



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

# Colorado Student Re-Engagement Grant Evaluation Report

*Grantee Award Period: July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2019*

By:

**Juliana Rosa, Ph.D.**

**Research and Evaluation Principal Consultant**

[Rosa\\_J@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Rosa_J@cde.state.co.us)

**Angelica Kim**

**Research and Evaluation Intern**

October 2020

---

**Office of Student Engagement and Dropout Prevention**

*Director Ashley Idrees, Ph.D.*

[Idrees\\_A@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Idrees_A@cde.state.co.us)

201 E. Colfax Ave., Denver, CO 80203

303-866-6635



---

# Table of Contents

<u>Executive Summary</u>	3
<u>Overview</u>	4
Program Description Evaluation Methodology	
<u>Students Served</u>	6
Students Served by Year Students Served Over Time Student Demographics	
<u>Program Implementation</u>	8
Risk Factors Central to Students Served Methods and Tactics Implemented by Grantees Targeted Interventions	
<u>Performance Results</u>	11
Overall Improvement Improvement by Objective Area	
<u>Lessons Learned</u>	12
Best Practices Implementation Challenges	
<u>Student Outcomes</u>	14
Dropout Prevention Positive Student Outcomes	
<u>School Outcomes</u>	16
Attendance and Truancy Rates Dropout Rates Graduation and Completion Rates Re-engagement Rates	
<u>Leveraging Resources and Sustaining Strategies</u>	19
Actions Taken Toward Sustainability Sustainability Planning	
<u>Conclusion</u>	20
<u>Endnotes</u>	21
<u>Appendices</u>	22



## Executive Summary

Colorado's Student Re-engagement Grant (SRG) program assists local education agencies in providing educational services and supports to maintain student engagement and facilitate student re-engagement at the secondary level. The grant is managed by the Office of Student Engagement and Dropout Prevention (SEDP) and is authorized by section 22-14-109, C.R.S. Competitive grants under this statute were awarded for the first time in March 2016 to 10 grantees serving 35 schools.

### **More than 10,000 Colorado Students Served between 2016-2017 and 2018-2019**

This includes re-engaged out-of-school youth and 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade students at risk for dropping out of school due to factors such as course failure, low attendance, and insufficient credit accrual.

Of the students served, 52.9 percent were male, and 61.1 percent identified as Hispanic. Most students served were in 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade (96 percent of students). More than half of students served qualified for free/reduced lunch (67.6 percent of students), 28.1 percent were English learners, 13.0 percent had a special education designation, and 3.7 percent were identified as homeless.

### **Eight out of 10 Students Experienced Positive Outcomes**

Grantees reported an increase in positive student outcomes from 86.0 percent of students in 2016-2017 to 88.3 percent of students in 2018-2019. Positive outcomes included school completion, persistence in their education, and continuing services to overcome education barriers.

As the number of students served by the program increased by more than 1,000 students across the three academic school years, the percent of students served who dropped out of the school decreased by 3.9 percentage points (from 8.4 percent in 2016-2017 to 4.5 percent in 2018-2019).

More than 2,000 students served by the grant program graduated or completed high school by 2018-2019. The economic benefits to these students and the state can be captured by an increase in projected lifetime earnings and annual state and local tax revenue, which is estimated at \$230,000 per high school graduate.<sup>1</sup>

### **More Time is an Important Component of Program Success**

Overall, seven out of 10 grantees made significant progress meeting program performance objectives over time ( $p < .01$ ); grantees went from making progress in 2016-2017 to meeting their objectives in 2018-2019. Future evaluations will focus on three set performance objectives and metrics to demonstrate improvement in the key areas of academic achievement, school engagement, and re-engagement.

### **Funded Schools Showed Improvement**

Funded schools reported increases in attendance rates (0.9 percentage point increase) and decreases in both truancy rates (1.3 percentage point decrease) and dropout rates (1.4 percentage point decrease) from 2016-2017 to 2018-2019. Additionally, grantees reported funding re-engagement efforts for out-of-school youth with a re-engagement rate of 66.6 percent by 2018-2019.

### **Grantees Plan for Sustainability**

Five out of 10 grantees reported that they recaptured per pupil revenue to re-invest in the SRG-funded strategies. All funded grantees reported that plans were in place to fully sustain the grant in future years. Future evaluations will focus on determining how programs are sustained beyond the awarded years.



