Expelled and At-Risk Student Services Grant Program Annual Evaluation Report

Amy Werpy
Program Manager

Bonnie Brett
Research and Evaluation Consultant

Johann Liljengren
Director

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Contents

Executive Summary

The Expelled and At-Risk Student Services (EARSS) program is authorized by section 22-33-205, C.R.S. This grant program provides educational and support services to expelled students, and students at risk of being expelled, chronically absent, and/or habitually truant students. Funds are annually appropriated to the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) for the purpose of making grants available to eligible applicants, and the program is managed by the Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-Engagement.

The program provides grants for districts to provide services to expelled and at-risk students, consistent attendance and discipline practices, and alternatives to suspension and expulsion with the goal to keep more students in school, improve students' regular attendance, and support students' progress toward graduation. This approach is supported by research showing that exclusionary disciplinary practices put students at an increased risk of low school achievement, increased risk of dropping out, and increased risk of future police involvement[1]. In addition, research has shown that chronic absenteeism is associated with lower achievement levels in school and an increased risk of dropping out of high school. Students who attend school regularly outperform their low-attending peers on standardized assessments and are more likely to stay engaged in school and more likely to graduate[2].

More than 6,400 Students and 4,300 Parents, Families, and Guardians Served

In 2021-2022, the General Assembly appropriated $9,493,560 for the program and CDE awarded funds to 66 grantees. These grantees served 2,471 students at risk of being expelled, 3,837 chronically absent and/or habitually truant, and 125 expelled students.

Of the 2,596 at-risk and expelled students served, the primary reasons a student was served were due to detrimental behavior (26.7 percent of students) and disobedient/defiant behavior (22.2 percent of students). Available student-level data indicated that 55.0 percent of students served were male and most were Hispanic (56.3 percent of students) or White (32.8 percent of students). The majority of students were in ninth to twelfth grade (38.7 percent of students), followed by sixth through eighth grade (36.9 percent of students), and then kindergarten through fifth grade (21.0 percent of students). A small percentage (1.1 percent of students) were in pre-kindergarten.

In addition to the student support, more than 4,300 parents and guardians received support services to assist in their children's learning, positive engagement, and academic development. The grantees indicated that the most common support services available to families included involving parents/guardians in academic, attendance, and/or behavioral planning, communication between EARSS staff and the parent/guardian, referrals to community services/social services, and family engagement and relationship-building meetings.

The EARSS Program Met Legislative Intent

Evaluation results indicate that the legislative intent of the EARSS program to prevent expulsions, suspensions, and truancy was met. Grantees reported that, while being served by the EARSS program, 99.6 percent of students served were not expelled, 74.3 percent of at-risk students did not receive an out-of-school suspension, 84.4 percent of at-risk students did not receive an in-school suspension, and 93.7 percent of truant students did not have a truancy petition filed in court.

Majority of Students Experienced Positive Outcomes

Overall, grantees reported that 89.2 percent of students experienced positive outcomes and 96.2 percent of students who were supported in the program remained in school or graduated and completed school. This is consistent with results from the last three years of the grant program (with an average of 96.5 percent of students served graduating, completing, or remaining in school).

Background Context: State Statute on Expulsion Prevention and Intervention

Colorado's school attendance laws include several provisions that address the education of students who break school conduct and discipline codes or are deemed at risk of suspension or expulsion. Included in these laws is a legislative framework for expulsion prevention and intervention. See Colo. Rev. Stat., Title 22, Article 33, Part 2: Expulsion Prevention Programs. The law states that there are disciplinary violations that justify expulsion; however, it also addresses alternatives to expulsion when discretion is allowed. In such cases, the legislation directs school districts to develop a plan to provide the necessary support services to help students avoid expulsion. The Colorado General Assembly has also created the Expelled and At-Risk Student Services (EARSS) grant program to assist grantee school districts in providing such services. Colorado statute further outlines procedures and potential support options for students who have been expelled or at risk of expulsion. This includes guidance to districts and the establishment of the EARSS grant program that districts can access for support.

The EARSS Program

The EARSS program provides funding for grantees to provide educational and support services to expelled students, students at risk of being expelled, students at risk of dropping out of school due to chronic absenteeism or disciplinary action, and truant students. This includes students who are at risk of being declared habitually disruptive and/or habitually truant. Funds are annually appropriated to the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) for the purpose of making grants in accordance with authorizing legislation.

The program's approach maintains that more students will stay in school, regularly attend, and make progress toward graduation if school staff provide support services to expelled and at-risk students, offer alternatives to suspension and expulsion, and create effective attendance and discipline systems in schools.

COLO. REV. STAT.TITLE 22, ART. 33 PART 2: EXPULSION PREVENTION PROGRAMS

22-33-201. Legislative declaration.

The general assembly hereby finds that except when a student's behavior would cause imminent harm to others in the school or when an incident requires expulsion as defined by state law or a school's conduct and discipline code, expulsion should be the last step taken after several attempts to support a student who has discipline problems.

The general assembly further finds that school districts should work with the student's parent or guardian and with state agencies and community-based non-public organizations to develop alternatives to help students who are at risk of expulsion before expulsion becomes a necessary step and to support students who are unable to avoid expulsion.

22-33-202(2). In providing necessary support services pursuant to subsection (1) of this section, each school district may provide attendance supports, behavior intervention, and educational services to students in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade who are identified as at risk of dropping out of school due to chronic absenteeism or disciplinary actions, including classroom removal, suspensions, and expulsion. Any school district that provides attendance supports, behavior intervention, or educational services to students in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade who are at risk of dropping out of school due to chronic absenteeism or disciplinary actions may apply for money through the expelled and at-risk student services grant program established in section 22-33-205 to assist in providing such attendance, behavior intervention, and educational services.

Reporting Requirements

The EARSS authorizing legislation (section 22-33-205, C.R.S.) requires reporting on the evaluation of the grant to the Colorado House and Senate Education Committees by January 1 each year. This report is intended to meet the statutory reporting requirements outlined in section 22-33-205(4), C.R.S., through the analysis of program-level and student-level information annually submitted to CDE by grantees. This report covers evaluation data from 66 grantees available between July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022. For more details on the evaluation methodology, see *Appendix A – Evaluation Methodology*. For the survey tools from the evaluation, visit the EARSS Evaluation website at www.cde.state.co.us/dropoutprevention/earss_evaluation.

2021-2022 Grant Awards

Grant Application and Selection Process

The EARSS program is managed through CDE's Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-Engagement. Competitive grant reviews occur each year based on the level of funding appropriated by the legislature. Eligible grant applicants include school districts, Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), charter schools, alternative education schools within school districts, non-public schools, and facility schools. Grants are awarded for four sequential fiscal years provided that grantees are meeting grant requirements and making reasonable progress toward performance outcomes, and that state funds are annually appropriated.

In 2021-2022, based on feedback and needs of grantees, the format of this four-year grant was modified to include an additional 6-month planning period. After reviewing implementation challenges in previous years, it became apparent that new grantees struggled to immediately implement a program due to inability to hire staff and lack of time to receive program-specific training. A planning period, occurring during the spring semester, allows grantees to hold additional stakeholder meetings, establish protocol in identifying at-risk students, and to hire and train staff. At the time of this report, all the new grantees who had completed the 6-month planning period in spring 2022 were able to hire personnel and start serving students immediately in the 2022-2023 school year.

For the 2021-2022 school year, the General Assembly appropriated $9,493,560 for the program. CDE awarded 22 new grants and 44 continuation awards for grantees moving into years two through four of the grant cycle.

TABLE 1 shows the number and percent of grantees per cohort. **See** *Appendix B – 2021-2022 Funded Grantees* for a list of grantees.

TABLE 1: Grantees by Cohort and Type (*N*=66)			
Funding Start	**Funding End**	**Number of Grantees**	**Percent of Grantees**
January 2022*	**June 2026**	**22**	**33.3**
July 2020	**June 2024**	**10**	**15.2**
July 2019	**June 2023**	**7**	**10.6**
July 2018	**June 2022**	**27**	**40.9**

Source: Colorado Department of Education, EARSS End-of-Year Reporting, 2021-2022.
*Includes 6-month planning period

Twelve grantees (18.2 percent of grantees) served students from more than one school district. This occurs when the grantee is a Board of Cooperative Services, a facility school, or the grantee is in a rural area and offering services to neighboring districts. Approximately 15 percent of active facility schools currently have an EARSS grant.

District Map

The 66 grantees funded in 2021-2022 represent 30 counties across Colorado. EARSS funded 42 school districts, thirteen individual charter schools, five BOCES, and six facility schools. Ten school districts and the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI) had multiple EARSS grants, each grant serving a different school. **FIGURE 1** shows the School District Map which highlights all the districts served by the grant. Grantees serving multiple school districts through collaborative agreements are highlighted in grey.

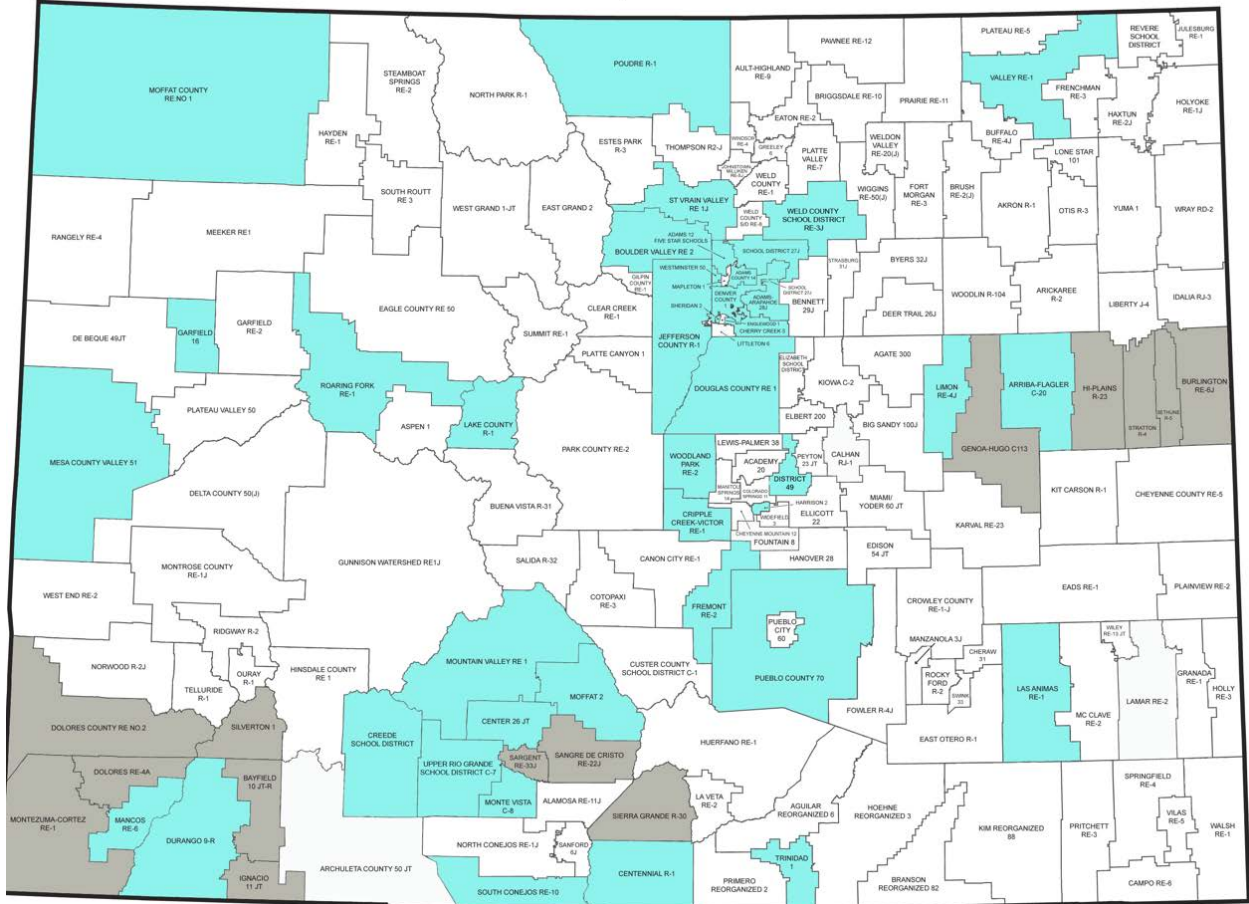Colorado School District Map of EARSS Grantees 2021-22

Figure 1- Grantees serving multiple school districts through collaborative agreements are highlighted in grey.

Students Served in 2021-2022

In 2021-2022, EARSS program grantees reported serving 6,433 students.

- Twenty-one grantees reported serving **125 expelled students** (1.9 percent of students served). This represents about 61.9 percent of the expelled students in the districts where grantees are located.

- Fifty-two grantees reported serving **2,471 students at risk for expulsion** (38.4 percent of students served). This is approximately 17.4 percent of students who received suspensions in EARSS-served districts.

- Overall 15.8 percent of the unduplicated count of disciplinary incidents in EARSS-served districts were reported as being served by the grant program.

- Fifty-one grantees reported serving **3,837 truant students or students at risk for habitual truancy or chronic absenteeism** (59.6 percent of students served). This represents 5.2 percent of the chronically absent and truant students in EARSS served districts.

6,433

STUDENTS SERVED
IN 2021-2022

| Facility School Grantees |
| --- |
| Students Served |
| Facility schools served 1.7 percent of all students served by the grant. The 110 students served by facility schools included:
 • No expelled students
 • 99.1 percent students at-risk of expulsion
 • 0.9 percent truant students or students at risk for habitual truancy |

Student Demographics

Demographic data was available for 97.6 percent of the students served by an EARSS program (6,281 students). A review by grade level showed that most students were in ninth through twelfth grade (38.6 percent of students), followed by sixth through eighth grade (36.9 percent of students), and then kindergarten through fifth grade (21.0 percent of students). A small percentage (1.1 percent of students) were in pre-kindergarten.

The available data show most students served were male (55.0 percent of students) and Hispanic or Latino (56.3 percent of students) and White (32.8 percent of students). *CHART 1* shows a breakout by race/ethnicity for the students served by the program compared to the 2021-2022 pupil membership rate.
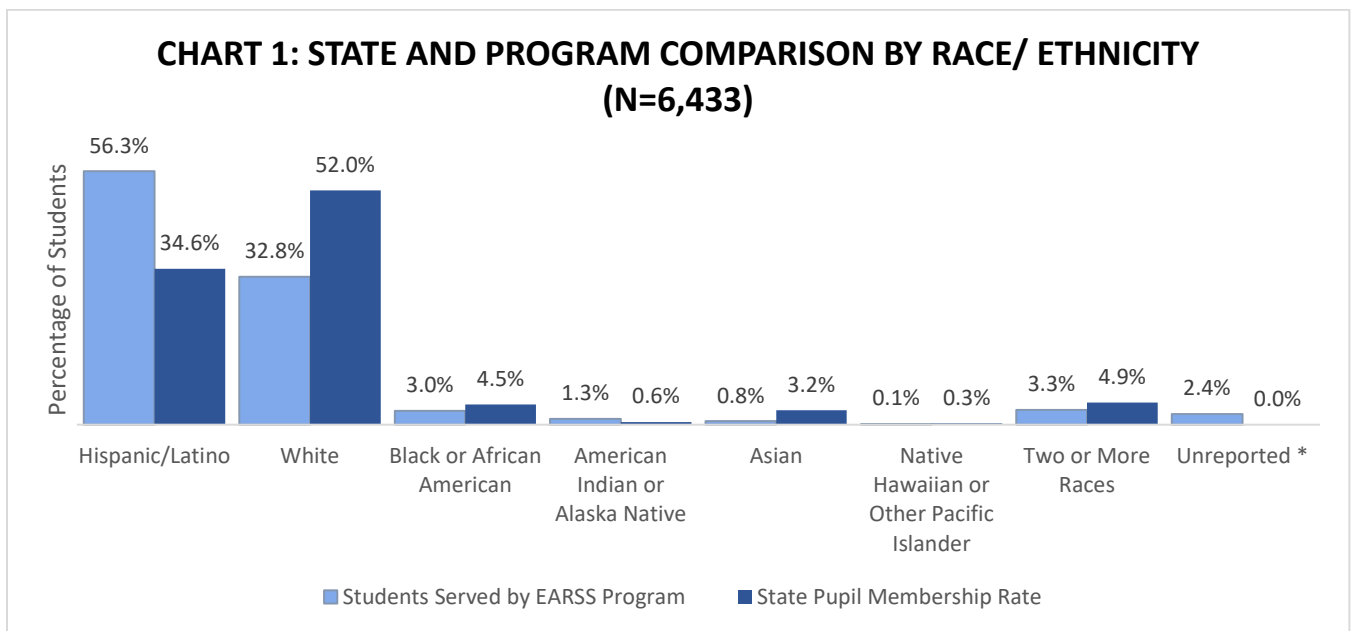
CHART 1: STATE AND PROGRAM COMPARISON BY RACE/ ETHNICITY (N=6,433)

Source: Colorado Department of Education, EARSS End-of-Year Reporting and Pupil Membership Data, 2021-2022
Note: *Grantees did not report race / ethnicity for 2.4% of students.

EARSS programs served higher percentages of students also served by specific Instructional Program Service Types than the overall state population including 56.6 percent of students served qualified for free/reduced lunch, 22.3 percent of students were English learners, 17.5 percent of students had a special education designation, and 4.7 percent of students were experiencing homelessness. *CHART 2 shows a breakout by instructional program service types for the students served by the program compared to the state average pupil membership rate of all students in 2021-2022.*

CHART 2: STATE AND PROGRAM COMPARISON OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM SERVICE TYPE (N = 6,433)

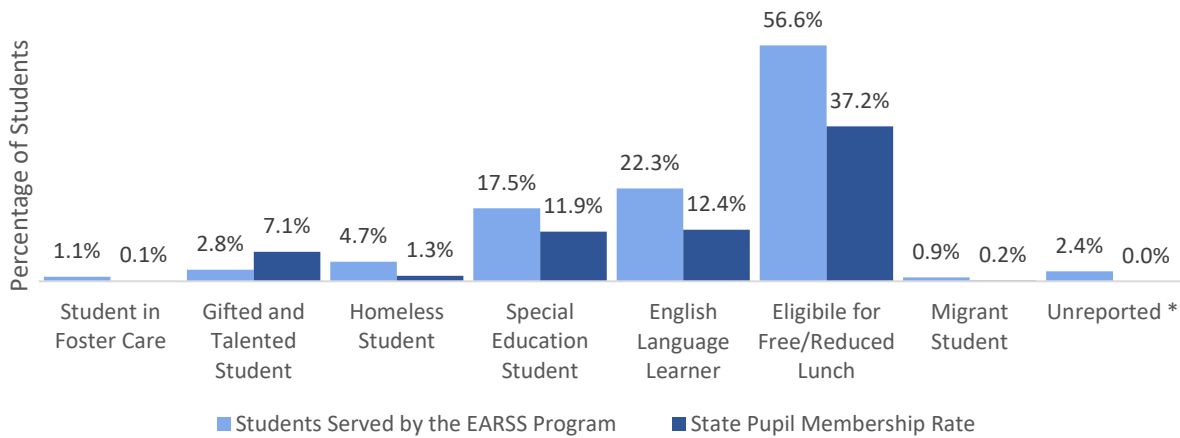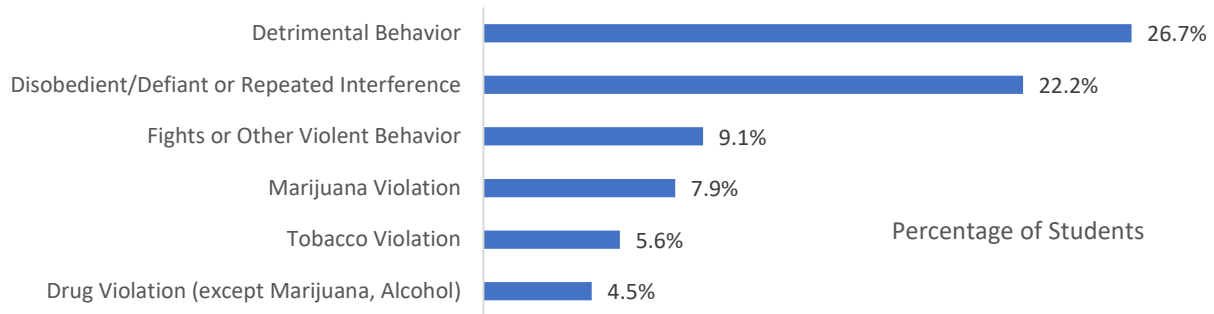*Source: Colorado Department of Education, EARSS End-of-Year Reporting and Pupil Membership Data, 2021-2022*
*Note: These categories are not mutually exclusives, students can belong to more than one of them. *Grantees did not report student group membership for 2.4% of students.*

Behaviors for Which Students Were Served

Students were mainly served due to attendance issues (59.6 percent of students served). When excluding these students from the analysis, the main reasons expelled students and students at risk for expulsion were served included detrimental behavior (26.7 percent of students), and disobedient/ defiant behavior or repeated interference (22.2 percent of students). *CHART 3 provides a breakout of the reasons that expelled students and students at risk for expulsion were served by an EARSS program.*

CHART 3: MOST COMMON REASONS FOR BEING SERVED FOR EXPELLED STUDENTS AND STUDENTS AT-RISK FOR EXPULSION (N = 2,596)

Reason	Percentage of Students
Detrimental Behavior	26.7%
Disobedient/Defiant or Repeated Interference	22.2%
Fights or Other Violent Behavior	9.1%
Marijuana Violation	7.9%
Tobacco Violation	5.6%
Drug Violation (except Marijuana, Alcohol)	4.5%

Source: Colorado Department of Education, EARSS End-of-Year Reporting, 2021-2022
Note: Excludes students served for truancy concerns.

Example Reasons for Being Served
Submitted by School District in Denver-Metro Area
One of our students is a highly gifted and precocious young man. He finds himself bored in school and tends to turn to drugs to keep himself entertained and regulated. Ultimately, the student ran away from home due to a fight with the parents. With the support of our team the student returned home. Parents indicated that staff had "saved his life" and at last report, the student had been clean for one month and attending school regularly.

Program Support Services Implemented

Most Funded Support Services

Various types of programming were utilized by grantees to serve students, including academic and attendance strategies (e.g., credit recovery, online and technology-based learning), behavioral supports (e.g., counseling, mentoring), and emotional supports (e.g., multi-tiered system of support, trauma informed approaches). These grant-funded support services are primarily delivered by specialized staff (e.g., behavior interventionist, student attendance advocates, family liaisons, etc.). *CHART 4 provides a breakout of the most common support services utilized by grantees.*

CHART 4: MOST COMMONLY FUNDED SUPPORT SERVICES

Support Service	Percentage of Grantees
Wraparound case management	53.5%
Counseling	62.8%
Trauma Informed Approaches	65.1%
Essential Skills Building	67.4%
Restorative Justice Practices	69.8%
Multi-tiered system of support	69.8%
Positive staff-student mentoring and relationship building	72.1%
Attendance contracts	74.4%
Behavioral plans	83.7%

Percentage of Grantees

Source: Colorado Department of Education, EARSS End-of-Year Reporting, 2021-2022
Note: Grantees could select more than one support service.

Most Effective Strategies

Grantees were asked to report on the most effective strategies that have positively impacted their programs. Survey results revealed that Restorative Justice Practices (30 percent of grantees), Mentorships (25 percent of grantees), and Wraparound Case Management (23 percent of grantees) were reported as the most effective strategies. Other strategies, including tutoring, trauma informed care, and multi-tiered support systems (MTSS), were also reported as being effective by grantees to meet the unique needs of the population they serve.

Program Successes

Grantees were asked to specifically describe special circumstances that positively affected progress on achieving their objectives. When focusing on grantees who were meeting or exceeding most of their goals and reported positive outcomes for at least 80 percent of students served (see *Appendix C – Example Program Summaries*), program success was attributed to the following factors:

- Restorative Justice Practices help students recognize how their behavior impacts others and the greater community.
- Extended day programming provides time for tutoring and skill development. This also provides time for students to make up work and skills that were missed due to absences.
- Positive staff-student mentoring and relationship building allows students to feel connected to a staff member, building trust within the school community.
- Wraparound support helps build relationships and trust within the school community, providing connections for both the student and the student's family.

Program Success Story
Submitted by an AEC (Charter School) in the Denver-Metro Area
EARSS was an integral part of a complete school overhaul and restructuring that resulted in the school achieving a "performance" status on CDE's School Performance Framework after being on the "priority improvement" status for years. These outcomes have led to the school gaining attention and increasing the credibility and trust from the community and school district, which has led to more collaboration and support.

Program Challenges

Grantees were asked to share challenges that were faced when implementing their program and achieving their objectives. The most common challenges related to schools trying to return to normal after the pandemic and subsequent issues with implementation. These issues included:

- Elimination of assessments during the pandemic making it difficult to measure academic progress.
- Disruptions impacting the ability of staff to form deep connections with families.
- Inability to fill positions and retain staff, especially staff in the mental health field, and counseling roles.
- Inadequate support to students when transitioning back to in-person learning due to frequent changes, lack of staff, and on-going disruptions due to the pandemic and its impacts on the learning environment.

Example of Program Challenge
Submitted by a BOCES
During our 4 years, we have found that the most effective intervention strategy is the use of the therapeutic relationship developed between the student and the coordinator. This relationship becomes the foundation for all the interventions - essential skill building, tutoring, Trauma Informed strategies, Wraparound, facilitating stronger relationships with school staff, and counseling. Behavior and Attendance plans don't work when they are cookie cutter and just about having a student sign a piece of paper that says they are going to behave and come to schools. They DO work when the student is involved in their development and the focus is on how the school/staff are going to support the student if they start to slip on their expectations.

Parent/Family Engagement
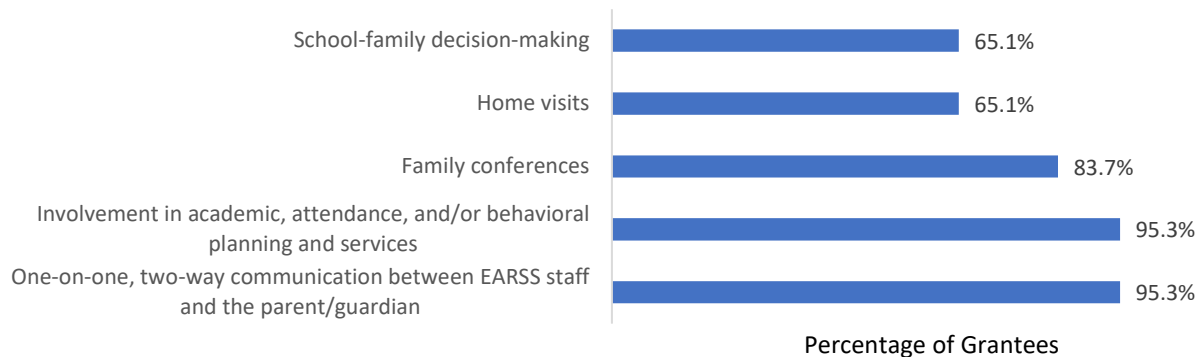
Parents/Guardians Served

In addition to students, grantees reported serving 4,304 parents/guardians of students served. These parents/guardians received support services to assist in their children's learning and positive development.

4,304

PARENTS/GUARDIANS
SERVED

Parent/Guardian Services

Forty-four grantees provided various support services for parents, guardians, and families. The grantees indicated that the most common support services available to families was involvement in academic, attendance, and/or behavioral planning and services. Family conferences and referrals to community services/social services were also commonly utilized. *CHART 5 lists the most common family engagement strategies available to parents/guardians.*

CHART 5: MOST COMMONLY FUNDED FAMILY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS (N = 43)

Strategy	Percentage of Grantees
School-family decision-making	65.1%
Home visits	65.1%
Family conferences	83.7%
Involvement in academic, attendance, and/or behavioral planning and services	95.3%
One-on-one, two-way communication between EARSS staff and the parent/guardian	95.3%

Source: Colorado Department of Education, EARSS End-of-Year Reporting, 2021-2022
Note: Grantees could select more than one support service.

Example of Family Engagement
Submitted by a School District from an Outlying Town
A student who was at risk of being expelled was required to attend a meeting with their parents. During this meeting, the team discussed the needs of the family and the steps for the student to be able to return to the school. One intervention was to work with the family as the family had difficulty communicating with each other and tended to lash out at one another. Since their first session the student and family both spoke about how well they can communicate and that they have been able to spend quality time together. The student has mentioned that she feels supported by her mother.

Program Effectiveness

CDE evaluates the impact of the program each year through analysis of individual student progress, progress towards performance measures that are set for each grantee, and overall impact on school and district outcomes.

Overall Outcomes for All Students

Each year, grantees share implementation or program outcomes for each student that received services as part of the EARSS program. Of the students served by the grant, grantees reported that 89.6 percent experienced positive outcomes by the end of the 2021-2022 academic year. These outcomes include school completion, continuation of education, completion of the expulsion term and return to school. Importantly, although 96.2 students continued

9 out of 10

STUDENTS EXPERIENCED POSITIVE OUTCOMES

their education, not all were categorized as experiencing a positive outcome. For example, students who transferred to a detention center to continue their education no longer received services and were considered as having a negative outcome due to the incarceration.

Outcomes were separated into three categories for analysis. Examples of positive, neutral, and negative outcomes are found in *TABLE 2: EARSS OUTCOMES.*

TABLE 2: EARSS OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS		
Positive Outcomes	**Neutral Outcomes**	**Negative Outcomes**
Will continue to receive EARSS services	Transferred school within district	Expelled, Not receiving services
Successfully completed EARSS program and exited the EARSS program	Refused services but continued in school	Discontinued school / dropped out
Transitioned back to school	Expelled, receiving educational services	Transferred to detention center, not receiving services
Graduated with diploma		

The majority of students who participated in the EARSS program experienced positive outcomes. The two most common outcomes were that the student would continue in the EARSS program (43.5 percent), and the student successfully completed the EARSS program and no longer needed the EARSS-related support and have exited the program (37.0 percent). Under 10 percent of students served by EARSS experienced a neutral or negative response. The most common neutral response was to refuse EARSS services but remain in school (2.9 percent). The most common negative outcome was the discontinuation of schooling or dropping out (3.7 percent). *CHART 6 displays how many students experienced positive, neutral, and negative outcomes.*

CHART 6: NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES OF STUDENTS EXPERIENCING POSITIVE, NEUTRAL, AND NEGATIVE OUTCOMES

284, 4%   107, 2%

280, 4%

5762, 90%

■ Positive   ■ Neutral   ■ Negative   ■ Unknown
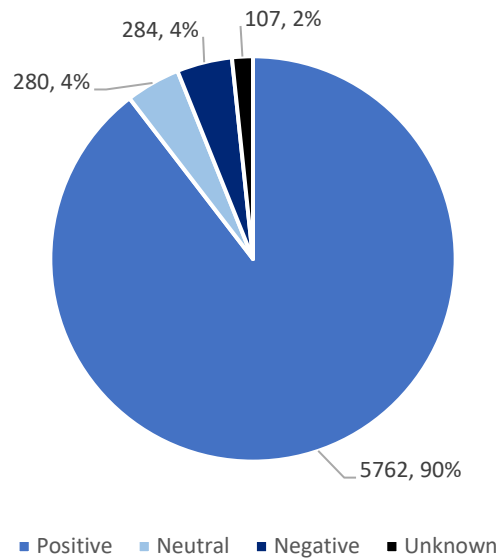
Source: *Colorado Department of Education, EARSS End-of-Year Reporting, 2021-2022*
Note: *Categories are mutually exclusive. No outcome was reported on 107 students due to reporting errors.*

Student Success Story
Submitted by a Charter School in an Urban-Suburban Setting
An 11th grade student was referred for detrimental behavior during the school year-2020-2021. Some of the goals set for this student included to increase academic performance, learn self-advocacy in the classroom, and conflict resolution. The social worker, provided through EARSS funding, met with the student on a weekly basis to target individual goals. The student was able to meet her academic goals successfully passing all her classes. She is now on track to graduate on time. Her social skills also improved. The student is currently involved in volunteering work and participating in extracurricular activities.

Dropout Prevention

One long-term aim of the program is to reduce the number of students disengaging and dropping out of school. In the 2021-22 school year, just under half of grantees (46.5%) reported no student dropouts.

Based on the available demographic and outcome data, the remaining grantees reported that 235 students (3.7 percent of all students served or 5.7 percent of students in seventh through twelfth grade) dropped out of school in 2021-2022. This is higher than the dropout rate for the statewide population, which was 2.2% in the 2021-22 school year. Fifty-six students, or 0.9 percent of students served, were identified as having dropped out but re-entering to continue working toward a high school diploma.

50% of all
GRANTEES REPORTED NO STUDENT DROPOUT

Meeting Legislative Intent

The purpose of the EARSS program is to assist in reducing and preventing expulsions, suspensions, and truancy. Grantees reported the following disciplinary outcomes in 2021-2022:

- *Expulsions:* 99.6 percent of at-risk students served who remained in school did not receive an expulsion while being served. More than 70 percent of grantees reported that no students at risk of expulsion were expelled while being served. This is consistent with results from the last three years of the grant program with an average of 99.6 percent of students served did not receive an expulsion while being at school in the previous three years.

  Out-of-School Suspensions: 74.3 percent of at-risk students served did not receive an out-of-school suspension while being served, compared to the three year average of 88.0 percent. More than 20 percent of grantees who served at-risk students reported that no students received an out-of-school suspension while being served.

- *In-School Suspensions*: 84.4 percent of at-risk students served did not receive an in-school suspension while being served. More than 22 percent of grantees who served at-risk students reported that no students received an in-school suspension while being served. This is a decrease from FY20-21 (95.9%), but similar to the two years prior to the pandemic where the students receiving in-school suspensions while being served averaged 84.3 in the three previous years.

- *Truancy Petitions:* 93.7 percent of truant students or students at risk for habitual truancy served by the program did not have a truancy petition filed in court while being served. The number of students who did not receive truancy petitions is consistent with results from the last three years of the grant program with an average of 94.4 percent of students served not receiving a truancy petition in the previous three years. 75 percent of grantees who served habitually truant students reported no petitions filed in court. This was a significant increase in comparison

to the last three years of the grant program with an average of 43.3 percent of grantees not filing petitions in the three previous years.

Student Success Story

Submitted by a School District in Denver-Metro Area

For our end-of-year EARSS party, our team crafted a unique award for each student to celebrate their progress. One particular student, who started attending school regularly after working with an EARSS mentor, was awarded "Most Friendly" because he is always so polite to everyone. Upon receiving the award, his face lit up and he had a giant smile on his face. He giggled. I asked him how he felt about receiving an award and he said, "I'm so happy, I never thought I would ever get one of these things!"

If all the work that was put into this program was meant to make a quiet, reserved, and shy kid feel this amount of joy over what seemed to us, just a piece of paper, then it was so worth it!

Performance Objectives and Program Outcomes

Each grantee measured success through performance objectives to be achieved by the end of the grant period. These were set as part of the application process. Grantees set goals in the following categories:

Increasing Family Engagement
Improving Academic Performance
Increasing Attendance
Improving Safety and Decreasing Discipline/Behavior

Grantees annually report progress toward achieving these goals. Grantees were instructed to rate their performance objectives using the following guidance:

- *If you went above and beyond your objective(s), then you exceeded your goal.*
- *If you have completely (100 percent) met your objective(s), then you have met your goal.*
- *If you have partially met your objective (more than 50 percent), then indicate making progress/approaching.*
- *If you have made minimal gains on your objective, select not making progress.*

Ratings for All Objectives

To better identify how many grantees met or exceeded their objectives, ratings were aggregated by grantees. When focusing on the ratings "exceeding" and "meeting," the results were the following:

- 45 percent of grantees met or exceeded at least half of their objectives.
- 20 percent of grantees met or exceeded all their objectives.

To better identify how many objectives were met, data was aggregated across all objective areas. Ratings for all objectives across areas included:

- **Exceeded or Met**: 44.1 percent of the performance objectives were rated as meeting or exceeding.
- **Making Progress:** 42.0 percent of the performance objectives were rated as making progress.
- **Not Making Progress:** 13.8 percent of the performance objectives were rated as not making progress.

In 2021-2022 grantees reported that performance measures were met or exceeded at a higher rate than the previous year. In 2020-2021 grantees were able to report "being unable to report on a performance measure" if the pandemic interrupted program implementation. This was not an option in 2021-2022. *CHART 7 shows a comparison between Performance Measure Ratings from 2020-2021 and 2021-2022.*

CHART 7: PERCENTAGE OF RATINGS ACROSS ALL OBJECTIVES FOR 2020-2021 and 2021-2022
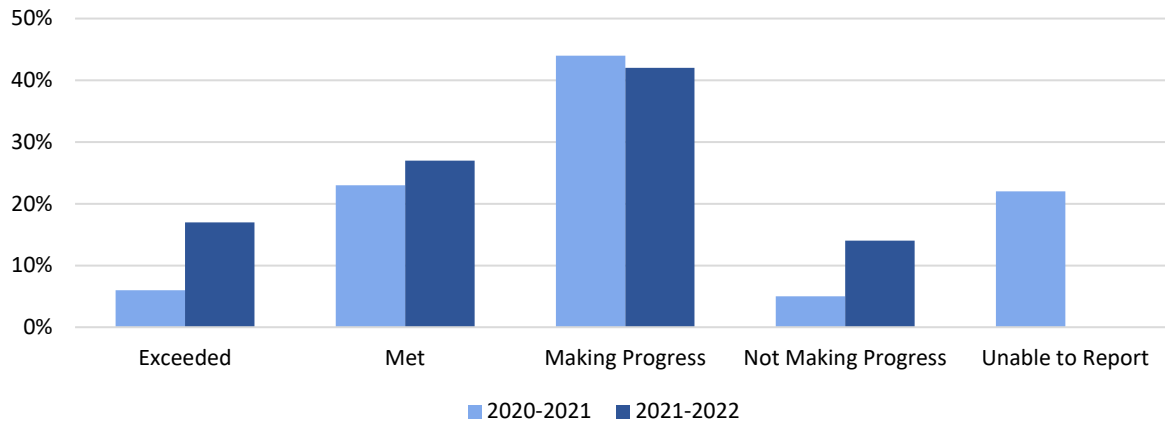
Source: Colorado Department of Education, EARSS End-of-Year Reporting, 2021-2022.

Note: Grantees were able to select multiple objectives when they started the grant. For the most recent cohort, grantees selected 2-3 objectives.

Endnotes

[1] Augustine, C., Engberg, a., Grimm, G., Lee, E., Lin Wang, E., Christianson, K., & Joseph, A. (2018). *Can Restorative Practices improve school climate and curb suspension? An evolution of the impact of Restorative Practices in a mid-sized urban school district.* (2018). Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation. 10.7249/RR2840

[2] Chang, H. N., Bauer, L., & Byrnes, V. (2018). *Data Matters: Using Chronic Absence to Accelerate Action for Student Success*. Attendance Works. Retrieved from ERIC http://eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/detail?accno=ED587559

Appendix A – Evaluation Methodology

Data Collection

Evaluation data were collected from 44 grantees funded by the EARSS program. An additional 22 grantees were in the planning period for their first year of funding and did not provide data. Grantees were responsible for submitting their End-of-Year Survey to CDE using a Qualtrics survey platform. In addition, they were required to securely submit State Assigned Student Identifiers (SASIDs) for all students served using the Student Engagement Evaluation Data Collection (SEEDC) in Data Pipeline.

The results reported in this document reflect data collected at the end of the 2021-2022 school year. Two webinars were conducted to prepare grantees to collect and enter data. Recorded versions of the webinars were also shared with all grantees. Throughout the reporting period, CDE staff were available to assist with problems and answer questions.

The CDE staff analyzed the data for any irregularities and conducted mathematical checks to correctly calculate and tabulate data. If data were not accurate, CDE staff would contact the grantee for clarification and revisions. These strategies ensure that year-end reporting is as accurate as possible.

Analysis

Aggregated data from the materials collected was downloaded from the SEEDC and Qualtrics systems as Excel spreadsheets by CDE staff, which facilitated the statistical analysis of process and outcome data. All Personally Identified Information (PII) data was handled and stored securely in accordance with CDE guidelines. Using disaggregated and aggregated data, CDE staff conducted quantitative (i.e., descriptive statistics and inferential statistics) and qualitative analyses (i.e., thematic analysis). When appropriate, inferential analyses included an investigation of differences by grant year and student type. Due to the unique nature of facility schools, additional analyses were conducted focused on those grantees.

Appendix B – 2021-2022 Funded Grantees

County*	Year of 4-year grant	Grantee	School or Program funded, or District-wide Strategies	Grantee Type	Amount Awarded
Adams, Jefferson, Denver	Plan	Charter School Initiative	New America School Opportunities Centers	Charter	$53,221
Arapahoe	Plan	Cherry Creek 5	CCSD #5 EARSS Grant 2022-2026	District	$100,000
Denver	Plan	Denver Public Schools	Compass Academy	Charter	$90,527
Denver	Plan	Denver Public Schools	Rise-Up Community Post-secondary Readiness Support	Charter	$99,715
Denver	Plan	Tennyson Center	Motivational Interviewing	Facility	$82,200
Douglas	Plan	Douglas County RE-1	HOPE Online Workforce Pathway	Charter	$88,010
Douglas	Plan	Douglas County RE-1	Renaissance Secondary Student Support Team	Charter	$10,035
El Paso	Plan	Griffith Centers for Children	Griffith Vocational Program	Facility	$63,405
El Paso	Plan	Harrison 2	Atlas Prep Middle School	Charter	$19,669
El Paso	Plan	Harrison 2	HSD2 EARSS Program	School District	$100,000
El Paso*	Plan	Education reEnvisioned BOCES	Pikes Peak Online School	BOCES	$34,500
Garfield	Plan	Roaring Fork RE 1	RFSD Student Support	District	$20,215
La Plata County	Plan	Durango 9-R	The HUB Therapeutic Program	School District	$52,415

County*	Year of 4-year grant	Grantee	School or Program funded, or District-wide Strategies	Grantee Type	Amount Awarded
Las Animas	Plan	Las Animas RE-1	Academy of Las Animas Student Support	Charter	$83,205
Las Animas	Plan	Trinidad 1	Trinidad Middle School	District	$62,250
Logan	Plan	Valley RE-1	VSD Case Management	District	$95,450
Mesa	Plan	Mesa County Valley 51	Mesa County Valley 51 Bounce Back Program	District	$38,115
Montezuma	Plan	Mancos RE-6	MSD Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Support	District	$85,500
Montezuma	Plan	San Juan BOCES	Behavior Emotional Transition and Academic Program	BOCES	$27,375
Pueblo	Plan	Pueblo County 70	Pueblo D70 Student Support	District	$92,875
Saguache	Plan	Center Consolidated 26JT	Center Positive Youth Development	District	$100,000
Teller	Plan	Cripple Creek-Victor RE-1	Restore, Engage, and Provide Support	District	$60,327
Adams	2	Adams 12	EARSS 2021 to 2024 Program	School District	$298,231
Adams	2	School District 27J	EARSS 2021-2024 Middle School Tier 3 Program	School District	$422,710
Alamosa	2	San Luis Valley BOCES	SLV EARSS 2021-2024	BOCES	$364,768
Boulder	2	Boulder Valley	Advanced Alternative Learning Program and Services	School District	$307,167
Centennial	2	Centennial School District R-1	EARSS 2021 to 2024 Program	School District	$216,119
Denver	2	Denver Public Schools	DPS EARSS Program	School District	$286,134

County*	Year of 4-year grant	Grantee	School or Program funded, or District-wide Strategies	Grantee Type	Amount Awarded
Denver	2	DPS - Denver Justice High School	Denver Justice High EARSS Program	Charter School	$297,420
Jefferson	2	CSI - Early College of Arvada	EARSS Advocacy Case Management	Charter School	$126,000
Jefferson	2	Jefferson Hills Academy	EARSS 2021 to 2024 Program	Facility School	$134,616
Lincoln	2	Limon School District RE-4J	Lincoln County RAD-C	School District	$81,400
Boulder	3	Boulder Valley	Boulder Prep High School EARSS Program	Charter School	$90,524
Conejos	3	South Conejos	EARSS 2020-2023	School District	$122,857
Douglas	3	Douglas County	DCSD Student Assistance Grant	School District	$337,033
Kit Carson	3	Arriba-Flagler CSD #20	Kit Carson Co EARSS 2020-23	School District	$83,058
Larimer	3	Poudre	Poudre District Smart Start	School District	$157,169
Rio Grande	3	Upper Rio Grande School District	URGSD EARSS	School District	$73,065
Saguache	3	Mountain Valley	EARSS 2020-2023	School District	$67,228
Adams	4	Adams County School District 14	Middle School Mentoring	School District	$138,500
Adams	4	Westminster Public Schools	Intensive Services - Case Management	School District	$287,159
Adams, Arapahoe	4	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	APS Avenues Program	School District	$81,455
Adams, Jefferson, Denver	4	Charter School Institute	New America School Attendance Casework	Charter School	$201,802

County*	Year of 4-year grant	Grantee	School or Program funded, or District-wide Strategies	Grantee Type	Amount Awarded
Arapahoe	4	Sheridan School District	High School System of Support	School District	$371,492
BOCES	4	San Juan BOCES	BETA Program	BOCES	$122,829
Boulder	4	Justice High School - Lafayette	EARSS Program	Charter School	$192,000
Boulder	4	St. Vrain Valley Schools	Credit Recovery	School District	$231,432
Denver	4	Charter School Institute	New Legacy	Charter School	$97,297
Denver	4	Mount Saint Vincent	Refocus Restorative Practices Program	Facility School	$151,304
Denver	4	Tennyson Center for Children	EARSS Life Skills	Facility School	$100,011
El Paso	4	Atlas Preparatory School	At-risk Student Services	Charter School	$125,574
El Paso	4	Roundup Fellowship	Behavior Intervention	Facility School	$59,263
El Paso +	4	Education reEnvisioned BOCES	Pikes Peak Online School	BOCES	$73,840
Fremont	4	Fremont RE-2	ATS, RJ & Family Outreach	School District	$125,855
Garfield	4	Garfield County School District No. 16	Wraparound Services	School District	$157,000
Garfield	4	Roaring Fork Schools	Truancy Reduction	School District	$161,760
Jefferson	4	Jefferson County R1	EARSS Program	School District	$229,816
Lake	4	Lake County School District	EARSS - LCIS and LCHS	School District	$173,206

