance indicators for the coming academic year with the goal of raising the level of academic performance in the public schools throughout the state." (C.R.S. 22-11-201) The "growth-to-standard" (also now known as On Track Growth) is not currently included in the frameworks as the department works on revising the measure. While the metric is ready for use at the elementary and middle school levels, the high school measure needs further study as the high school assessment transitions from a paper-based to digital adaptive approach. Based upon the Technical Advisory Panel's recommendation, pursuant to section 22-11-204(1)(c), C.R.S., the state board voted to instead release the measure for public reporting until On Track Growth could be included in the frameworks for all school levels at the same time.

Section 22-11-204(4) requires the inclusion of "higher-bar" measures in English language arts, math and other content courses by the 2020-21 school year in the state's School and District Performance Frameworks as part of the postsecondary and workforce readiness performance indicator. These measures are not currently included in the performance frameworks. As noted above, the State Board of Education must annually set statewide performance targets to determine the levels of attainment of the performance indicators (C.R.S. 22-11-201). The board has not yet adopted these "higher bar" performance targets due to the accountability pause in 2020 and 2021 and the Technical Advisory Panel's concerns about data quality for these measures. This delay also acknowledges that there may be changes to the statute as a result of the recommendations from the HB23-1241 legislatively required task force.

Section 22-11-503.5 requires the department to provide a core course level participation and performance report for each district and school, which report should include the participation of students in each core course level disaggregated by student groups and, when available, the proficiency levels that the students enrolled in each core course level achieve on corresponding statewide assessments. This report has not been updated for the past several years due to the poor data quality of the Teacher-Student Data Link.

Section 22-54-104.6(3) and (11.5)

The department has partially implemented a new data collection process to identify at-risk students based on census block groups. However, feedback from districts—particularly small, rural districts—indicates that this process is both challenging and administratively burdensome.

During the implementation phase, the legislature passed HB 24-1448, which has affected the practicality and relevance of this new data collection effort. Specifically, the new school finance formula introduced by HB 24-1448 shifts funding allocations to focus on student characteristics. This change may diminish the value of collecting additional data to identify at-risk students as originally envisioned, given the significant burden it places on districts.

The department respectfully requests guidance from the legislature on whether to continue with the current implementation plan for collecting census block data or to reconsider the approach in light of HB 24-1448.

Section 22-1-139(1)(b) and Section 22-32-147(1)(d) In 2023-24, two different data collections were updated that included information about use of restraint and one collection that included use of seclusion based on state statute. Section 22-1-139(1)(b), C.R.S., requires CDE to include number of students physically restrained and number of students placed in seclusion on the district profile reports created through HB 23-1376, starting with data from the 2023-24 school year, disaggregated by student demographic details.The discipline and behavior collection collects instances when seclusion and restraint were used and districts report that information at student and incident level. In addition, the Protection of Persons from Restraint Act (PPRA; section 22-32-147(1)(d), C.R.S.) was updated to require districts to report to CDE (among other things) the number of uses of restraint and delineate how many are 1-5 minutes or 5+ minutes.

In reviewing data submitted on use of seclusion and use of restraint by districts in the 2023-24 school year, there were inconsistencies in the reported data, which may indicate unclear communication about or understanding of the reporting requirements – and, as a result, might be under-reporting the use of restraint or seclusion. As part of the data validation process, CDE compared data within the discipline and behavior report for restraint and the data reported for compliance with the PPRA. There are several examples where data does not match across the collections, including cases where the data collected in the discipline collection that was to be used for reporting shows zero students involved in use of restraint while the PPRA reporting for the same district shows large numbers.

Given the inconsistencies, CDE published the 2023-24 discipline and behavior data without tables or counts of seclusion or restraint (both in the "flat files" and in the district profile reports). While the department understands that this process does not fully implement the statutory requirement to publicly report the seclusion or restraint data from the discipline collection, the department is concerned that reporting the incomplete data may not accurately reflect the use of restraint and seclusion across the state of Colorado. CDE intends to take additional measures over the next year to update the collections and their accompanying guidance that were confusing in order to increase the quality and reliability of the data so that it can be published publicly in the future.

2 Describe General Fund appropriation reductions made in the Department for budget balancing purposes in 2020, and whether the appropriation has been restored with General Fund or another fund source through budget actions or legislation.

Please see the attached table (Pandemic Budget Balancing).

3 Please provide the most current information possible. For all line items with FTE, please show:

a the number of allocated FTE each job classification in that line item
b the number of active FTE for each of those job classifications
c the number of vacant FTE for each of those job classifications
d the vacancy rate for each of those job classifications

Use the attached Template C to populate these data. Please return the data in editable Excel format.