## Overview

The Office of Student Engagement and Dropout Prevention (SEDP) at the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) 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 Colorado Revised Statute 22-14-101 and builds on the state's commitment to ensure graduation and school success for all students.

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.<sup>1</sup> If Colorado increased the overall state graduation rate to 90 percent, the economic benefits are estimated at \$101 million in increased annual earnings and \$4.5 million in annual state and local tax revenues.<sup>2</sup>

### Program Description

SEDP oversees the Colorado Student Re-engagement Grant (SRG). The program is authorized by section 22-14-109, C.R.S. to assist local education providers in providing educational services and supports to increase student engagement for student at risk for dropping out of school and increase re-engagement of students who have previously dropped out of school or out-of-school youth. (See [Appendix A: Definitions](#) for a list of commonly used terms throughout the report).

The grant program focuses primarily on LEAs serving 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. State appropriations for this grant program began in 2016 and competitive grants were awarded for the first time in March 2016.

Grants are awarded for three sequential fiscal years provided grantees are meeting grant requirements, grantees are making reasonable progress toward performance outcomes, and state funds are annually appropriated.

Between 2016-2017 and 2018-2019, grantees were awarded \$6.6 million to implement programing – a program rate of \$475 per student served (range from \$230 to \$1,472 per student)

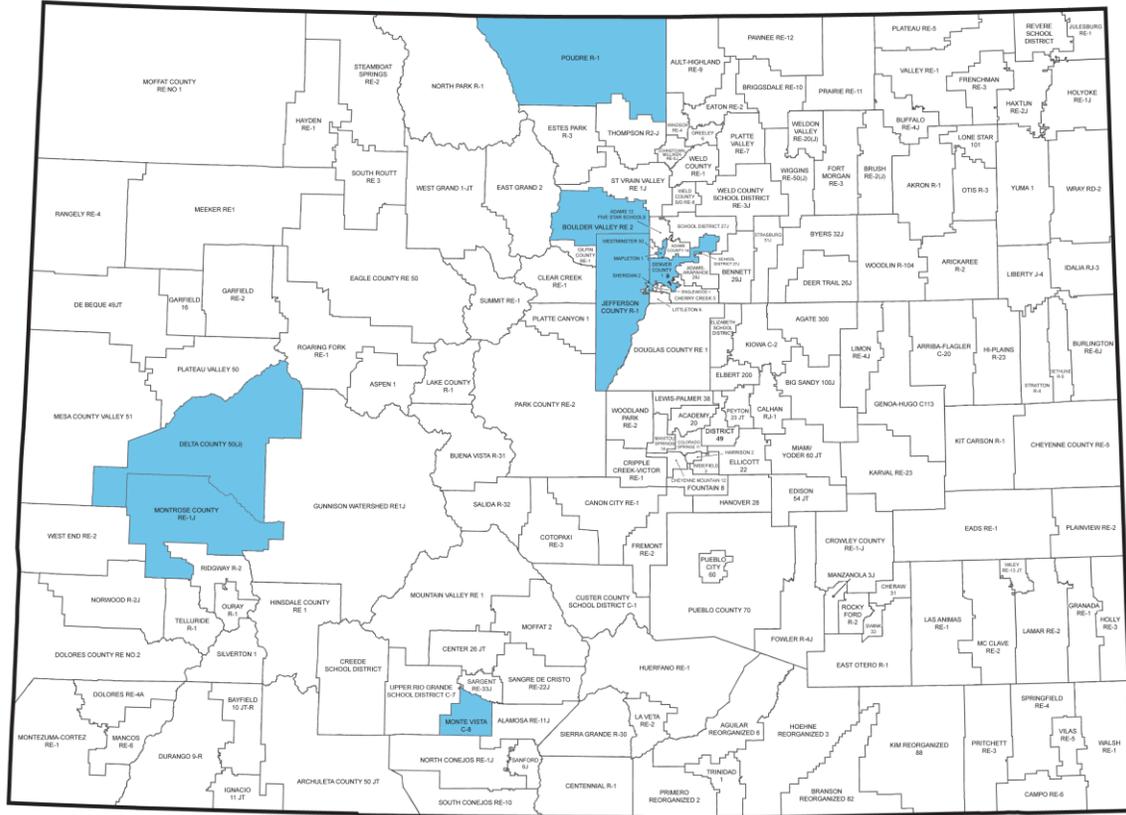
The first cohort of SRG grantees included 10 school districts serving 35 schools. Almost half of the schools (16 schools) were classified as Alternative Education Campuses (AECs) while receiving funding. See the School District Map below, which highlights all the districts served by the grant. Additional information on each program are available in [Appendix B: Funded SRG Grantees](#).

