



COLORADO
Department of Education

2018-2019 State Policy Report: Dropout Prevention and Student Engagement

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Office of the Governor

Colorado State Board of Education

Colorado House Education Committee

Colorado Senate Education Committee

By:

The Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement

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Division of Student Pathways
Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement
201 E. Colfax Ave., Denver, CO 80203
303-866-6635



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This report was prepared pursuant to C.R.S. 22-14-111 and covers the 2018-2019 school year.

Contact:
Juliana Rosa, Ph.D.



Evaluation and Research Consultant of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement
Rosa_J@cde.state.co.us

Overview

Attaining a high school credential is correlated with several lifelong positive outcomes, such as lower unemployment rates, livable wage earnings, homeownership, and healthy economic growth.¹ Increases in lifetime earnings and annual state and local tax revenue are estimated at \$230,000 per high school graduate.²

"The best economic stimulus package is a high school diploma."
- [Alliance for Excellent Education](#)

State statistics show that Colorado is making progress in increasing high school completion and keeping more students in school. The graduation rate for the Class of 2019 was 81.1 percent, a 0.4 percentage point increase since the previous year and 8.7 percentage point increase since 2010. This represents the highest graduation rate since 2010, when the state changed how the rate was reported.

Most students finished high school within four years of entering ninth grade, but others needed more time in high school to meet local graduation requirements and pursue pathways to postsecondary and workforce readiness. Extended year rates for students taking five, six and seven years to graduate also have steadily improved.

The dropout rate significantly fell to an all-time low from 2.2 percent in the 2017-2018 academic year to 2.0 percent in the 2018-2019 academic year. Since the 2009-2010 school year, the dropout rate for Colorado has decreased by 1.1 percentage points.

Not all students are fully benefiting from the state's educational gains. Historically underserved students, specifically those from economically challenged communities, racial minority groups, and students with disabilities continue to fall short of their academic potential and are missing the skills to compete with their peers.³ Graduation, completion, and dropout rates for these students continue to be lower than for their peers across the nation.⁴ Colorado statistics show that minority male students, youth experiencing homelessness, and those in foster care experience disproportionate rates of graduation, dropout, and school disciplinary actions, which negatively impacts school engagement.⁵ Students express that negative school experiences lead to dis-engaging from the public education system.⁶ Colorado must address persistent educational disparities in order to accelerate progress in high school completion and educational outcomes.

To prevent students from dis-engaging, a whole-systems approach is needed. The [Colorado Dropout Prevention Framework](#) is an evidence-based framework designed to create an ecosystem for institutional change. The framework outlines how to accelerate progress at the school and district level and provides a foundation for rigorous and relevant coursework, teacher preparedness and instruction, and development of systems to support students who need more attention to reach their full potential.

State law requires the Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement to complete an annual report on reducing the student dropout rate, increasing the high school graduation and completion rates, and improving student engagement. This report was prepared in accordance with state statute, section 22-14-111, C.R.S, for the 2018-2019 school year. See [Appendix A](#) for relevant definition of terms included in this report.



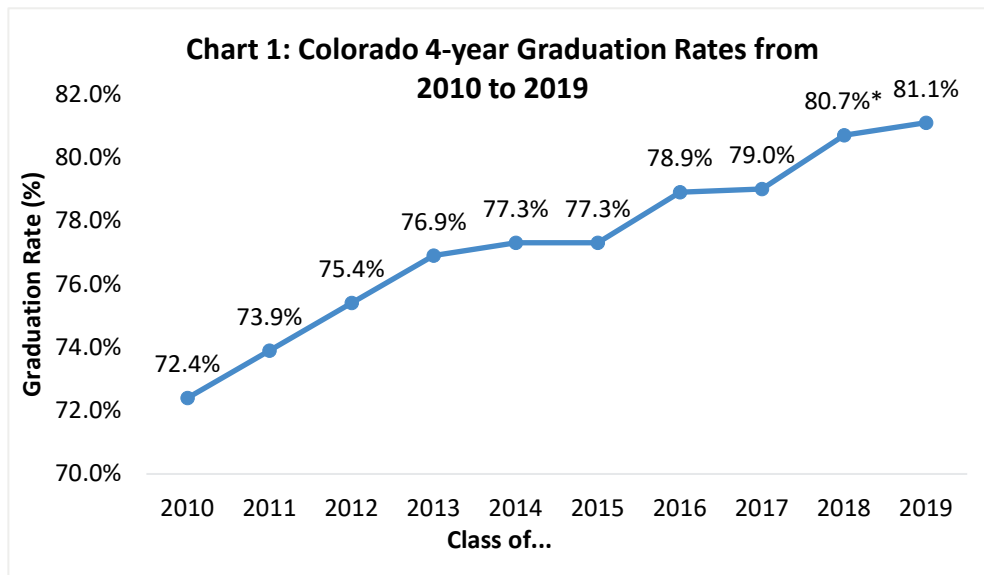
Four -Year Graduation Rate

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) collects and publicly reports graduation, completion, and still-enrolled rates (available at [Graduation Statistics](#)). State law mandates a free public education for students between the ages of five and 21 years (section 22-1-102, C.R.S). See [Appendix A](#) for a definition of graduation rates and completion rates.

81.1%
2019 FOUR-YEAR
GRADUATION RATE

Class of 2019

The Class of 2019 achieved a four-year graduation rate of 81.1 percent. This means that, out of the 66,852 students counted in the 2019 graduating cohort, 54,239 students met their local graduation requirements to receive a high school diploma within four years. Compared to the previous year, Colorado’s four-year graduation rate increased 0.4 percentage points. The 2018-2019 rate set a new record for the highest rate since 2010, which is the year CDE began reporting an adjusted cohort rate (8.7 percentage point increase). See [Chart 1](#).



Source: CDE Office of Data Services and Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement

*Note: Starting in 2018, graduation rates included ASCENT and P-TECH students who were still enrolled but met graduation requirements.

Graduation Rate by Student Types

The four-year graduation and completion rates varied by gender, race/ethnicity, and student groups. As in recent years, the data continues to show a graduation gap between the overall state rate and rates for most minority students and most Instructional Program Services Type (IPST) student groups. See [Appendix B](#) for a historical overview of four-year graduation rates across these student groups. This table shows that since 2010, the most significant increases in four-year graduation rates were seen for Hispanic students (18.5 percentage point increase) and limited-English proficient students (19.4 percentage point increase).

Note: In the 2015-16 school year, CDE automated the process districts use to remove duplicate records, which improved the accuracy of graduation and completion rates. In prior years, it was possible for students



to remain in the graduation base of a school or district even though they had later enrolled elsewhere in Colorado. This enhancement prevented such duplications in the 2015-16 calculation and future years.

Additional Outcomes

When combining the number of graduates with those who received a High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED), the state’s high school completion rate rises to 82.9 percent (55,429 high school completers, including 1,138 HSED recipients and 52 students who received a certificate of completion). Of the 66,852 students in the Class of 2019 cohort, 17.1 percent (11,423 students) did not complete high school with their graduating cohort or attain an HSED.

- 9.2 percent of the students in the cohort (6,160 students) were still enrolled at the end of the school year and were drop outs. Still-enrolled students may persist to complete high school in a later year and those who graduate will be counted in the extended-year graduation rates. Those who attain an HSED will be counted in the extended-year completion rates.
- 6.7 percent of the students in the cohort (4,463 students) were considered non-graduates who dropped out of high school at some point. The focus of dropout recovery programs should be outreach to these out-of-school youth and re-engaging them in their education.
- Additional student outcomes for the remaining 800 students include illness/injury, death, exit to detention center, expulsion without return to school, transfer to a facility school or other program, transfer to homeschool, or exit to prepare for high school equivalency.

Extended-Year Graduation Rates

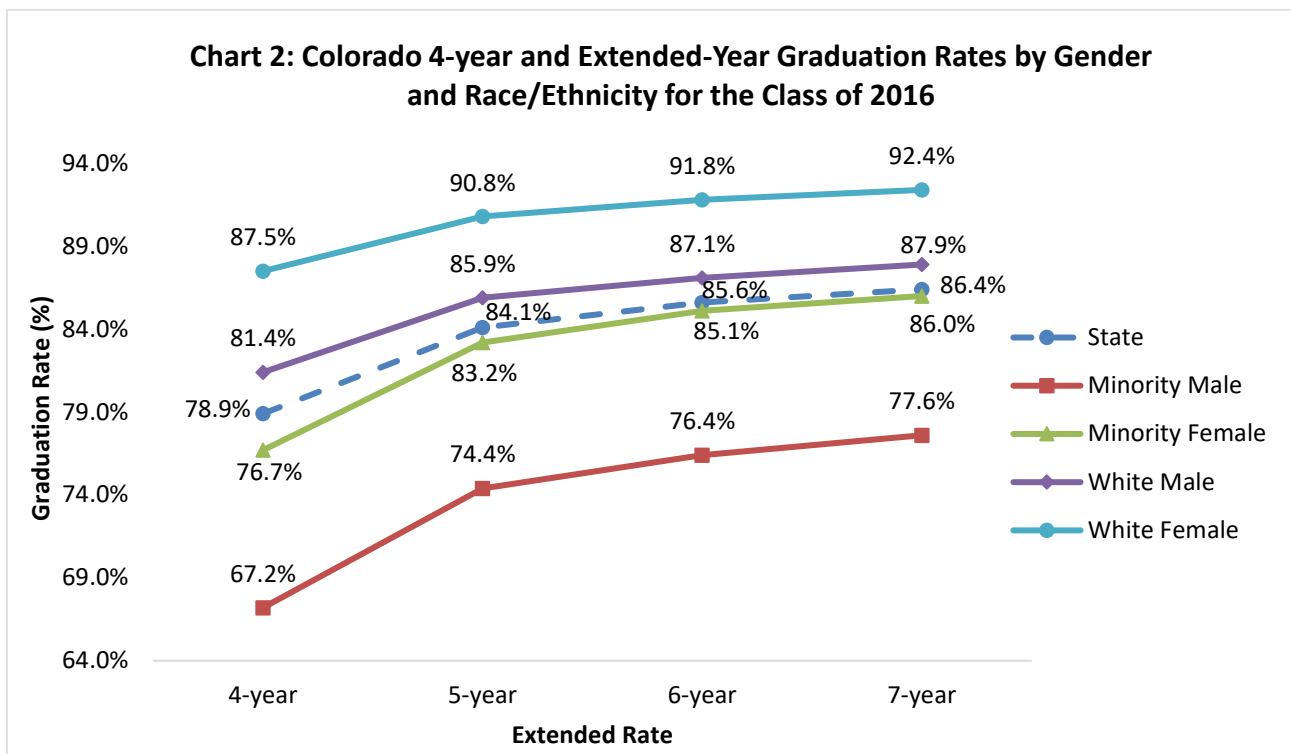
On average, more than half of students in a class cohort who did not receive a diploma or high school equivalency within four years of entering high school are counted as still-enrolled. Still-enrolled students have an opportunity to complete their high school education within five, six, or seven years of entering ninth grade. A close-up look at the extended-year graduation rates from the Class of 2010 to the Class of 2016 shows that, when afforded more time, more students graduate - an average of 7.4 percentage points difference from the four-year rate to the seven-year rate and an average 4,000 additional students. The largest gains between extended rates occurred when students were afforded an additional year to graduate, which equated to an averaged 4.8 percentage point increase per cohort in the last 10 years. See *Table 1* for available extended graduation rates.