The Department is unable to track the history of an appropriated position, therefore cannot provide detail on a position's job class relative to its original allocation. Attached is an update on the vacancy/turnover data we have issued in previous years in response to JBC questions.

4 Please provide the same information as Question #3 for FYs 2022-23 and FY 2023-24. Use the attached Template C to populate these data. Please return the data in editable Excel.

This information, to the extent available, is included in the November 1st budget request. The Schedule 14s convey the number of FTE by job classification for each appropriation. If the format shown in the template is required, the department can move the schedule 14 data to that format as needed.

5 For FYs 2022-23 and 2023-24, please provide, in editable Excel format, department-wide spending totals for each of the following object codes, by fund source.

a Object Code 1130: Statutory Personnel & Payroll System Overtime Wages
b Object Code 1131: Statutory Personnel & Payroll System Shift Diff. Wages
c Object Code 1140: Statutory Personnel & Payroll System Annual Leave Payments
d Object Code 1141: Statutory Personnel & Payroll System Sick Leave Payments
e Object Code 1340: Employee Cash Incentive Awards
f Object Code 1350: Employee Non-Cash Incentive Award
g Object Code 1370: Employee Commission Incentive Pay
h Object Codes 1510, 1511, 1512: Health, Life, and Dental Insurance
i Object Code 1524: PERA – AED
j Object Code 1525: PERA - SAED
k Object Code 1531: Higher Education Tuition reimbursement

Please see attached spreadsheet.

6 For the latest month for which the data are available, please provide, in editable Excel format, department-wide FY 2024-25 year-to-date spending totals for each of the following object codes, by fund source.

a Object Code 1130: Statutory Personnel & Payroll System Overtime Wages
b Object Code 1131: Statutory Personnel & Payroll System Shift Diff. Wages
c Object Code 1140: Statutory Personnel & Payroll System Annual Leave Payments
d Object Code 1141: Statutory Personnel & Payroll System Sick Leave Payments
e Object Code 1340: Employee Cash Incentive Awards
f Object Code 1350: Employee Non-Cash Incentive Award
g Object Code 1370: Employee Commission Incentive Pay
h Object Codes 1510, 1511, 1512: Health, Life, and Dental Insurance
i Object Code 1524: PERA – AED
j Object Code 1525: PERA-SAED
k Object Code 1531: Higher Education Tuition reimbursement

Please see attached spreadsheet.

7 For FYs 2022-23 and 2023-24, please provide department-wide spending totals for each of the following object codes, by fund source.

a Object Code 1100: Total Contract Services (Purchased Personal Services)
b Object Code 1210: Contractual Employee Regular Part-Time Wages
c Object Code 1211: Contractual Employee Regular Full-Time Wages
d Object Code 1131: Statutory Personnel & Payroll System Shift Diff. Wages
e Object Code 1240: Contractual Employee Annual Leave Payments
f Object Code 1622: Contractual Employee PERA
g Object Code 1624: Contractual Employee Pera AED
h Object Code 1625: Contractual Employee Pera - Supplemental AED
i Object Code 1910: Personal Services – Temporary
j Object Code 1920: Personal Services – Professional
k Object Code 1940: Personal Services – Medical Services
l Object Code 1950: Personal Services - Other State Departments
m Object Code 1960: Personal Services – Information Technology

Please see attached spreadsheet.

8 Please provide a table showing both allocated and actual FTE for each Division within the Department from FY 2018-19 through FY 2023-24.

This information is available in the November 1st submission, please refer to schedules 3A and 3B.

9 Please discuss how the Department would absorb base personal services reductions of the following amounts: 1.0 percent, 3.0 percent, and 5.0 percent. How would those reductions impact the departments operations and core mission?

The Department is willing to provide analysis of information around proposed program cuts and the associated FTE impact of those reductions. Reductions to personal services of 1.0, 3.0 and 5.0 percent of total state funded FTE would require corresponding reductions in statutory requirements of approximately 2.8 FTE, approximately 8.3 FTE and approximately 13.8 FTE respectively for each corresponding percentage reduction.

The impact on CDE's CORE mission would depend on the specific program(s) eliminated in order to achieve the reduction.

10 Describe steps the Department is taking to reduce operating expenditures for FY 2025-26.

Similar to efforts previously shared, the Department continues to look for meaningful ways to maximize state funding and reduce expenditures (for example, the recent lease consolidation is now saving over $1.2 million per year as the Department no longer maintains any space outside of the Capitol Complex).

More recently, the Department worked with the State Board of Education to identify and submit various reductions and offsets to the Joint Budget Committee. In addition to these, there were 20+ cost containment proposals within the HSMA Technical Advisory Group report submitted to the Joint Budget Committee.

Additional ongoing cost containment efforts include the Grants Project recently presented to the JBC, bulk contracting proposal for the School Transformation Program, the Student Information System request, the HB1364 work, and many others. These efforts are intended to enable the state to stretch existing resources further and create efficiencies throughout our work.

The Department is also currently collaborating with the Governor's Office and JBC staff to identify and evaluate additional cost containment proposals. The Department is prepared to implement other cost-saving measures as instructed by the General Assembly.

11 For each operating expenses line item in FY 2023-24, provide a table showing the total appropriation for FY 2023-24 and the total actual expenditures at the end of the third quarter of FY 2023-24.

The Department's understanding is that this information was provided by the Department of Personnel and Administration; however, if there are still any questions or need for additional information, the Department is happy to provide it.

12 Please provide an overview of the department's service efforts. In your response, describe the following:

a Populations served by the Department

All School districts, BOCES, students, teachers, administrators, and many others throughout Colorado.

b The target populations of the Department's services

Primarily all K-12 students within Colorado.

c Number of people served by the Department

The department provides leadership, resources, support and accountability to the state's 178 school districts, 1,927 schools, 55,000+ teachers and 4,100 + administrators to help them build capacity to meet the needs of the state's approximately 883,264 public school students, including:

- 113,992 students receiving special education services,
- 114,509 English Language Learners,
- 135,223 students in charter schools, and
- 31,839 students in online schools.

CDE also provides services and support to boards of cooperative educational services (BOCES), early learning centers, state correctional schools, facility schools, the state's libraries, adult/family literacy centers, and General Education Development (GED) testing centers reaching learners of all ages. CDE operates the Colorado Talking Book Library that provides supports for people who have vision, print and reading disabilities.

In addition, CDE provides structural and administrative support to the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind and the Charter School Institute.

The department publishes statistics on the number of districts, students, and educators served in its Colorado State Education Snapshot. For detailed information and data on each of these categories please visit:
https://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolview/explore/statesnapshot

d Outcomes measured by the Department

The department tracks a wide range of outcomes across systems and programs (including accountability data, educator talent data, financial transparency data, state grant programs, etc.). Additionally, CDE is focused on monitoring the success of its strategic priorities in the areas of increasing student engagement, accelerating student outcomes, strengthening the educator workforce and providing operational excellence. Details can be found in CDE's draft strategic plan here.

e Present and future strategies for collecting customer experience data

The department regularly seeks customer feedback through a variety of channels and advisory groups, including, but not limited to, the following:

-The Teaching and Learning Conditions in Colorado (TLCC), a statewide, anonymous survey intended to support school, district, and state improvement planning, as well as research and policy. This survey opens every two years for public school teachers, education support professionals (including positions such as teacher assistants and paraprofessionals), school leaders and special service providers such as psychologists and social workers.

-State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education, a committee responsible for reviewing best practices and strategies to increase parent involvement in public education

-Commissioner's Teacher Cabinet, made up of 23 practicing teachers from around the state representing small, medium, large, rural, suburban and urban school systems who share with the department their hands-on classroom knowledge.

-Rural Education Council, comprised of superintendent representatives from each of the eight regions in the state, two rural school board members, two rural principals, a rural teacher, and a representative from the Colorado Association of School Executives, Colorado BOCES Association, Rural Alliance and the Colorado Association of School Boards.

-Education Data Advisory Committee, comprised of district representatives who review data demands placed on Colorado K-12 public education. Each year, all data collected by CDE and other state and federal agencies from LEAs are reviewed by this committee.

13 For each TABOR non-exempt cash fund, provide the following information

These answers are for fund 2930 - Licensure Fund

a The amount in the cash fund

As of 7/1/2024, $1,258,072. Through Accounting Period 3 (FY25), $1,157,564.

b Total amount of revenue in the fund that would not be transferred

N/A

c Detailed explanation of why the fund should not be sunset

Fund covers licensure activities for all licensed school teachers in Colorado.

d Statutory reference of the fund creation, specific uses, and legislative history of changes to the fund

CRS 22-60.5-112

e Every program funded by the fund

Educator Licensing, eLicensing and Enforcement, Educator Effectiveness, Educator Preparation, and Educator Career Navigation.

f Explanation of how fees to the fund are set and a history of fee changes

Pursuant to 22-60.5-112 C.R.S., the State Board of Education adjusts fees charged for licensing purposes, if necessary, so that revenues generated approximates the direct and indirect costs of administering the Colorado Educator Licensing Act.

SBE Date Approved	Licensing Fee	1 yr Sub Fee	CBI Proc. Fee
5/11/2000	$36	$18	$36
5/10/2001	$48	$24	$36
5/9/2002	$40	$20	$36
5/8/2003	$44	$22	$36
5/13/2004	$60	$30	$39
5/12/2005	$60	$30	$39
5/11/2006	$60	$30	$39
6/12/2006	same	same	$39.50
4/12/2007	$60	$30	$39.50
5/15/2008	increase approved, not set		$39
8/1/2008	fees taken online but not yet increased		$39
2/11/2011	$80	$40	$39
Current	**$80**	**$40**	**$39**

g The number of people provided service by the programs funded through the cash fund

Table X: Credentials Issued by CDE, FY20 through FY24

Sum of COUNT_ISSUED	Colum					
Row Labels	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	Grand Total
Adjunct Instructor Authorization	38	38	86	139	113	414
Adult Basic Education Authorization	46	21	27	23	26	143
Alternative Teacher License	912	888	991	948	951	4690
Career and Technical Education Authorization	520	480	580	622	588	2790
Educational Interpreter Authorization	36	64	74	59	50	283
Emergency Authorization	87	84	75	140	116	502
Emergency Educational Interpreter Authorization	16	19	4			39
Exchange Educator Interim Authorization	4	3	4	13	22	46
Initial Administrator License	82	85	86	73	80	406
Initial Principal License	979	966	1098	1021	918	4982
Initial Special Services License	1073	1052	1219	1220	1199	5763
Initial Teacher License	4732	4244	4474	3770	3650	20870
Interim Authorization - Administrator	7	9	9	9	13	47
Interim Authorization - Principal	31	27	45	59	47	209
Interim Authorization - Special Services Provider	26	17	12	2	1	58
Interim Authorization - Teacher	588	609	795	1354	1629	4975
Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) Instructor Authorization	17	25	24	27	26	119
Native American Language & Culture Instructor Authorization					1	1
Principal Authorization	64	37	38	44	63	246
Professional Administrator License	92	122	77	28	87	406
Professional Principal License	1115	1154	687	431	878	4265
Professional Special Services License	1577	1685	989	718	1406	6375
Professional Teacher License	13431	14007	7462	4265	10447	49612
School Speech-Language Pathology Assistant Authorization	76	64	101	97	129	467
Special Services Intern Authorization	121	134	155	126	125	661
Substitute Authorization	6653	7586	11306	12183	13459	51187
Teacher of Record License	8	6	17	20	16	67
Temporary Educator Eligibility Authorization	538	463	571	744	945	3261
Grand Total	**32869**	**33889**	**31006**	**28135**	**36985**	**162884**

h Any additional information necessary to ensure the Joint Budget Committee can make an informed decision.

N/A

Program Reduced in FY 20-21 Budget Balancing	Pandemic	Reduction	Appr.	Restored	Funds
State Grants to Publicly-Supported Libraries Program	$3,001,519	-$500,000	$2,501,519	Yes	GF
Quality Teacher Recruitment Program	$3,000,000	-$3,000,000	$0	Yes	GF
National Board Stipends	$1,384,000	-$1,384,000	$0	No	CF
School Bullying Prevention Program	$2,000,000	-$1,000,000	$1,000,000	No	CF
Career Development Success Program	$5,000,000	-$500,000	$4,500,000	No	GF
ELL Excellence Awards	$500,000	-$500,000	$0	No	CF
AP Exam Fee Program	$561,461	-$280,730	$280,731	Yes	GF
Career Counseling and Professional Development	$1,500,000	-$1,500,000	$0	No	GF
Behavioral Health Professional Program	$14,948,026	-$3,000,000	$11,948,026	Yes	CF
Ninth Grade Success Program	$800,000	-$800,000	$0	Yes	GF
Workforce Diploma Program	$1,012,222	-$800,000	$212,222	No	GF
Local Accountability Grant Program	$494,267	-$494,267	$0	Yes	GF
School Leadership Program	$751,615	-$375,807	$375,808	Yes	GF
Concurrent Enrollment Grant Program	$2,500,000	-$1,023,104	$1,476,896	Yes*	CF
John W. Buckner Automatic Enrollment in Advanced Course Grant Pro	$250,000	-$250,000	$0	Yes	GF
BEST Cash Grant Program	$160,000,000	-$100,000,000	$60,000,000	Yes**	CF
Retaining Teachers Fund Program	$2,500,000	-$2,500,000	$0	No	CF
Grow Your Own Educator Program	$22,933	-$22,933	$0	No	GF
Local School Food Purchasing Program	$675,255	-$675,255	$0	Yes	GF
Advanced Placement Incentives Program	$262,763	-$262,763	$0	No	CF
Computer Science Education Grants Program	$1,301,657	-$551,657	$750,000	Partially	CF/GF
School Counselor Corps Grant Program	$10,257,963	-$250,000	$10,007,963	Yes	GF
K-5 Social and Emotional Health Program	$2,500,000	-$2,500,000	$0	Yes	CF

*Legislation removed the cap on Concurrent Enrollment

**Process of restoring $100 million cash fund transfer goes over several years

Question #5/6

CDE

Through November

Object code	2023	2024	2025
1130	$900	$2,040	$5,236
1140	$29,609	$50,216	$4,644
1141		$3,946	$0
1340	$80,572	$119,578	$33,185
1510	$262,120	$291,039	$129,085
1511	$5,339,073	$6,275,914	$2,988,784
1512	$51,971	$54,869	$23,662
1524	$2,053,777	$2,251,845	$1,007,350
1525	$2,053,777	$2,251,845	$1,007,350

CSI

Object code	2023	2024	2025
1340	$146,750	$218,330	$49,910
1510	$18,038	$20,984	$9,800
1511	$349,749	$422,787	$211,034
1512	$3,575	$4,014	$1,807
1524	$139,285	$163,339	$77,956
1525	$139,285	$163,339	$77,956
1531	$8,229	$9,741	$2,095

CSDB

Object code	2023	2024	2025
1130	$29,439	$11,823	$29,337
1131	$75,740	$77,381	$36,665
1140	$24,766	$24,764	$10,398
1141			$4,590
1340	$3,268	$485,474	$10,900
1350	$25		
1510	$83,633	$87,934	$38,543
1511	$1,680,535	$1,769,823	$826,142
1512	$18,565	$9,977	$7,788
1524	$537,028	$558,264	$262,237
1525	$537,028	$558,264	$262,237
1531	$1,095	$581	

Question #7

CDE

Object code	2023	2024	2025
1110	$5,423,566	$6,274,119	$3,044,808
1111	$97,032	$56,916	$17,935
1210	$33,800,139	$37,148,071	$16,239,622
1211	$1,964,153	$2,040,304	$875,998
1240	$396,451	$343,045	$175,305
1622	$15,203	$12,849	$7,861
1624	$6,589	$5,545	$3,385
1625	$6,589	$5,545	$3,385
1910	$3,161	$42,125	$8,324
1920	$43,298,408	$42,204,617	$16,540,063
1940	$13,714	$0	
1950	$3,879,432	$4,064,248	$385,258

CSI

Object code	2023	2024	2025
1210	$2,494,210	$2,958,439	$1,403,930
1211	$298,961	$286,194	$135,296
1240	$34,260	$25,637	$10,526
1622	$0		
1624	$0		
1625	$0		
1920	$327,118	$246,476	$120,812

CSDB

Object code	2023	2024	2025
1110	$2,532,889	$2,740,426	$1,198,149
1111	$1,026,108	$1,055,095	$518,603
1131	$75,740	$77,381	$36,665
1210	$4,863,732	$5,006,038	$2,370,804
1211	$1,833,570	$1,905,857	$831,361
1240	$4,022	$458	$18,289
1622	$435	$132	$164
1624	$189	$57	$71
1625	$189	$57	$71
1910	$141,507	$179,107	$100,075
1920	$238,858	$445,911	$122,244
1940	$38,408	$48,100	$21,928
1960	$17,138	$150	

COLORADO
Department of Education

FY 2023-24 Turnover/Vacancy Data

When including the non-classified staff, CDE Turnover/Vacancy Rate is shown in the follow table.

Department	Total Separations	FY 2022-23 Turnover Rate
Education	65	11%

The following table illustrates the rate for several CDE programs.

Program	FY 2023-24 Rate
Information Management Services	2%
Assessment	14%
Student Learning	10%
Educator Talent	12%
School District Operations	12%
Deputy Commissioner	7%
School Quality and Support	10%
Operations/Finance	24%
Communications	15%

For those job classifications with over 20 FTE, the following turnover rates were experienced in FY 2023-24.

Job Class	FY 2022-23 Rate
Admin/Program Assistant	19%
Consultant class	8%
Supervisor	7%
Unit Director	8%

Turnover of CDE staff during FY 2023-24 continued to abate from the elevated level of FY 2021-22 during the 'Great Resignation'. The moderation in turnover within CDE is attributed to the larger nationwide tighter labor market conditions.