### Example Description of Exemplar Program

- Submitted by a Funded School in an Urban-Suburban Setting

*“Administration and staff at all three sites have agreed to work together to enhance their existing strategies and build new opportunities together to improve outcomes for high-needs high school students. The addition of graduation coaches and other supportive staff will allow the district to increase credit attainment, enhance student engagement, and connect students to meaningful postsecondary outcomes... Methods and tactics used include early warning system, re-engagement and tracking out-of-school youth, assess and enhance school climate, policy and practice review, family engagement, community involvement, transition programs, multiple pathways to graduation, enhanced counseling and mentoring, and credit recovery.”*

Student Re-engagement Grantees 2016-19



Produced by the Colorado Department of Education - February 2019

### Evaluation Methodology

Grantees were responsible for submitting an annual end-of-year survey using an online survey platform. As part of this requirement, grantees securely submit State Assigned Student Identifiers (SASIDs) for all students served using the Student Engagement Evaluation System (SEES). For more details on the evaluation methodology and survey questions, see [Appendix C: Evaluation Methodology](#).

Additional school, district, and state-level data (e.g., attendance, graduation, dropout, and completion rates) reported to CDE during this period were also used in this report. Data from schools funded by the program were also isolated and compared to state-level data. For more information about data collected by the CDE, visit [Overview of Student Data and CDE Data Collections](#).

This report covers evaluation data available during a three-year period between July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2019. This report only includes data from the first cohort of 10 grantees (33 out of 35 schools).

**Notes:** *Two schools were excluded from the analyses due to reallocation of funds or school closure. Some of the quotes provided throughout the report have been edited for succinctness and clarity, and to protect Personally Identifiable Information.*



## Students Served

### Students Served by Year

Grantees reported an increase in the number of students served over time by the program. This includes 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade students at risk for dropping out of school and re-engaged out-of-school youth.

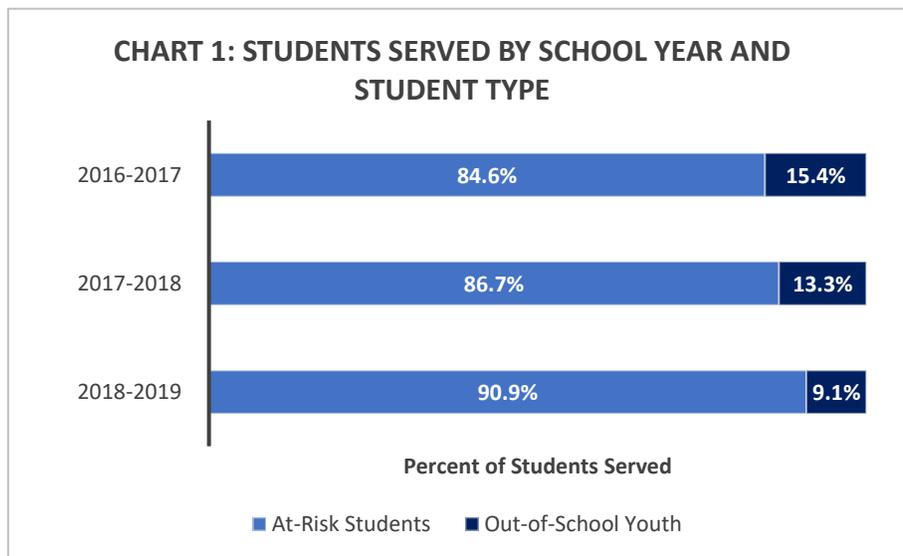
- 3,685 students were served in 2016-2017.
- 4,749 students were served in 2017-2018.
- 5,388 students were served in 2018-2019.

10,000+

STUDENTS WERE SERVED  
BY SRG PROGRAMS  
OVER 3 YEARS

This represents between 0.8 percent and 1.1 percent of all enrolled 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in Colorado each year.