Class of	Four-Year Rate	Five-Year Rate	Six-Year ear Rate	7-year Rate
2010	72.4%	77.1%	78.5%	79.4%
2011	73.9%	78.7%	80.1%	80.9%
2012	75.4%	80.1%	81.2%	82.2%
2013	76.9%	81.2%	82.5%	84.2%
2014	77.3%	81.7%	84.3%	85.3%
2015	77.3%	83.3%	84.9%	85.6%
2016	78.9%	84.1%	85.6%	86.4%
2017	79.0%	84.2%	85.7%	Available 2019-20
2018	80.7%	84.9%	Available 2019-20	Available 2020-21
2019	81.1%	Available 2019-2020	Available 2020-21	Available 2021-22

Source: Colorado Department of Education, Data Services and Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement

Extended-Year Rates by Student Types

When looking at extended graduation rates for the Class of 2016, the highest graduation rates are among white females and white males, with seven-year graduation rates rising to 92.4 percent and 87.9 percent, respectively. The graduation gap between the overall state rate and minority male rate persists, but shows some improvement from 4-year rates (gap of 11.7 percentage points) to 7-year rates (gap of 8.8 percentage points). Minority male students continue to experience the lowest rates of graduation among their peers. The widest graduation rate gap tops 20 percentage points, between the high four-year graduation rate of 87.5 percent for white female students and the low four-year rate of 67.2 percent for minority male students. See *Chart 2*. See [Appendix D](#) a more extensive historical overview of extended graduation and completion rates by gender and race/ethnicity.



Source: CDE Office of Data Services and Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement

A graduation gap also exists between IPST student groups and their peers. Students with disabilities, youth experiencing homelessness, and those in foster care have lower rates of four-year and extended graduation rates. See [Appendix E](#) for a more extensive historical overview of extended graduation and completion rates by IPST student groups.

Impact of Extended-Year Rates

Students may need additional years to participate in a five-year or six-year concurrent enrollment or work-based learning program, to reach English proficiency, to fulfill individualized education plans, to complete courses, or to accumulate the credits needed to graduate.



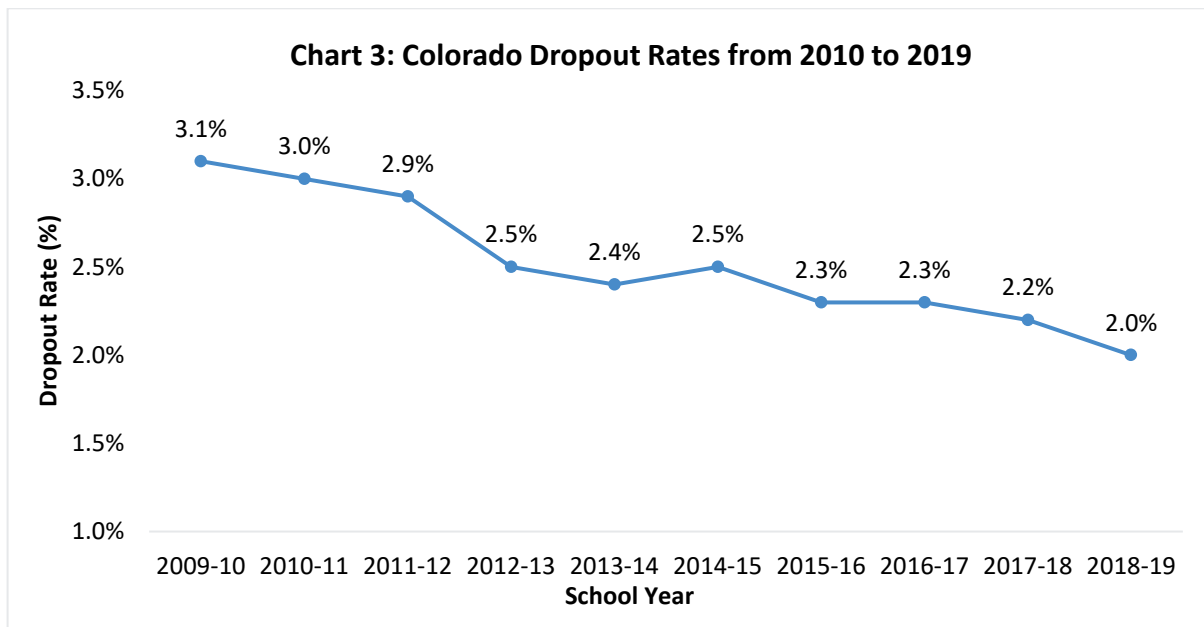
Trend data show that specific student groups benefit the most from extended rates. Similar to the Class of 2015, the greatest gains in extended-year graduation rates are among minority male students (10.4 percentage point increase), as well as students with disabilities (19.3 percentage point increase), English Language Learners (14.6 percentage point increase), students in foster care (11.7 percentage point increase) and homeless students (11.3 percentage point increase). In addition to making gains with more time, the graduation gap between the overall state rate and minority female rate closes at the six-year and seven-year rate.

Dropout Rates

More Colorado students are staying in school and persisting in their education as evidenced by steady improvement in the annual dropout rate. The dropout rate for the 2018-2019 school year was 2.0 percent. This means that, out of the 465,179 students enrolled in grades seven to 12 in Colorado, 9,277 students dropped out of school during the 2018-2019 school year. See [Appendix A](#) for a definition of dropout and dropout rates.

2.0%
2018-2019
DROPOUT RATE

Compared to the previous year, Colorado’s dropout rate decreased 0.2 percentage points, which is 903 fewer students that dropped out in the 2018-2019 school year than during the 2017-2018 school year. This represents the lowest rate since the 2009-10 school year, a 1.1 percentage point decrease. (See *Chart 3*.)



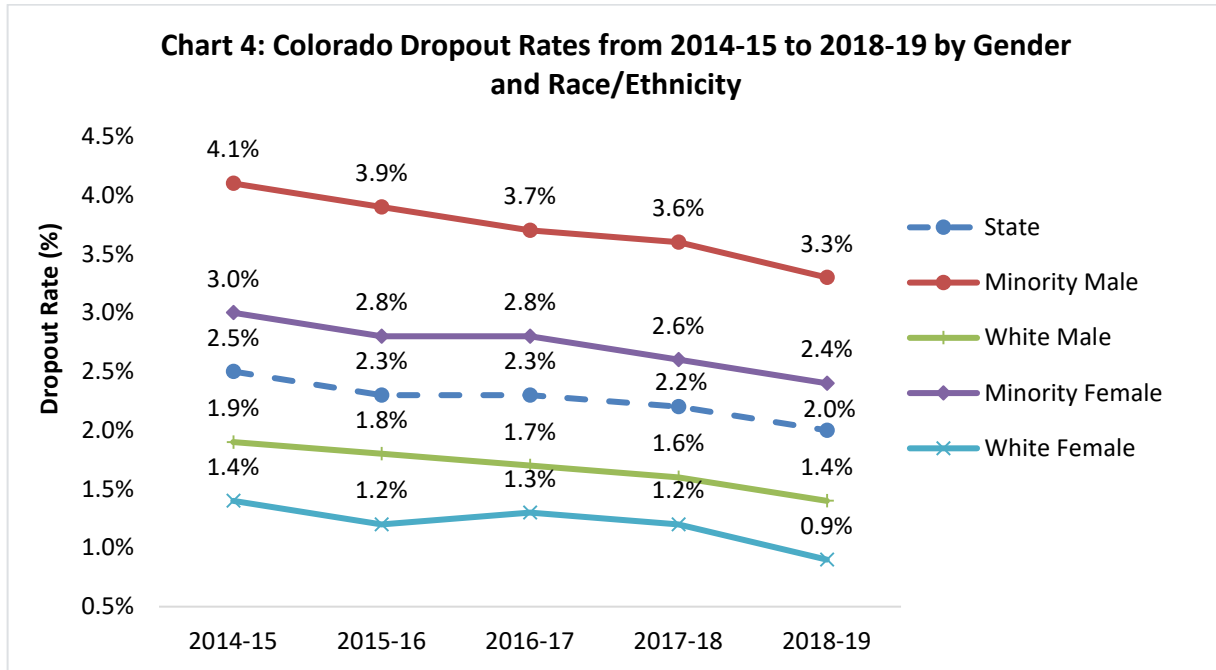
Source: CDE Office of Data Services and Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement

Dropout Rates by Student Types

White female students and white male students had the lowest dropout rates in 2018-2019, 0.9 percent and 1.4 percent, respectively. The greatest gains in dropout rates in the last five years have been among minority male students, who had a 0.8 percentage point decrease in dropouts. Minority male students continue to



experience the highest dropout rates compared to their peers. Over time, the average dropout rate for these students has been about 1.4 percentage points higher than the overall state rate and about 2.5 percentage points higher rate than for their white female peers. See *Chart 4*.

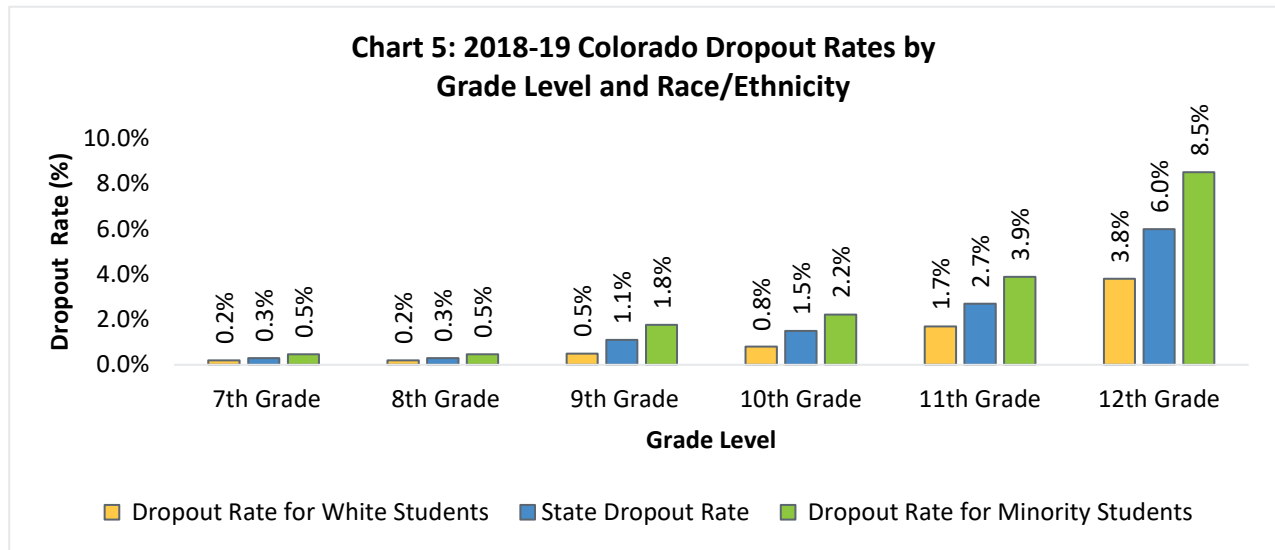


Source: CDE Office of Data Services and Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement

Dropout rates also varied by IPST student groups. The highest dropout rates were seen for homeless students (5.4 percent) and students in foster care (6.9 percent). See [Appendix C](#) for a historical overview of dropout rates across these student groups.

Dropout Rates by Grade Level

Dropout rates also vary by grade level. Five out of 10 students who dropped out of school in 2018-2019 were in 12th grade, which is consistent with trends from previous years. In 2018-2019, dropout rates remained low for 7th and 8th grade students (0.3 percent of 7th and 8th grade students) and begin to increase in 9th grade (up to 1.1 percent of 9th grade students). It is also in the 9th grade where dropout rates begin to diverge by gender, creating a 0.4 percentage point difference between male and female students, and by race/ethnicity, creating a 1.3 percentage point difference between white and minority students. This data emphasizes the importance of focusing on students' transition to 9th grade and their success, especially for male and minority students. See *Chart 5*.



Source: CDE Office of Data Services and Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement

District Overview

In Colorado, locally elected school boards set graduation requirements for their school districts, which means expectations for earning a diploma may differ from district to district. Beginning with the Class of 2021, students will graduate under locally determined requirements that meet or exceed the Colorado Graduation Guidelines adopted by the state board of education. For more information, see: [CDE Graduation Guidelines](#).

Out of 185 Colorado school districts and BOCES, 77.8 percent reached an overall four-year graduation rate at or above the state rate of 81.1 percent. Thirty-six districts achieved a four-year graduation rate of 100 percent for the Class of 2019, of which 88.8 percent are located in a remote setting.

Out of 185 Colorado school districts and BOCES, 82.7 percent reported a dropout rate at or below the overall state rate of 2.0 percent. Fifty-four districts reported no dropouts in 2018-2019; 85.1 percent of those districts are located in a remote setting.

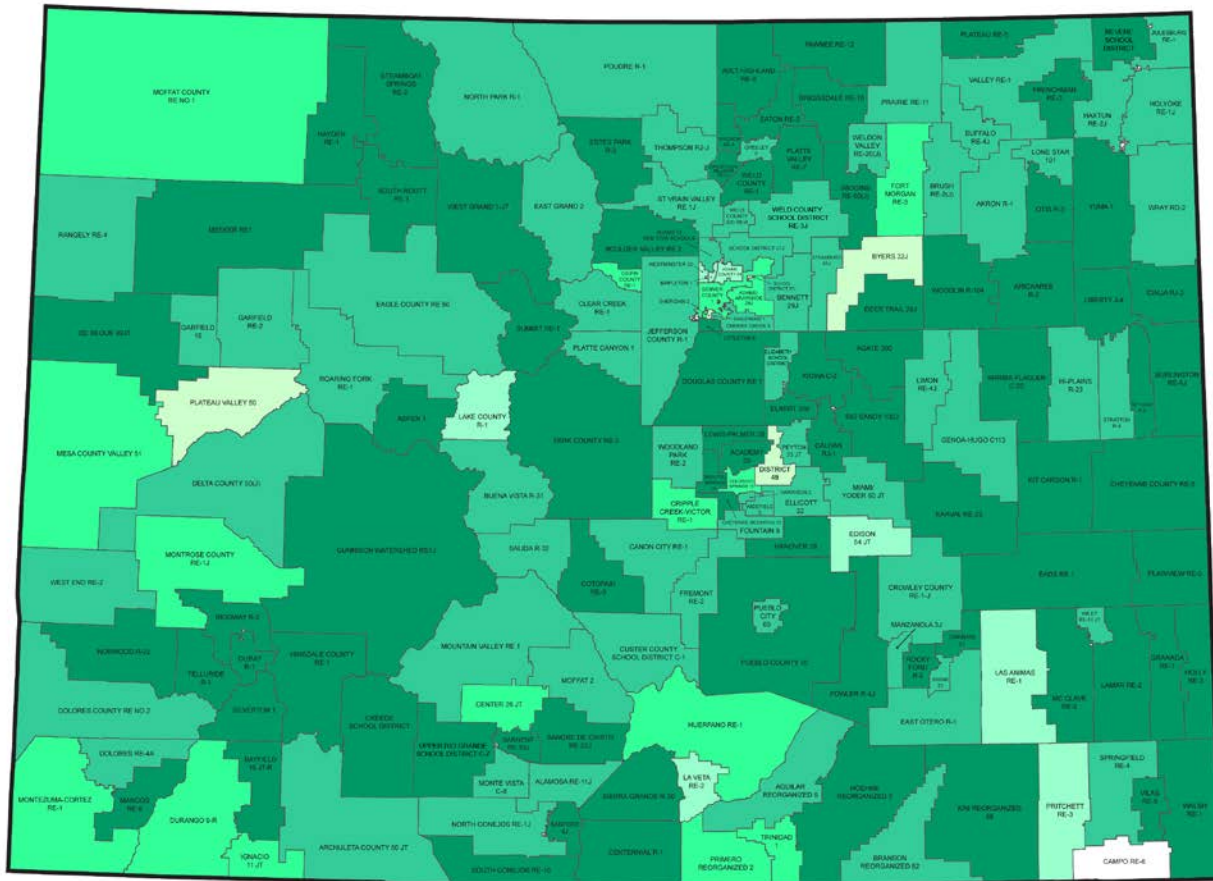
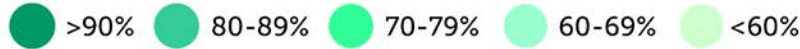
District Improvement

The Education Accountability Act of 2009 (SB 09-163) and HB18-1355 authorizes the Colorado Department of Education to conduct an annual review of the performance of public schools and districts in the state and to make recommendations to the State Board of Education concerning the type of school improvement plan to be implemented in each school and determine the accreditation category for each district. The State Board of Education established a state expectation for all districts to meet or exceed a graduation rate of 85 percent for either the four-year or an extended-year graduation rate. For more information, see: [CDE State Accountability](#). Colorado school districts are making progress towards this goal, with a growing number of districts meeting or exceeding graduation rates at 85 percent.

- 62.7 percent of the 185 Colorado school districts and BOCES reached an overall four-year graduation rate of 85 percent or above to meet state expectations. When including extended rates, 87.5 percent of districts met or exceeded state expectations in 2018-2019.

- 67.0 percent of districts (123 districts) received a state accountability rating of "meets" or "exceeds" on their Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) indicator, which includes aggregate measures of graduation rates (overall and disaggregated), dropout rates (overall and disaggregated), SAT scores (overall and disaggregated), and matriculation rates.

Colorado 4-Year Graduation Rates by District in 2018-2019



Produced by the Colorado Department of Education - January 2020
Source: Colorado Department of Education

Student Re-engagement

Each year, more than 10,000 Colorado students leave school prior to completing high school. On average, about 30 percent of those who dropped out will re-enroll in school. In 2018-2019, 30.8 percent of students (3,135 students) who dropped out in the previous school year (2017-2018), re-enrolled in school.

Per historical trends, half of these re-enrolled students will stay in school or complete high school, which represents a re-engagement rate of 50 percent. Historically, the other half drop out again. This pattern is described as dropout recidivism.



One in 10 students (978 students) who dropped out in 2018-2019, also dropped out in the previous school year (2017-2018). More specifically, of the 3,135 students who had dropped out in 2017-2018 and re-enrolled in school in 2018-2019, 31.2 percent of those students dropped out again during 2018-2019. Decreasing dropout recidivism is key to improving disaggregated dropout rates. Effective re-engagement requires identifying and understanding the challenges and circumstances of out-of-school youth, and reconnecting them to high-quality educational opportunities, postsecondary education, and careers.⁷

Dropout and Re-engagement Rates for Alternative Education Campuses (AECs)

Alternative Education Campuses (AECs) most commonly serve Colorado youth who previously dropped out of school or are at high-risk for dropping out. In the 2018-2019 school year, there were 91 AECs across Colorado serving more than 30,000 students, and accounting for about 7 percent of the state's pupil membership. These schools are designated with AEC status by meeting the statutory requirements and receiving approval by the State Board of Education. More information on AECs is available at: [CDE Alternative Education Campuses](#).

In Colorado, AECs actively seek to provide dedicated educators and special supports to re-engage and reconnect students to viable pathways to high school completion and postsecondary and workforce readiness. At least 90 percent of students in AECs are considered at "high-risk" of dropping out. Each AEC has a specialized mission and serves special needs or at-risk populations.

An analysis of AECs shows that the current AEC dropout rate is 15.6 percent, which is 13.6 percentage points higher than the overall state rate (2.0 percent). In 2018-2019, 50 out of 91 AECs (54.9 percent) self-identified as dropout recovery programs. Ten AECs reported a 70 percent re-engagement rate on their 2019 AEC State Performance Framework, which is notably higher than the state re-engagement rate of 50 percent. Find more information on AECs at: [Alternative Education Campus Accountability](#).

School Climate

The [National School Climate Center](#) defines school climate as the quality of school life experienced by students, caregivers, school personnel, and others interacting with the school environment. Research has repeatedly shown that positive school climate is linked to several outcomes for students, such as academic achievement, academic, social, and personal attitudes and motives, attendance and school avoidance, behavior problems, delinquency, and wellbeing.⁸



There is a significant link between school discipline policy and school climate.^{9,10} More specifically, zero tolerance policies contributes to lower school wide achievement, higher risk of academic failure, and a higher drop-out rate.¹⁰

The Colorado legislature has shifted school discipline policy from strict, mandatory punishment to supportive school discipline through the passage of a series of bills that led to the end of "zero tolerance." In 2011, the passage of House Bill 11-1032 encouraged the use of restorative practices as a school's first consideration to remediate several types of offenses. In 2012, House Bill 12-1345 eliminated the statutory mandate to expel students for drugs, weapons (except firearms), serious assaults, and robbery, as well as encouraged alternatives to exclusionary discipline.

The implementation of these bills coincides with a reduction of expulsions from 2,163 incidents in the 2009-10 school year to 909 incidents in 2018-2019, reaching an all-time low in expulsion rates for the state of Colorado.

However, suspension incidents have steadily been on the rise since the 2013-14 school year, following a five-year period of steady decline. In 2018-2019, there were 92,100 suspensions, which is a slight decrease from the 93,337 reported suspensions in 2017-2018.

The high use of suspensions is linked to several negative outcomes, including disproportionate discipline practices by race/ethnicity.¹¹ In the last five years, patterns in discipline have varied across race/ethnicity and gender. CDE conducted an analysis to better understand how many students within each race/ethnicity were disciplined out of the total number of enrolled students. *Chart 6* depicts the percentage of students disciplined within race/ethnicity from the 2014-2015 school year to the 2018-2019 school year. A closer look at discipline rate by student enrollment and race/ethnicity show a disproportionately higher rate of discipline among minority students when compared to discipline rates for their peers.

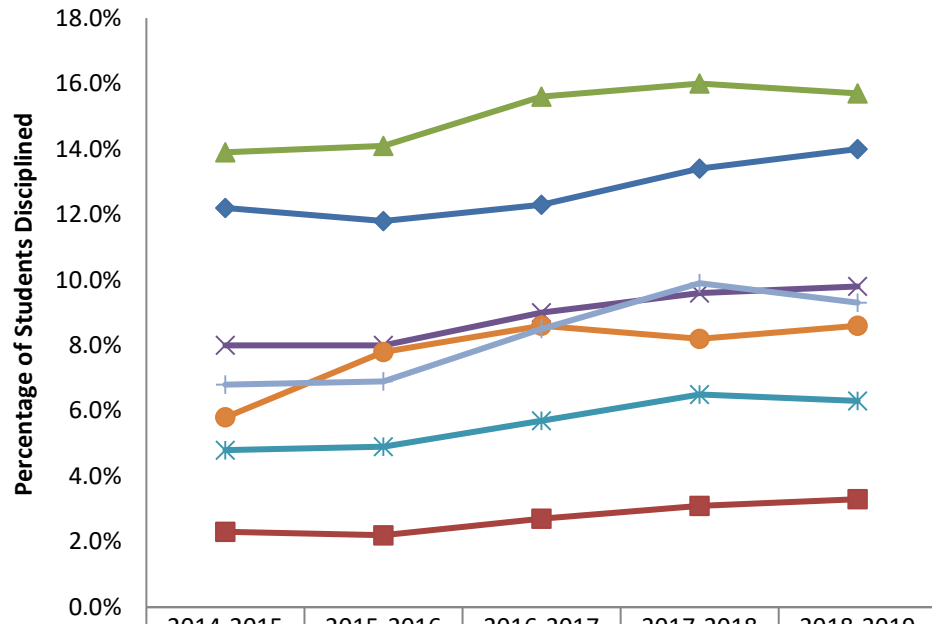
Why Colorado Students Leave School

Dropping out of school is not an event. It is a process that can begin as early as elementary school.⁵ In Colorado, the process of dropping out is influenced by academic environment, family circumstances, social economic issues, and student performance. Results from the 2018-2019 GED test taker showed that former Colorado high school students most frequently report leaving school due to the following reasons:⁶

- Did not like school
- Emotional problems
- Did not feel part of the school
- Was absent too many times
- Was not happy in school
- Got a job
- Was bored

These results highlight the importance of a positive school climate and culture, providing students with access to the resources they need to succeed, and keeping students engaged in their education.

Chart 6: Five Year Trend of Students Disciplined by Race/Ethnicity



	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
American Indian	12.2%	11.8%	12.3%	13.4%	14.0%
Asian	2.3%	2.2%	2.7%	3.1%	3.3%
Black	13.9%	14.1%	15.6%	16.0%	15.7%
Hispanic	8.0%	8.0%	9.0%	9.6%	9.8%
White	4.8%	4.9%	5.7%	6.5%	6.3%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	5.8%	7.8%	8.6%	8.2%	8.6%
Two or More Races	6.8%	6.9%	8.5%	9.9%	9.3%

Source: CDE Office of Data Services and Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement

More information about evidence-based supportive disciplinary methods that serve as alternatives to suspensions and expulsions can be found in the [CDE Dropout Prevention Best Practices Guide](#).

Discipline Incidents and Dropout

Receiving a disciplinary action remains one of the strongest predictors of students dropping out of school. Students who receive at least one disciplinary action are two times as likely to drop out of school compared to their peers.¹² To test the relationship between disciplinary action and dropout, CDE conducted a regression analysis using 2018-2019 Colorado data from 178 districts including the aggregate number of students disciplined and number of students who dropped out by race/ethnicity. Results indicate that discipline patterns for these districts significantly predicted the likelihood of student dropout across student groups ($F(1,1251)=1446.6, p < 0.01; R^2=.53$). When looking at specific groups of students, this relationship was especially evident for black or African American students ($F(1,177)=496.1, p < 0.01; R^2=.73$) and Hispanic or Latino students ($F(1,177)=366.7, p < 0.01; R^2=.67$).



Best and Promising Practices for Improving School Climate and Culture

A positive school climate is one where the school attends to each of the following: (a) fostering safety; (b) promoting a supportive academic, disciplinary, and physical environment; and (c) encouraging and maintaining respectful, trusting, and caring relationships throughout the school community. Additionally, school context such as student body socioeconomic status, retention of staff, racial and ethnic diversity of staff and students, and community support may influence climate.

Effective school practices that could contribute to reduced dropout rates include the development and implementation of the following:

- Strategies designed to catch students up, such as: self-paced catch-up courses, project-based learning, differentiated flexible school schedules, job training embedded as part of the academic program;
- Policies and practices that promote personalized learning environments and opportunities for individualized instruction, such as tutoring, case management, and small classes focused on building close staff-student relationships;
- A tiered and prevention-based framework like Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) that approaches students from a strength-based perspective, teaches students how to be successful, and celebrates their accomplishments with clear benchmarks for attaining student success;
- Mechanisms by which students can connect to strong adult and peer relationships through mentoring programs and partnering with social service agencies;
- Incentives and recognition programs for students and schools when there is improvement in attendance to positively impact school climate;
- A whole child approach which focuses on students' social and emotional well-being, academic progress, and overall development and success; and
- A breakfast program that encourages students to attend school and may allow students to bond with teachers and prepare for their school day.

More information about improving school climate can be found in the [CDE Dropout Prevention Best Practices Guide](#).

School Attendance

Attendance issues are one of the earliest indicators of students needing help and, if not addressed effectively, can result in a student eventually dropping out of school. For example, poor attendance in 9th grade is a better predictor than poor test scores that a student will leave before completing high school.¹⁵ Working with each student as soon as attendance issues become known is one of the earliest opportunities to identify and re-engage students in the learning process and on a path toward academic success.

State attendance data trends show that Colorado students are missing school and are on a path toward dropping out.

- The attendance rate decreased in the 2018-2019 school year to 92.3 percent, compared to 92.5 percent in 2017-2018.
- Similar to the previous year, one in five Colorado students was chronically absent in 2018-19.
- The truancy rate increased from 2.8 percent in 2017-2018 to 3.0 percent in 2018-2019.



- The number of students identified as habitually truant is at an all-time high. Habitually truant students either attained the age of six years on or before August 1 of the year in question and is under the age of 17 years having four unexcused absences from public school in any one month, or 10 unexcused absences from public school during any school year.
- More than 140,000 Colorado students were habitually truant during the 2018-2019 school year, which represented 16 percent of the student population. The number of habitual truant students has increased by 20 percent since the previous school year.

Note: The Colorado Department of Education collects school and district level attendance data. Student level attendance data was not available in 2018-2019, and trends by student groups could not be determined. More information on student attendance can be found at [CDE Attendance Information](#).

Attendance Inventory Study

The department seeks to understand school attendance practices, programs, and policies in Colorado to provide appropriate support to schools and schools districts. As a result, a School Attendance Task Force was convened and an inventory study on school attendance practices, policies, and programs was conducted throughout the state in 2018-2019.

Participants included district-level, school-level, and community-level representatives ($N=424$). The following summarizes the findings from the study:

- On average, schools used two forms of attendance tracking. The results showed that *average daily attendance* and *number of full days unexcused absence* ranked as the main forms of tracking.¹⁶
- At least 84 percent of participants reported that attendance data is used as a *referral to attendance supports* and 70 percent reported that it is used to *inform behavior interventions*.¹⁶
- The report data showed that, on average, there are six targeted interventions available at the school, district, and community level that are utilized when students are chronically missing school. The most common strategies included attendance letter, family conferences, inquiries to students and families to find a root cause of absences, opportunities to make up course work, and opportunities to turn in missing assignments.¹⁶
- The report data showed that, on average, there are six intensive interventions available at the school, district, and community level that are utilized when students are habitually truant. The most common strategies included intervening before students are withdrawn due to non-attendance, family group conference, opportunities to catch up on missed instruction, referrals to truancy court, referrals to community agencies and other service providers, and individual behavior intervention plans.¹⁶

Best and Promising Practices for Increasing Attendance

Best practices recommendations from the taskforce included the following:

- **Focus on 9th Grade** – Improvements in long-term outcomes are made when schools focus on students' 9th grade year.
- **Focus on Middle School** – Students' middle school attendance rate and grades are the best indicators to determine their high school success. Targeted interventions aiding students' transition from middle school to high school could improve academic performance.
- **After School Programs** – Regular school attendance is supported by academic enrichment and incentives.

- **Family-School-Community Engagement** – Engaging the whole family is a key strategy in improving attendance and academic performance. Attendance awareness campaigns at the community level help promote the importance of regular, daily attendance.
- **School-based Health Centers and Health Interventions** – Health and wellness interventions have a direct impact on educational outcomes, such as attendance.

Find more information on approaches and best and promising practices at CDE’s Dropout Prevention and Student Re-Engagement webpage: www.cde.state.co.us/dropoutprevention.

Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement Priorities



The Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-Engagement (DPSR) was launched in 2009 and was created to expand efforts in reducing the dropout rate, increasing the graduation rate and advancing credential attainment. This effort is authorized by statute, in section 22-14-101, C.R.S., and builds on the state’s commitment to ensure graduation and school success for all students and re-engaging out of school youth.

The office uses the dropout prevention framework to develop initiatives and guide distribution of state grant funds with the goal of accelerating improvement in education outcomes for all Colorado students.

Colorado’s Dropout Prevention Framework outlines how to accelerate progress at the school and district level. The evidence-based framework is designed to create an ecosystem for institutional change. It provides a foundation for rigorous and relevant coursework, teacher preparedness and instruction, and development of systems for students needing more attention to reach their full potential. This multi-faceted framework includes evidence-based systems, essential elements, and strategies focused on the following:

- **Identification:** Identifying students who are at risk of dropping out of school through data analysis, early warning systems, and the review of policies and practices as a means of preventing student disengagement before it starts.
- **Intervention and Support:** Successful efforts include transition planning and support, whole school strategies and tiered interventions for students identified as being off-track to graduate or at risk for dropping out. Intervention and supports are data-informed and contextualized to meet student needs.
- **Institutional Change:** System-wide changes that can be utilized to create an ecosystem for student success, including improving school climate, evaluating policies and practices, and understanding the multiple pathways to graduation that can be used to re-engage students and increase graduation rates.

Find more information on the dropout prevention framework and program at CDE Dropout Prevention. See *Table 2* for programs in the Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement (DPSR).





Table 2: DPSR Programs and Dropout Prevention Framework Implementation

Program Purpose	Dropout Prevention Framework: Strategy Example	2018-2019 Summary
Expelled and At-Risk Student Services (EARSS) Grant Program		
<p>The EARSS Grant Program assists in providing educational and support services to expelled students, students at risk of suspension and expulsion, and students at risk of habitual truancy as defined by unexcused absences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Completion/Credit Recovery refers to programs/activities that allow a student to continue earning course credits and to advance toward graduation and/or facilitates accrual of credits, especially in core courses (math, science, reading and social studies). • School Climate programs foster safety, create supportive academic, disciplinary, and physical environments, and build trusting relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 EARSS grantees located in 29 counties • Served 8,183 students • 3.4% of these students were served due to an expulsion • Of all students served, 96% remained in school.
Foster Care Education Program		
<p>The Foster Care Education Program is dedicated to helping students in foster care excel academically, complete courses, advance to the next grade and continue on a path to postsecondary success.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Analysis and research guide decision-making. • Review Policies and Practices on dropout prevention (attendance, behavior, and course performance) and resource development to assist in identifying areas that need improvement and prioritizing resource allocation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of policies to foster educational stability.
McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Program		
<p>The intent of the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program is to remove all educational barriers facing children and youth experiencing homelessness, with an emphasis on educational enrollment, attendance and success.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Analysis is used to identify trends and set performance goals. • Community Partnerships address barriers to learning, enhance the healthy development of youth, and strengthen the whole community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 grants to local education agencies to increase educational access, school stability and academic success • Expanded partnerships and increased capacity to address homelessness

21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) Grant Program		
<p>The 21st CCLC grant program supports the creation of local out-of-school time programs to provide students and their families with high-quality academic enrichment opportunities and services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced counseling and mentoring provide structures and processes to increase school engagement. These may include career exploration, goal setting, coaching, skill development and building trust relationships. • Multiple Pathways strategies provide customized educational options to address unique needs and circumstances of students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21st CCLC grants served 20,413 students and 6,721 family members. • More than 60% of students served improved academic performance and class participation.
Student Re-engagement Grant (SRG) Program		
<p>The SRG Program assists with providing educational services and supports to local education providers to maintain student engagement and facilitate student re-engagement at the secondary level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Warning Systems support districts in identifying students who are in jeopardy of dropping out of school by analyzing key data to determine which students are most at-risk. • Re-engagement of Out-of-School Youth through outreach, learning and understanding the challenges youth face, and reconnecting youth to high-quality educational opportunities. • Transition Programs that support students progressing to new grade levels and assist when school moves or other changes occur during the school year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 32 SRG schools served 5,388 middle school and high school students. • 490 out-of-school youth were re-engaged. • SRG students dropped out of school at lower rates (4.5%) compared to non-SRG students at alternative schools (16.9%).

State Priorities

In the past year, state agencies have set goals to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for all students. Collective state priorities include:

- Cross-systems coordination and collaboration, with special attention in serving students involved in public service systems (e.g., child welfare and juvenile corrections), students experiencing homelessness, and students from rural areas with limited access to services.¹⁷
- Talent development to address teacher shortages, especially in early childhood education and care, special education, and secondary-level mathematics and science.¹⁸
- Erasing equity gaps among traditionally underserved populations, with special attention to minority males and students living in poverty.^{3,19}

Steps to accelerate progress are occurring across the state. There is collective momentum to stem and reverse negative trends. [CDE’s strategic plan](#) focuses attention on systemic inequities on student outcomes, seeks to expand successful high school models and commits to developing a strong pipeline of high-quality teachers and principals.





Legislative Review

Article 14 of Title 22 of the Colorado Revised Statutes requires CDE to report on the amount of state moneys appropriated for dropout prevention and student engagement. A statutory review identified 42 state statutes that impact or pertain to dropout prevention, student engagement and attainment of a high school credential.

In FY 2018-2019, \$2 million was appropriated directly to dropout prevention and student re-engagement efforts.

2019 Legislative Bills

There were six bills that passed during the 2019 legislative session that are included in this review. See *Table 3*. The majority of bills (five) pertained to postsecondary and workforce readiness. The remaining is categorized under public school finance.

Table 3: Legislative Bills

Category: Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness	
<p>1. SB 19-59 Automatic Enrollment in Advanced Courses Grant Program-Appropriation</p> <p>Effective August 2, 2019</p>	<p>This bill creates the Automatic Enrollment in Advanced Courses grant program in CDE. The program will provide assistance to local education providers that automatically enroll students in advanced courses for subjects in which the students have demonstrated proficiency.</p> <p>FY 2019-20 Appropriation-\$250,000</p>
<p>2. SB 19-176 Expanding Concurrent Enrollment Opportunities-Appropriation</p> <p>Effective August 2, 2019</p>	<p>This bill makes changes to the state’s concurrent enrollment laws. The bill requires that concurrent enrollment be offered at no tuition cost to qualified students, and students who complete a concurrent enrollment course must receive credit that applies to high school graduation requirements and that applies to a postsecondary degree, certificate, or gateway course, or is transferrable among state institutions of higher education. The bill further clarifies that concurrent enrollment does not include simultaneous enrollment in a high school course and Advanced Placement course, International Baccalaureate course, or a postsecondary course that does not fall under the definition of concurrent enrollment. It also does not include simultaneous enrollment in a postsecondary course and an early college or p-tech school.</p> <p>The bill creates the Concurrent Enrollment Expansion and Innovation Grant Program in CDE to provide grants to partnerships between LEPs and institutions of higher education that begin to offer or expand concurrent enrollment opportunities. Grants begin during the 2019-20 academic year.</p> <p>FY 2019-20 Appropriation-\$1,544,916 (Additional \$210,000 to CDHE)</p>
<p>3. SB 19-216 High School Innovative Learning Pilot-Appropriation</p>	<p>Under the pilot program, local education providers (LEPs) may submit applications during 2019-20 to participate in the pilot program in 2020-21. LEPs may propose an innovative learning plan that permits high</p>



<p>Effective May 10, 2019</p>	<p>school students to participate in innovative learning opportunities prior to graduation. LEPs selected by the State Board of Education to participate in the pilot program may count students participating in innovative learning opportunities as full-time students for purposes of the School Finance Act, regardless of the actual amount of instructional time or contact hours for which the student is enrolled. CDE must contract with a statewide nonprofit to assist in implementing the pilot program. The State Board of Education must adopt rules for the pilot program, including application requirements and timelines.</p> <p>FY 2019-20 Appropriation-\$129,563</p>
<p>4. HB 19-1187 Increase Student Aid Application Completion Rates- Appropriation</p> <p>Effective May 13, 2019</p>	<p>This bill requires that the General Assembly appropriate \$250,000 per year in FY 2019-20, FY 2020-21, and FY 2021-22 to be distributed to local education providers (LEPs) that receive a school counselor corps grant. LEPs must use the additional funding to: (1) develop and distribute information regarding the process for and benefits of completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and state financial aid applications; (2) train school counselors on best practices to support students and families with filling out the FAFSA and state financial aid applications, with an emphasis on supporting communities with historically low completion rates; and (3) organize opportunities for students and families to meet with stakeholders who assist in completing the FAFSA and state financial aid applications.</p> <p>FY 2019-20 Appropriation-\$250,000</p>
<p>5. HB 19-1222 International Baccalaureate Exam Fee Grant</p> <p>Effective August 2, 2019</p>	<p>Pursuant to previously existing law, the Advanced Placement (AP) Exam Fee Grant Program covers a portion of the cost for low-income students to take an AP exam. This bill changes the name of the program to the Accelerated College Opportunity Exam Fee Grant Program and allows grants to also be awarded to cover the cost of International Baccalaureate (IB) exams. The bill allows grants to be awarded for varying amounts, as long as the lesser grant amounts cover the entire cost of the exam fee.</p>
<p>Category: Public School Finance</p>	
<p>6. SB 19-246 Public School Finance-Appropriation</p> <p>Effective May 10, 2019</p>	<p>Among other items, the bill specified the appropriation for the ASCENT program as well as created the Ninth Grade Success Grant Program in CDE. The program will provide funding to local education providers and charter schools to assist students in ninth grade to develop the skills they need to successfully persist in high school graduation and succeed in their education and professional careers. Grant recipients must provide a grant match and must use grant funding for activities specified in the legislation.</p> <p>FY2019-20 Appropriation-\$3,888,000 (ASCENT program) and \$800,000 (Ninth Grade Success Grant program).</p>



Conclusion

The state's graduation and dropout rates have steadily improved since 2010, but disaggregated data based on gender, race/ethnicity, and IPST student groups reveal areas that require more focused attention and effort. Disproportionate rates of disciplinary actions, high dropout rates, and persistently low graduation rates for certain students tell a consistent story in Colorado and across the nation.⁴ Not all students are fully benefiting from the state's educational gains, specifically those from economically challenged communities, racial minority groups and students with disabilities.

There are opportunities to accelerate improvement and education outcomes by focusing on improving school climate and culture and applying strategies that show promising results in serving Colorado's most vulnerable students. The Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement is focused on accelerating these efforts and the Dropout Prevention Framework was designed support the work.



Appendices

APPENDIX A: Definitions of Terms

The following definitions are taken from Colorado Revised Statutes, the Colorado Code of Regulations and the CDE data dictionary.

Adjusted Cohort Rate: Under the “Anticipated Year of Graduation” cohort formula that was implemented beginning in 2010, students are assigned an unchanging anticipated year of graduation when they enter into ninth grade. The anticipated year of graduation is assigned by adding three years to the school year that a student begins ninth grade. For example, the formula anticipates that a student starting ninth grade in the fall of the 2015–2016 school year will graduate with the Class of 2019.

Assistance for Out-of-School Youth to Re-Enroll: Defined in CDE data collection reporting as school and/or district approaches and systems to re-engage youth who are not enrolled in school and have not earned a high school credential (either a diploma or high school equivalency credential, such as a HSED). This includes retrieval of students who have dropped out within the current school year or those who have dropped out in previous years. Examples include designating staff to identify and provide outreach to students who have dropped out and re-enrollment processes that involve individualized transition planning and assessment of a re-enrolled student’s educational needs/strengths and needed supports.

Chronic Absenteeism Count: Unduplicated count of students absent 10% or more of the days enrolled in the public school during the school year. A student is absent if he or she is not physically on school grounds and is not participating in instruction or instruction–related activities at an approved off-grounds location for the school day. Chronically absent students include students who are absent for any reason (e.g., illness, suspension, or the need to care for a family member), regardless of whether absences are excused or unexcused. This count would include students in grades K–12. Annual counts by school/district are available at CDE Attendance Information, www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/truancystatistics.

Dropout: A person who leaves school for any reason, except death, before completion of a high school diploma or its equivalent, and who does not transfer to another public or private school or enroll in an approved home study program. Students who reach the age of 21 before receiving a diploma or designation of completion (“age-outs”) are also counted as dropouts.

Not at dropout: A student who transfers to an educational program recognized by the district, completes a high school equivalency or registers in a program leading to a high school equivalency, is committed to an institution that maintains educational programs, or is ill and unable to participate in a homebound or special therapy program. See Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) at CDE dropout statistics, www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/dropoutcurrent.htm.

Dropout Rate: An annual rate, reflecting the percentage of all students enrolled in grades 7 to 12 who leave school during a single school year without subsequently attending another school or educational program. The Colorado dropout rate is not the inverse of the graduation rate. FAQ and calculation details are available at CDE dropout statistics, www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/dropoutcurrent.htm.

Discipline Incidents: The total number of incidents (not students) that are reported by local education agencies to CDE. Examples include, but are not limited to, classroom suspension/teacher removal, in school



suspension, out of school suspension, and expulsion. More details can be found at CDE suspension/expulsion, www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/suspend-expelcurrent.

- **Classroom Removal Incidents:** Reporting includes total number of incidents (not students) in which the most severe action taken was the student(s) being suspended from the classroom or removed by the teacher. Includes only incidents where a teacher removal process was followed (e.g., contacting parent/guardian, student-parent-teacher conference and if the second removal, developing a behavior plan).
- **In-School Suspension Incidents:** Student suspended from classroom to another location in the school in accordance with local school board policy.
- **Out of School Suspension Incidents:** Student suspended from school grounds in accordance with local school board policy.
- **Expulsion Incidents:** Student expelled in accordance with local school board policy.

Expulsion Rate: Indicates number of students expelled during the year divided by the student enrollment as of October 1.

Graduation Rates and Completion Rates

Four-year and Extended-year Graduation Rates: The graduation rate is a cohort rate. Included in the cohort are students with the same Anticipated Year of Graduation (AYG). Under the AYG cohort formula, students are assigned an unchanging anticipated year of graduation when they enter into ninth grade. AYG is assigned by adding three years to the school year that a student begins ninth grade. Regardless if it takes four years or up to seven years to graduate, students are always included in the graduate membership base (the denominator) of their AYG cohort. Upon receiving a diploma, a student is counted in the graduates total (the numerator). FAQ and calculation details can be found at CDE Graduation Statistics, www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/gradcurrent.

Notes:

- In school year 2015-16, CDE automated the reporting process districts use to remove duplicate records, which improved the accuracy of graduation and completion rates. In prior years it was possible for students to remain in the graduation base of a school or district even though they had later enrolled elsewhere in Colorado.

Completion Rate (four-year and extended-year): A cohort-based rate which includes the number of students who graduate plus those who receive a high school equivalency diploma (HSED) or other designation of high school completion. Like the graduation rate, the completion rate is calculated as a percent of those who were in membership over the previous four-year period (i.e., from grades 9 to 12) and could have graduated or completed in the currently reported school year. Extended-year completion rates are calculated following the same logic as the extended-year graduation rates, but the numerator includes regular diploma graduates, high school equivalency completers and students receiving other completion certificates. **Note:** *Colorado has approved the use of three High School Equivalency (HSE) tests: General Educational Development (GED®) Test, High School Equivalency Test (HiSET®); and Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC™). Students, 17 years of age and older, are eligible to take an HSE test, however, younger students may receive an age waiver if they meet specific conditions. More information at CDE High School Equivalency Testing Program, www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/hse.*



Habitually Truant: A child who is “habitually truant” means a child who has attained the age of six years on or before August 1 of the year in question and is under the age of 17 years having four unexcused absences from public school in any one month, or 10 unexcused absences from public school during any school year. Authorizing legislation: C.R.S. 22-33-107

Instructional Program Service Type (IPST): This includes students who are economically disadvantaged, Title I, limited English Proficient, migrant, homeless, gifted and talented, and students with disabilities.

Local Education Agencies (Local Education Provider): These terms mean a school district, a board of cooperative services created pursuant to article 5 of title 22, or the state Charter School Institute created pursuant to C.R.S 22-30.5-503.

Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR): Performance indicator in the state accountability performance frameworks that reflects student preparedness for college or careers upon completing high school. The indicator includes student graduation rates, disaggregated graduation rates for historically disadvantaged students (free/reduced price lunch eligible, minority students, students with disabilities, English learners), dropout rates (overall and disaggregated) Colorado SAT mean scale scores (overall and disaggregated), and matriculation rates that represent the percent of high school graduates that go on to CTE (Career and Technical Education) programs, community colleges, or four-year institutions in the year after they graduate high school.

Student Mobility Rate: Proportion of students having moved during the school year. Measures the number of students who have moved (a count of one regardless of the number of times a student moves). The rate includes an unduplicated count of students who transfer into or out of the public school, district or institute charter school during the regular school year as defined and calculated in CCR 301-1 (Rules for the Administration of Statewide Accountability Measures).

Student engagement: Refers to a student’s sense of belonging, safety and involvement in school that leads to academic achievement, regular school attendance, and graduation. Elements of promoting student engagement include providing rigorous and relevant instruction, creating positive relationships with teachers and counselors, providing social and emotional support services for students and their families, creating partnerships with community organizations and families that foster learning outside of the classroom, and cultivating regular school attendance.

Student re-engagement: Means a student re-enrolls in school after dropping out prior to completion. Student re-engagement can be facilitated through a local education provider’s use of evidence- or research-based strategies to reach out to students who have dropped out of school and to assist them in transitioning back into school and obtaining a high school diploma or certificate of completion.

Student Re-engagement Rate: Percent of students who dropped out in the prior year and re-enrolled in their home school/district in the following year and the percent who dropped out and were retrieved anywhere in the state in the following year. Calculation information cited in CCR 301-84, *Rules for Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement*, www.sos.state.co.us/CCR/GenerateRulePdf.do?ruleVersionId=3542.

Truancy: In general, truancy refers to a student who is absent without excuse by the parent/guardian or if the student leaves school or a class without permission of the teacher or administrator in charge, it will be



considered to be an unexcused absence and the student shall be considered truant. Local school district policy provides details on what types of absences are considered excused or unexcused.

Truancy Rate: Total Student Days Unexcused divided by Total Student Days Possible. Annual district and school-by-school truancy rates at CDE Attendance Information, www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/truancystatistics.



APPENDIX B: Historical Overview of Four-Year Graduation Rates

Four-Year Graduation Rate	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018*	2019*	Percentage Pt. Difference 2010 Compared to 2019
State Total (all students)	72.4	73.9	75.4	76.9	77.3	77.3	78.9	79.0	80.7	81.1	8.7
American Indian / Alaska Native	50.1	52.2	57.7	61.4	60.7	64.0	62.0	64.1	68.5	64.9	14.8
Asian	82.4	81.7	82.9	85.9	84.7	88.1	86.0	89.8	90.3	89.9	7.5
Black or African American	63.7	64.6	66.2	69.5	69.0	69.8	71.8	71.9	74.4	74.4	10.7
Hispanic or Latino	55.5	60.1	62.5	65.4	66.7	67.6	69.9	71.1	73.4	74.0	18.5
White	80.2	81.1	82.1	82.8	83.2	82.6	84.4	83.9	85.3	85.9	5.7
Hawaiian / Pac. Islander	<i>N/R</i>	74.8	70.1	75.5	73.4	74.5	74.4	76.5	73.9	76.0	<i>N/A</i>
Two or More Races	<i>N/R</i>	82.8	80.4	79.0	79.7	79.7	79.1	80.2	82.8	80.6	<i>N/A</i>
Male	68.7	70.3	71.4	73.2	73.7	73.6	75.3	75.5	77.1	77.6	8.9
Female	76.3	77.6	79.5	80.9	81.0	81.2	82.7	82.8	84.6	84.8	8.5
Students with Disabilities	52.0	53.5	53.7	53.8	54.6	53.8	57.2	56.8	58.6	59.2	7.2
Limited English Proficient	49.2	52.8	53.3	58.5	58.7	61.1	61.4	64.6	67.0	68.6	19.4
Economically Disadvantaged	58.9	62.2	61.4	63.7	64.2	65.5	67.8	68.5	70.7	70.9	12.0
Migrant	53.8	60.8	55.7	62.6	63.0	67.9	62.8	61.8	66.9	68.8	15.0
Title I	47.8	51.6	52.1	52.8	52.4	51.2	56.7	56.5	59.9	60.6	12.8
Homeless	48.1	49.7	49.1	50.4	52.7	52.8	53.2	55.8	55.4	55.5	7.4
Gifted & Talented	92.9	93.7	91.6	91.7	92.2	92.2	93.2	93.0	93.7	94.0	1.1
Students in Foster Care**	<i>N/R</i>	<i>N/R</i>	<i>N/R</i>	27.5	30.0	29.3	33.2	23.6	24.8	26.6	<i>N/A</i>

Source: Colorado Department of Education, Data Services. More information can be found at www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval.

*2018 and 2019 rates include students who qualified for graduation but remained in school to participate in the ASCENT program.

**Foster Care rates were made available through a data-sharing agreement between CDE and the Colorado Department of Human Services.

N/R = not reported.

Extended-year graduation rates are posted at www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/gradratecurrent.



APPENDIX C: Historical Overview of Annual Dropout Rates

School Year	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	Percentage Pt. Difference 2010 Compared to 2019
State Total (all students)	3.1	3.0	2.9	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.0	-1.1
American Indian / Alaska Native	5.3	6.5	5.4	4.4	5.0	4.7	4.4	4.1	4.3	4.0	-1.3
Asian	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.3	0.9	0.9	0.8	-0.8
Black or African American	4.6	4.4	4.4	3.5	3.7	3.7	3.4	3.4	3.1	3.0	-1.6
Hispanic or Latino	5.4	4.9	4.7	4.0	3.8	3.9	3.7	3.5	3.5	3.2	-2.2
White	2.0	2.0	1.9	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.2	-0.8
Hawaiian / Pac. Islander	<i>N/R</i>	2.9	3.8	3.6	2.4	3.3	2.7	2.5	3.0	3.4	<i>N/A</i>
Two or More Races	<i>N/R</i>	1.7	1.7	2.0	1.8	1.9	1.7	1.9	1.7	1.6	<i>N/A</i>
Male	3.4	3.2	3.2	2.8	2.7	2.9	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.3	-1.1
Female	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.2	2.1	2.2	1.9	2.0	1.9	1.7	-1.2
Students with Disabilities	2.3	2.2	2.2	1.7	2.9	3.0	2.8	2.8	2.6	2.3	0
Limited English Proficient	6.0	5.5	5.1	4.4	4.1	4.1	4.0	3.8	3.9	3.7	-2.3
Economically Disadvantaged	3.4	3.0	3.2	2.9	2.7	3.1	2.9	3.1	3.0	2.8	-0.6
Migrant	4.1	4.2	3.5	3.6	4.2	4.1	3.6	4.2	4.1	3.9	-0.2
Title I	4.9	5.2	5.7	4.4	4.2	4.5	5.2	5.4	5.1	4.0	-0.9
Homeless	7.2	6.7	8.5	6.0	5.5	6.1	6.1	5.9	6.1	5.4	-1.8
Gifted & Talented	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.4	-0.3
Students in Foster Care**	<i>N/R</i>	<i>N/R</i>	<i>N/R</i>	4.5	5.4	6.8	9.3	8.4	8.6	6.9	<i>N/A</i>

Source: Colorado Department of Education, Data Services. More information can be found at www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval.

Note: Decrease in percentage point difference = improvement in the dropout rate unless otherwise noted.

**Foster Care rates were made available through a data-sharing agreement between CDE and the Colorado Department of Human Services.

N/R = not reported



APPENDIX D: Graduation and Completion Rates by Gender and Race/Ethnicity

When looking at how graduation and completion rates have improved over time for the last five cohorts of students (2015 to 2019), there is evidence that more time in school resulted in an increased number of students that graduate or complete school. The data available for these cohorts indicate that minority female and male students especially benefit from extended-year opportunities and programming. For the Class of 2015 and 2016, minority female student graduation rates increased between 9.3 and 10.6 percentage points and completion rates increased between 10.5 and 11.8 percentage points. For minority male, graduation rates increase between 10.4 and 11.4 percentage points and completion rates increased between 12 and 13.2 percentage points.

Graduation and Completion Rates – Minority Male Students (See Table A)

The four-year completion rate shows that 73.0 percent of minority male students in the Class of 2019 finished high school with a diploma, high school equivalency or certificate of completion. Since 2015, the four-year graduation and completion rates for minority male students have shown steady improvement. The highest rate of high school completion for this student group is the six-year rate (80.8 percent) for the Class of 2017.

Table A: Extended-Year Graduation and Completion Rates of Minority Male Students from 2013 to 2019

Class of	4-Year Rate		5-year Rate		6-year Rate		7-year Rate	
	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion
2015	65.4	66.8	73.6	75.9	75.9	78.8	76.8	80.0
2016	67.2	68.6	74.4	76.5	76.4	79.1	77.6	80.6
2017	68.7	70.4	75.7	78.2	77.7	80.8	Available 2019-20	
2018	70.5	72.4	76.1	78.7	Available 2019-20		Available 2020-21	
2019	71.1	73.0	Available 2019-2020		Available 2020-21		Available 2021-22	

Source: Colorado Department of Education, Data Services and Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement

Graduation and Completion Rates – White Male Students (See Table B)

The four-year completion rate shows that 85.5 percent of white male students in the Class of 2019 finished high school with a diploma, high school equivalency or certificate of completion. Since 2015, the four-year graduation and completion rates for white male students have shown steady improvement. The highest rate of high school completion for this student group is the seven-year rate (91.3 percent) for the Class of 2016.

Table B: Extended-Year Graduation and Completion Rates of White Male Students from 2013 to 2019

Class of	4-Year Rate		5-year Rate		6-year Rate		7-year Rate	
	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion
2015	79.7	81.9	84.6	87.4	85.8	89.1	86.4	90.0
2016	81.4	83.2	85.9	88.6	87.1	90.3	87.9	91.3
2017	81.0	83.6	85.3	88.5	86.6	90.2	Available 2019-20	
2018	82.5	85.0	86.2	89.3	Available 2019-20		Available 2020-21	
2019	83.1	85.5	Available 2019-2020		Available 2020-21		Available 2021-22	

Source: Colorado Department of Education, Data Services and Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement



Graduation and Completion Rates – Minority Female Students (See Table C)

The four-year completion rate shows that 81.3 percent of minority female students in the Class of 2019 finished high school with a diploma, high school equivalency or certificate of completion. Since 2015, the four-year graduation and completion rates for minority female students have shown steady improvement. The highest rate of high school completion for this student group is the seven-year rate (88.0 percent) for the Class of 2016.

Table C: Extended-Year Graduation and Completion Rates of Minority Female Students from 2013 to 2019								
Class of	4-Year Rate		5-year Rate		6-year Rate		7-year Rate	
	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion
2015	75.3	76.1	83.0	84.3	85.0	86.7	85.9	87.9
2016	76.7	77.5	83.2	84.6	85.1	86.8	86.0	88.0
2017	77.7	78.8	83.8	85.2	85.8	87.6	Available 2019-20	
2018	80.2	81.2	84.8	86.3	Available 2019-20		Available 2020-21	
2019	80.1	81.3	Available 2019-2020		Available 2020-21		Available 2021-22	

Source: Colorado Department of Education, Data Services and Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement

Graduation and Completion Rates – White Females Students (See Table D)

The four-year completion rate shows that 90.3 percent of white female students in the Class of 2019 finished high school with a diploma, high school equivalency or certificate of completion. Since 2015, the four-year graduation and completion rates for white female students have shown mostly steady improvement. The highest rate of high school completion for this student group is the seven-year rate (94.5 percent) for the Class of 2016.

Table D: Extended-Year Graduation and Completion Rates of White Female Students from 2013 to 2019								
Class of	4-Year Rate		5-year Rate		6-year Rate		7-year Rate	
	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion
2015	85.6	86.9	89.6	91.5	90.7	92.9	91.3	93.6
2016	87.5	88.8	90.8	92.5	91.8	93.7	92.4	94.5
2017	86.8	88.2	90.4	92.2	91.4	93.4	Available 2019-20	
2018	88.3	89.8	91.2	93.0	Available 2019-20		Available 2020-21	
2019	88.8	90.3	Available 2019-2020		Available 2020-21		Available 2021-22	

Source: Colorado Department of Education, Data Services and Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement



APPENDIX E: Summary of Graduation and Completion Rates by Student Group

The Colorado Department for Education reports graduation and dropout rates by Instructional Program Services Type (IPST), which includes these student groups: economically disadvantaged, English learners, gifted and talented, homeless, migrant students, and students with disabilities. A summary of trends in graduation and completion rates for IPST student groups and students in foster is provided in this section. Rates for students in foster care are produced in accordance with a data-sharing agreement with the Colorado Department of Human Services.

Note: The numbers of students in each student group are not mutually exclusive, as a student may be classified in more than one category.

Economically Disadvantaged Students

Economically disadvantaged students qualify for either the free or reduced cost lunch program.

The four-year completion rate shows that 73.1 percent of economically disadvantaged students in the Class of 2019 finished high school with a diploma, high school equivalency, or certificate of completion. This represents a 0.3 percentage point increase since the previous year. Since 2015, the four-year graduation and completion rates for these students have shown steady improvement. The highest rate of high school completion for this student group is the seven-year rate (81.8 percent) for the Class of 2016. See *Table E*.

Class of	4-Year Rate		5-year Rate		6-year Rate		7-year Rate	
	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion
2015	65.5	67.2	74.0	76.5	76.4	79.5	77.5	80.9
2016	67.8	69.3	75.0	77.4	77.2	80.2	78.4	81.8
2017	68.5	70.5	75.5	78.4	77.6	81.0	Available 2019-20	
2018	70.7	72.8	76.4	79.2	Available 2019-20		Available 2020-21	
2019	70.9	73.1	Available 2019-2020		Available 2020-21		Available 2021-22	

Source: Colorado Department of Education, Data Services and Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement

English Learners

At the state level an English learner is a student who is categorized as having one of the following language proficiency levels: Non-English Proficient (NEP), Limited English Proficient (LEP), and Fluent English Proficient (FEP) M1 or FEP M2.

The four-year completion rate shows that 69.6 percent of English Language Learner students in the Class of 2019 finished high school with a diploma, high school equivalency, or certificate of completion. This represents a 1.8 percentage point increase since the previous year. Since 2015, the four-year graduation and completion rates for these students have shown steady improvement. The highest rate of high school completion for this student group is the six-year rate (78.0 percent) for the Class of 2017. See *Table F*.



Table F: Extended-Year Graduation and Completion Rates of English Learners

Class of	4-Year Rate		5-year Rate		6-year Rate		7-year Rate	
	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion
2015	61.1	61.7	72.2	73.2	75.0	76.4	76.1	77.7
2016	61.4	62.0	71.8	72.8	74.6	76.0	76.0	77.7
2017	64.6	65.3	73.9	75.1	76.6	78.0	Available 2019-20	
2018	67.0	67.8	74.0	75.3	Available 2019-20		Available 2020-21	
2019	68.6	69.6	Available 2019-20		Available 2020-21		Available 2021-22	

Source: Colorado Department of Education, Data Services and Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement

Gifted and Talented Students

The high school four-year completion rate for this student group is 95.3 percent, which represents an increase of 0.2 percentage point compared to the Class of 2018 cohort. The highest rate of high school completion for this student group is reflected in the seven-year rate for the Class of 2016 and six-year rate for the Class of 2017. This means that with two to three additional years in high school, 97.9 percent of students in this cohort group completed high school. See *Table G*.

Table G: Extended-Year Graduation and Completion Rates of Gifted and Talented Students

Class of	4-Year Rate		5-year Rate		6-year Rate		7-year Rate	
	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion
2015	92.2	93.4	94.8	96.3	95.2	97.0	95.4	97.4
2016	93.2	94.5	95.5	97.2	95.9	97.7	96.0	97.9
2017	93.0	94.3	95.6	97.3	96.1	97.9	Available 2019-20	
2018	93.7	95.1	95.4	97.1	Available 2019-20		Available 2020-21	
2019	94.0	95.3	Available 2019-20		Available 2020-21		Available 2021-22	

Source: Colorado Department of Education, Data Services and Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement

McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Students

The high school four-year completion rate for this student group is 58.6 percent, which represents an increase of 0.5 percentage point compared to the Class of 2018 cohort. The highest rate of high school completion for this student group is reflected in the seven-year rate for the Class of 2015 and six-year rate for the Class of 2017. This means that, with two to three additional years in high school, 70.0 percent of students in this cohort group completed high school. See *Table H*. More information about homeless education supports and services is available at McKinney-Vento Homeless Education, www.cde.state.co.us/dropoutprevention/homeless_index.



Table H: Extended-Year Graduation and Completion Rates of Homeless Students

Class of	4-Year Rate		5-year Rate		6-year Rate		7-year Rate	
	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion
2015	52.8	54.8	61.2	64.4	63.9	68.1	65.3	70.0
2016	53.2	54.9	60.1	63.1	63.1	66.9	64.5	69.1
2017	55.8	58.4	62.7	66.6	65.3	70.0	Available 2019-20	
2018	55.4	58.1	62.0	65.7	Available 2019-20		Available 2020-21	
2019	55.5	58.6	Available 2019-20		Available 2020-21		Available 2021-22	

Source: Colorado Department of Education, Data Services and Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement

Migrant Students

The four-year completion rate shows that 70.5 percent of migrant students in the Class of 2019 finished high school with a diploma, high school equivalency, or certificate of completion. The current four-year completion rate for this student group increased by 3.3 percentage points compared to their Class of 2018 cohort. The highest rate of high school completion for this student group is the seven-year rate for the Class of 2015. With three more years in high school, 82.1 percent of students in this cohort group completed high school. See Table I. Find information about Migrant Education at www.cde.state.co.us/migrant.

Table I: Extended-Year Graduation and Completion Rates of Migrant Students

Class of	4-Year Rate		5-year Rate		6-year Rate		7-year Rate	
	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion
2015	67.9	68.9	77.3	78.9	79.4	81.4	80.1	82.1
2016	62.8	63.2	69.7	70.0	73.2	73.9	75.0	75.6
2017	61.8	63.4	71.9	73.5	74.3	75.9	Available 2019-20	
2018	66.9	67.2	70.3	70.6	Available 2019-20		Available 2020-21	
2019	68.8	70.5	Available 2019-2020		Available 2020-2021		Available 2021-2022	

Source: Colorado Department of Education, Data Services and Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement

Students with Disabilities

The four-year completion rate for students with disabilities in the Class of 2019 is 61.3 percent. The current four-year completion rate for this student group increased by 1.0 percentage point compared to their Class of 2018 cohort. The highest rate of high school completion for students with disabilities is the seven-year rate for the Class of 2016. With three more years in high school, 79.2 percent of students in this group attain a high school credential. See Table J. Details about supports and services for students with disabilities can be found at CDE Office of Special Education, www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped.



Table J: Extended-Year Graduation and Completion Rates of Students with Disabilities

Class of	4-Year Rate		5-year Rate		6-year Rate		7 year Rate	
	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion
2015	53.8	55.0	64.8	66.8	70.0	72.6	74.1	77.2
2016	57.2	58.4	66.3	68.0	71.7	74.1	76.5	79.2
2017	56.8	58.3	66.2	68.4	71.9	74.5	Available 2019-20	
2018	58.6	60.3	67.1	69.4	Available 2019-20		Available 2020-21	
2019	59.2	61.3	Available 2019-2020		Available 2020-2021		Available 2021-2022	

Source: Colorado Department of Education, Data Services and Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement

Students in Foster Care

The term “student in foster care” means that an individual has experienced an out-of-home placement and has been enrolled in a Colorado public school.

The four-year completion rate shows that 38.5 percent of students in foster care in the Class of 2019 finished high school with a diploma, high school equivalency, or certificate of completion. The current four-year completion rate for this student group increased (0.7 percentage point) compared to their Class of 2018 cohort. Compared to the Class of 2015, the rates for students in foster care has fluctuated. The highest rate of high school completion for students in foster care can be found in the seven-year rate for the Class of 2016. With three more years in high school, 55.0 percent of students in this group attained a high school credential. See *Table M*. Learn more information about foster care education at: www.cde.state.co.us/dropoutprevention/fostercare_index.

Table M: Extended-Year Graduation and Completion Rates of Students in Foster Care

Class of	4-Year Rate		5-year Rate		6-year Rate		7-year Rate	
	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion	Graduation	Completion
2015	29.3	35.9	37.6	46.9	40.3	51.0	41.4	53.6
2016	33.2	37.4	40.2	46.4	42.5	51.1	44.9	55.0
2017	23.6	33.6	29.6	43.8	32.0	48.8	Available 2019-20	
2018	24.8	37.8	31.3	48.4	Available 2019-20		Available 2020-21	
2019	26.6	38.5	Available 2019-2020		Available 2020-2021		Available 2021-2022	

Source: Colorado Department of Education, Data Services, Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement and Colorado Department of Human Services

The foster care education data is made available through a data-sharing agreement between the Colorado Department of Education and the Colorado Department of Human Services. Foster care education data by county of the school district is available at www.cde.state.co.us/dropoutprevention/rad_coloradolegislaturereports.



End Notes

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