County*	Year of 4-year grant	Grantee	School or Program funded, or District-wide Strategies	Grantee Type	Amount Awarded
La Plata	4	Durango School District	Restorative Practices Expansion	School District	$166,707
Mineral	4	Creede School District	Restorative Practices	School District	$95,030
Moffat	4	Moffat County School District RE-1	MCHS-EARSS Program	School District	$186,552
Rio Grande	4	Monte Vista School District	Monte Vista Family Involvement	School District	$148,713
Saguache	4	Center Consolidated Schools	EARSS - Districtwide	School District	$282,426
Saguache	4	Moffat Consolidated School District 2	EARSS - Districtwide	School District	$94,139
Teller	4	Woodland Park School District	Restorative Practices	School District	$75,936
Weld	4	Weld County School District Re-3J	Wrap-Around Services	School District	$161,476

Note: County refers to where the city of administration was located. It might not reflect all counties receiving services per grantee.

Appendix C – Example Program Summaries

Below is a list of the grantees who reported positive outcomes for 80 percent or more of students served and reported having met or exceeded at least 75 percent of their performance objectives in 2021-2022, and summaries of their programs. ***Note:*** *The program summary found below is the program description submitted as part of the initial grant applications.*

Grantee	Program Summary
Boulder Valley RE-2	Boulder Valley School District will serve 120 of the district's most at-risk grade 9-12 students per year with AALPS (Advanced Alternative Learning Program and Services), a new 6-week, half-day program focused socio-emotional learning, behavioral counseling and intensive academic support. AALPS will serve students from all BVSD high schools who meet more than two of the following criteria: a history of disciplinary offenses, and/or truancy or chronic absenteeism, and/or recent suicide or threat assessment, and/or low grades/behind on credit.
Boulder Valley RE-2	Justice High School serves as the Alternative Education campus for all Boulder students 6-12 who face expulsion, are convicted delinquents, habitually truant, or who display other at- risk behaviors. As such, J.H.S. is in constant need of a plenary to adequately address the issues of its students. It is critical that the school offer good Academic and vocational programs as well as providing key services to address issues like drug and alcohol addiction, truancy, and delinquency, and delinquency.
Centennial R-1	The EARSS program will fund a choice-based student engagement strategy that places career pathways and the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) standards at its core through work-based learning opportunities and socio-emotional supports for students and families.
Denver Justice HS	Denver Justice High School will serve EARSS eligible students and reduce truancy and discipline issues while raising graduation rates and academic achievements. This plan for 9-12 graders who are currently behind on their credit accumulation will receive additional tutoring and opportunities for summer coursework to keep them involved in school all year long. We will also increase mentoring relationships and family involvement in individualized attendance and academic plans as well as plans for graduation.
Education reEnvisioned BOCES	Pikes Peak Online School create curriculum so that the school social worker can work effectively with all students that have social emotional needs.
Jefferson Hills Academy	Jefferson Hills Academy is a day treatment program serving about 30 students per year that have been referred by a number of metro school districts for education and mental health services. We serve male and female students from 4th to 12th grade and the average length of stay is currently an average of 20 months before the student transitions to their home school. This program will eliminate the need for out of school suspensions and will create an in-school suspension program that still requires the student to attend school, but have an alternate program.
Tennyson Center for Children	Traumatized students are at-risk for poor school performance and behaviors leading to suspension, expulsion, and/or habitual truancy. These students receive specialized services too. These students receive specialized services to reintegrate into a less restrictive educational setting, typically public school. EARSS funding will support a new Pathways Program featuring internship opportunities for 200 youth over four years ages 12+ in acquiring proven academic, life, social-emotional, and workforce skills so they are more likely to maintain their school placements, graduate high school, and successfully transition to adulthood.

Appendix D – Most Effective Strategies

EARSS program evaluations have identified the following activities and strategies as most effective in contributing toward meeting grantees' performance goals.

Attendance Contracts

Refers to written agreements to address attendance issues. Often includes strategies to address barriers to attendance and action plans to improve attendance.

Behavioral Plans

Refers to action plans to address behavioral and truancy issues. Plans should be developed in coordination with students, parents, school personnel and community-based providers.

Course Completion/Credit recovery

Refers to programs/activities that allow a student to continue earning course credits and to advance toward graduation and/or facilitate accrual of credits, especially in core courses (math, science, reading and social studies). May include self-paced digital content or online programs.

Counseling

Refers to social-emotional counseling that may be school-based or community-based and is provided by qualified school staff or other counseling professionals.

Online and Technology-Based Learning

In this context, refers to a full-time Online Education Program, which in Colorado is defined as ..."a non-religious, non-sectarian full-time online education program or school authorized by..., that delivers a sequential program of synchronous or asynchronous instruction from a teacher to a student primarily through the use of technology via the internet in a virtual or remote setting. It is not an online program if there is not a teacher at a distance, who is responsible for the grading and teaching of the student, and there is not instruction over the internet."

Positive Staff-Student Mentoring and Relationships

Refers to one-on-one or small group mentoring by staff and student connections to a caring adult. Strategies and activities may include, but are not limited to advising, coaching, problem solving, and self-esteem building. This is often done by grant-funded FTE such as behavior interventionists, attendance advocates, family liaisons, tutors, mentors, counselors, and social workers, etc. Often involves a case management structure

Restorative Practices (in response to or as an alternative to exclusionary discipline)

A formal process, facilitated by trained mediators in restorative justice, allows students to understand the harm caused, who it affected and how to repair it. It provides support and an opportunity to resolve student conflicts and misconduct.

Trauma Informed Approach

Implementation of explicit recognition, understanding, and responsiveness to trauma with intentional efforts made in utilizing evidence-based practices to build healthy relationships, restore emotional safety, and create positive opportunities where students can practice self-regulation strategies and prosocial skills.

Wraparound Case Management

Refers to an approach based on a team of people who come together around family strengths and needs to create unique interventions and supports based on a process of unconditional care. Family participation in decision-making is a key component. Involves provision of services and interventions to both students and parents* and activities that facilitate family access to needed community services.

*In the EARSS context, families are to be served through inter-agency agreements, not with EARSS funds.