**CHART 1** provides a visual representation of the proportion of students at risk for dropping out and out-of-school youth served across the three years of the SRG.



*Source: Colorado Department of Education, SRG End-of-Year Report from 2016-2017, 2017-2018, and 2018-2019.*

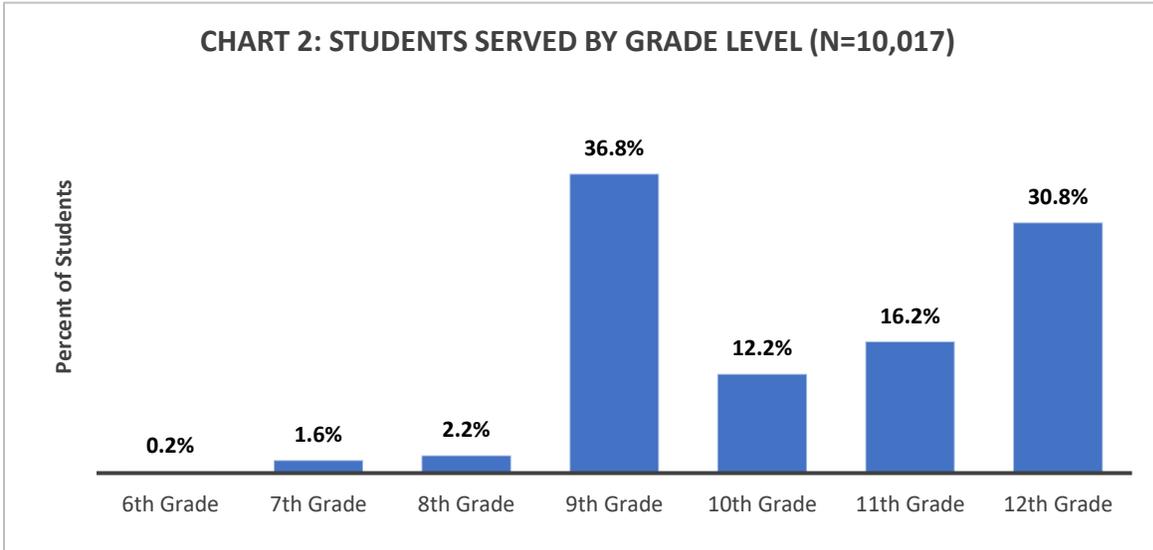
### Students Served Over Time

Based on the available student-level data submitted by grantees, it is estimated that more than 10,000 students were served from 2016-2017 to 2018-2019. The average number of years students participated in the program was 1.26, with 77.5 percent of students participating for one year, 18.7 percent of students participating for two years, and 3.8 percent of students participating in all three years of the grant program.

**Note:** SASIDs data is used to determine how many unique students are served for the duration of the grant. Between 2016-17 and 2018-19, grantees submitted SASIDs for 94.9 percent of students reported in the annual survey (10,017 unique SASIDs). Without the additional records, it is unclear whether the remaining 5.1 percent of students received one or multiple years of services. It is anticipated that more than 10,017 students were served by the grant over the three-year period.

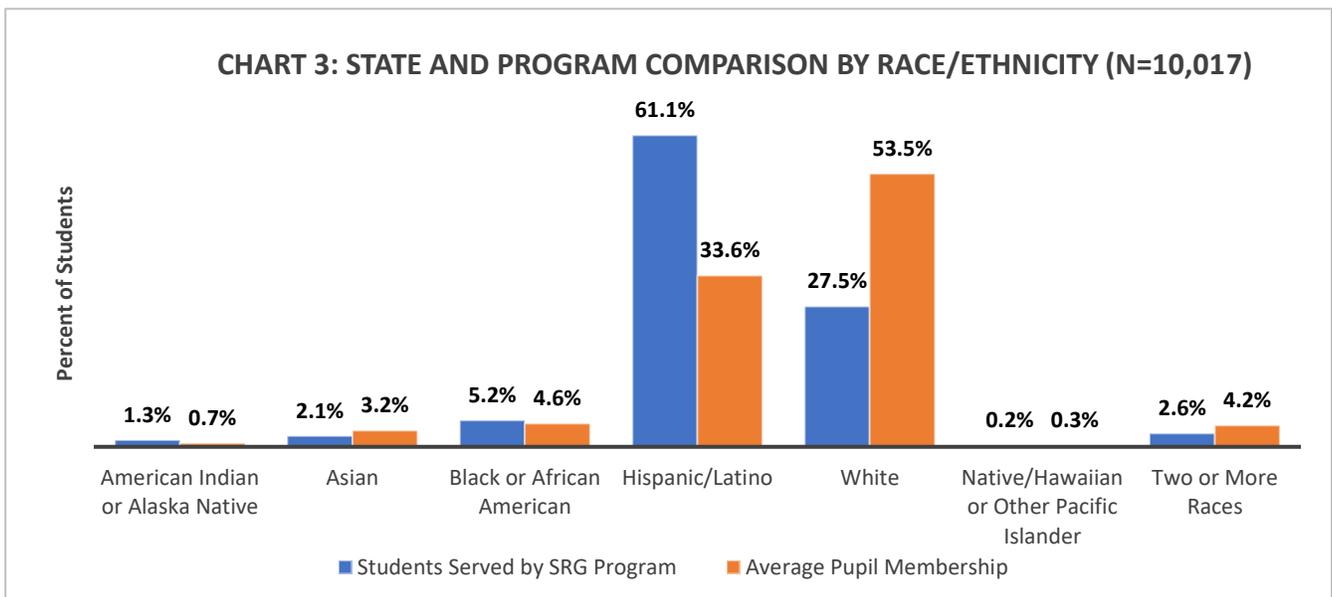
### Student Demographics

Available student-level data by grade showed that most students served were in 9<sup>th</sup> (36.8 percent of students) and 12<sup>th</sup> grade (30.8 percent of students). **CHART 2** shows a breakout by grade level for the students served from 2016-2017 to 2018-2019.



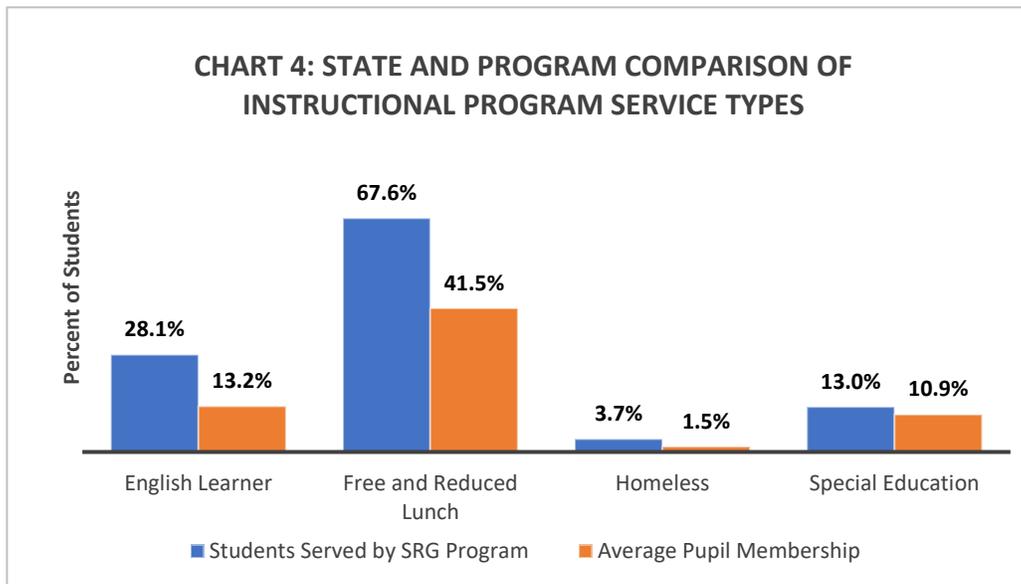
*Source: Colorado Department of Education, SRG End-of-Year Report and Pupil Membership Data from 2016-2017, 2017-2018, and 2018-2019.*

More than half of students served were male (52.9 percent of students) and most students identified either as Hispanic (61.1 percent of students) or White (27.5 percent of students). **CHART 3** shows a breakout by race/ethnicity for the students served by the program compared to the average pupil membership rate between 2016-2017 and 2018-2019.



*Source: Colorado Department of Education, SRG End-of-Year Report and Pupil Membership Data from 2016-2017, 2017-2018, and 2018-2019.*

Student-level data showed that 67.6 percent of student served qualified for free/reduced lunch, 28.1 percent were English learners, 13.0 percent had a special education designation, and 3.7 percent were homeless. Less than one percent of students served were migrant students or students in foster care. **CHART 4** 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 the state between 2016-2017 and 2018-2019.



**Source:** Colorado Department of Education, SRG End-of-Year Report and Pupil Membership Data from 2016-2017, 2017-2018, and 2018-2019. **Note:** These student groups are not mutually exclusive.

## Program Implementation

### Risk Factors Central to Students Served

Grantees were asked to report risk factors that were central to the student population served by the program, which are commonly known to hinder high school completion.

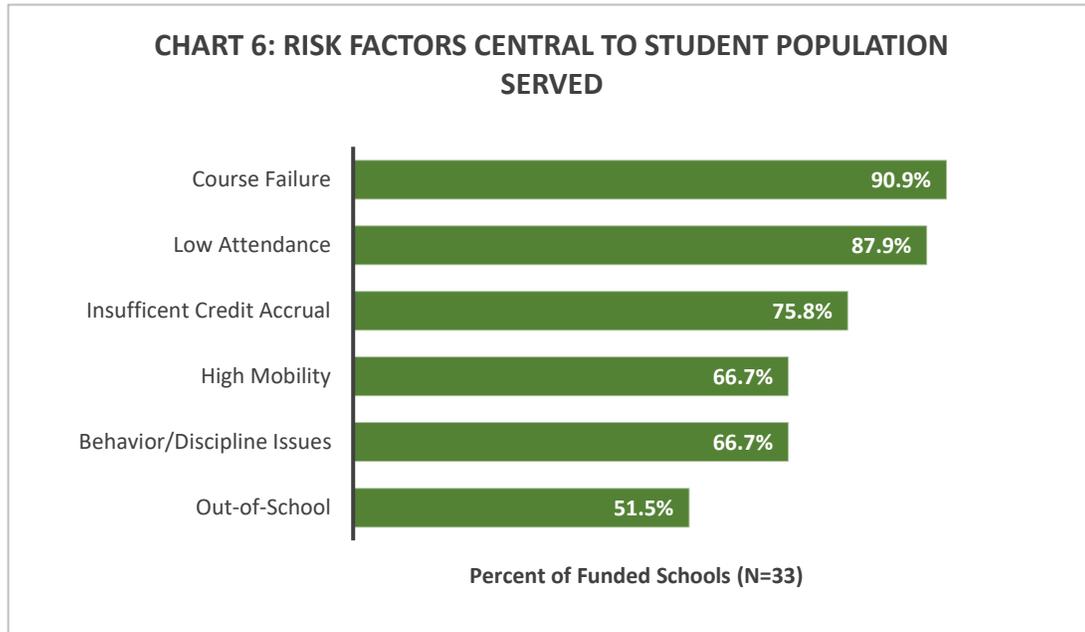
The most common risk factors reported by grantees included course failure (90.9 percent of funded schools), low attendance (87.9 percent of funded schools), and insufficient credit accrual (75.8 percent of funded schools).

Other risk factors identified by grantees included other behavioral challenges, pregnancy or parenting, traumatic experiences, and drug or alcohol abuse.

**CHART 6** shows a breakout of risk factors central to the student population served reported by funded schools.

**Example of Common Risk Factors**  
Submitted by a Funded School in an Urban-Suburban Setting

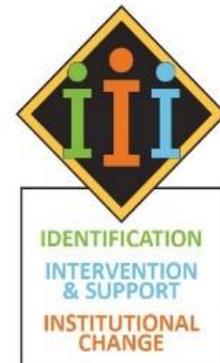
*“This year we had five seniors start our program who had not attended school the previous semester. Each came with a difficult story and hope that they would earn their diploma. Returning to school after an extended break was hard for all of them and attendance was a significant problem. They also had credits they need to make up from time missed.”*



*Source: Colorado Department of Education, SRG End-of-Year Report from 2016-2017, 2017-2018, and 2018-2019.*

### Implemented Methods and Tactics

The Colorado Dropout Prevention Framework is the foundation of the SRG program. This 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. This multi-faceted framework includes evidence-based systems, essential elements, and strategies focused on the following: identification, intervention and support, and institutional change.



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.

Identification method and tactics implemented by grantees included the following:

- *Data Analysis* – Implemented by 69.6 percent of funded schools.
- *Early Warning Systems* – Implemented by 54.5 percent of funded schools.
- *Policy and Practice Review* – Implemented by 45.5 percent of funded schools.
- *Tracking Out-Of-School Youth* – Implemented by 39.3 percent of funded schools.



## INTERVENTION & SUPPORT

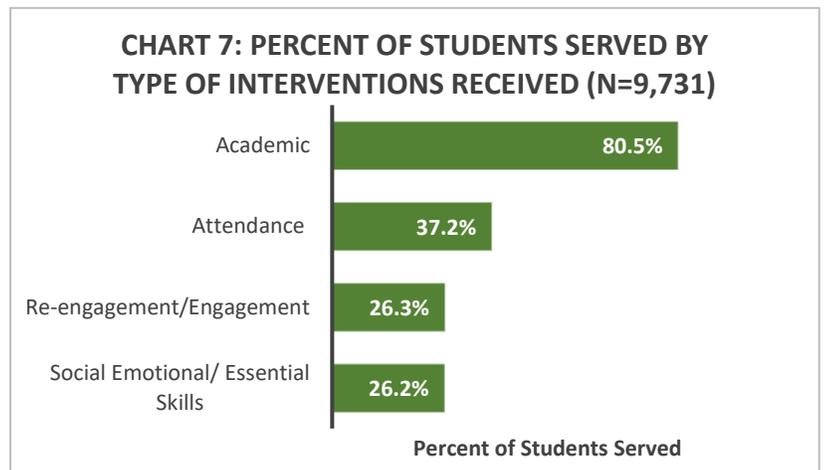
Successful efforts include transition planning and support, schoolwide strategies and multi-tiered systems of support and targeted interventions for students identified as being off-track to graduate or at risk for dropping out. Intervention and supports are data-informed and contextualized to meet student needs. Interventions and supports implemented by grantees included the following:

- *Enhanced Counseling and Mentoring* – Implemented by 78.8 percent of funded schools.
- *Course Completion Supports* – Implemented by 72.7 percent of funded schools.
- *Family Engagement* – Implemented by 54.5 percent of funded schools.
- *Transition Programs* – Implemented by 54.5 percent of funded schools.
- *Re-engagement of Out-Of-School Youth* – Implemented by 45.5 percent of funded schools.
- *Community Involvement* – Implemented by 42.4 percent of funded schools.

The average number of interventions received by students was 1.75, with 56.6 percent of students receiving at least one intervention and 43.4 percent of students receiving two to four interventions while being served. The most frequently received intervention was academic services such as enhanced counseling and mentoring, course completion, and credit recovery. Eight out of 10 students received academic interventions through the program, between 2016-2017 and 2018-2019.

Additionally, interventions received varied by grade level. Students in 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade were more likely to receive academic interventions compared to students in 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grades.

**CHART 7** shows the percent of students served by each intervention type.



**Source:** Colorado Department of Education, SRG End-of-Year Report from 2016-2017, 2017-2018, and 2018-2019.

**Note:** Services were not identified for 286 students. These students were not included in the analysis.

Results showed that as years of participation in the program increased, so did the variety of interventions received ( $p < .01$ ). Students ( $N=2,256$ ) who participated in the program for multiple years were most likely to receive continuous academic and attendance supports while being served.



## INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

System-wide changes that can be utilized to create an ecosystem for student success include 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. Method and tactics implemented by grantees to promote institutional change included the following:

- *Multiple Pathways to Graduation* – Implemented by 54.5 percent of funded schools.
- *Assess and Enhance School Climate* – Implemented by 54.5 percent of funded schools.



## Performance Results

Each grantee set their own performance objectives in three core areas to be achieved by the end of the grant period.

- **Academic achievement performance objectives** often addressed improving student academic performance, improving subject proficiency, increasing credit attainment, and providing individualized academic services/supports.
- **Engagement performance objectives** included providing alternative pathways for students, increasing regular attendance, and providing flexible course offerings.
- **Re-engagement performance objectives** focused on providing targeted reengagement programming, outreach to out-of-school youth, and decreasing the dropout rate.

### