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News Release

Statewide student enrollment growth slows

DENVER – Slightly more students enrolled in Colorado public schools this fall than the year before - the smallest increase in 30 years.

Specifically, 1,256 more preschool through 12th grade students were counted in October 2018 than the previous year for a total statewide enrollment of 911,536 public school students, a 0.1 percent increase from the 2017-18 school year. The number represents the total number of students enrolled in Colorado's public schools.

Colorado's student population has grown in each of the past 30 years. The last decrease was in the 1988-89 school year.

Big and Little Districts

The largest 15 districts and their current student enrollments are:

1. Denver Public Schools (91,998)
2. Jefferson County Public Schools (84,623)
3. Douglas County School District (67,591)
4. Cherry Creek Schools (55,791)
5. Aurora Public Schools (39,892)
6. Adams 12 Five Star Schools (39,282)
7. St. Vrain Valley School District (32,639)
8. Boulder Valley School District (31,169)
9. Poudre School District (30,463)
10. Colorado Springs School District 11 (26,395)
11. Academy School District 20 (26,178)
12. Greeley-Evans School District 6 (22,503)
13. Falcon School District 49 (22,397)
14. Mesa County Valley School, District 51 (22,082)
15. School District 27J (18,712)

These 15 school districts, with a total enrollment of 611,715, represent 67.1 percent of the total statewide enrollment. In 2017-18, the percentage of students in the 15 largest school districts was 67.2 percent of the total statewide enrollment.



On the other end of the size spectrum, 132 of Colorado’s 185 local education agencies (excluding detention centers) have an enrollment of fewer than 2,000 students. These 132 agencies currently enroll 66,380 students, 7.3 percent of the total number of students in the state. Of these, 109 enroll fewer than 1,000 students. These 109 local education agencies enroll 3.9 percent of the total number of students in the state.

Race and Ethnicity Data

As a part of the Pupil Membership data, CDE collects student race and ethnicity data that matches the guidelines put forth by the U.S. Census Bureau and U.S. Department of Education. There are seven race/ethnicity groups a student may fall into: American Indian or Native Alaskan, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Two or More Races, and White.

The largest increase is students of two or more races with an increase from 38,003 to 39,826 (1,823 student increase), which is a 4.80 percent increase compared to the 2017-18 school year. The greatest percentage growth (6.38 percent) is among students classified as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, which increased from 2,290 in 2017 to 2,436 in 2018.

Racial/Ethnic Group	Percent of Total Population October 2018
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.7%
Asian	3.2%
Black or African American	4.5%
Hispanic/Latino	33.6%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.3%
Two or More Races	4.4%
White	53.4%

Fast-Growing Districts

Of the districts with greater than 100 students, District 49 in El Paso County had the largest number of student gains in 2018, adding 949 students, which is a 4.4 percentage point increase from 2017. School District 27J in Brighton saw the second-largest growth with an increase of 829 students representing a 4.6 percentage point increase.

Agate School District had the largest percentage increase in 2018 -- 1,075 percentage points -- with an increase of 43 students. Most of Agate’s growth in 2018 has been due to re-opening the high school.

Additional districts that had their student population increase by 500 or more students include: Las Animas (590 students) and the Charter School Institute (713 students).

There were 16 school districts that saw an increase of 100 or more students in the 2018-19 school year and another three that had an increase of greater than 90 students. A total of 27 school districts, plus Colorado detention centers, saw an increase in their student populations of 5 percent or more, which is down from 33 districts that saw a 5 percent or greater increase in the 2017-18 school year.



District Decreases

Jefferson County School district had the largest drop in student enrollment, decreasing by 1,489 students from 2017-18, or by 1.7 percentage points. A total of 87 school districts or BOCES saw enrollment decreases in 2018, totaling 6,838 students. Of those districts, 21 had decreases of 50 or more students, and only 13 had decreases of 100 students or more. The districts with the largest decreases were Jefferson County Schools, Colorado Springs 11 (1,032 students), Aurora Public Schools (1,028 students), Pueblo 60 (505 students), and Adams County 14 (340 students).

[Follow this link to access to the complete 2018-19 school year student count information.](#)

Online Enrollment

A total of 21,246 students are registered in online educational programs in the 2018-19 school year, which is 2.3 percent of all Colorado public school students. The online enrollment for 2018 jumped from 1.5 percent to a 6.9 percent increase from the 2017 online enrollment count of 19,876.

Free and Reduced Lunch Eligible Students

This year there has been a decrease in the number of PK-12 students eligible for free and reduced price meals. A total of 371,326 students are reported as eligible for free or reduced price meals or 40.7 percent of the state's total student population. That is a 8,132 student decrease from the fall of 2017 and a 1.0 percentage point decrease in the number of students reported as eligible.

English Learners

In the fall of 2018, 125,477 students were reported as receiving English learner services or being monitored after being exited from an English learner program. This is a decrease of 2,767 students from the previous year. This year 13.8 percent of Colorado's students are considered an English learners.

Special Education Students

A total of 11.2 percent of the state's public school students, or 102,081 students, were reported in the fall of 2018 as receiving special education services. This represents an increase of 3,097 students since the fall of 2017.

Gifted and Talented Students

As of this fall there were 66,677 students identified as gifted and talented or 7.3 percent of the state's total student population, which is a decrease of 405 students since fall of 2017.

Student October Count

The Student October Count is based on a one-day membership count in which districts are asked to report all students who are actively enrolled and attending classes through their district on that date.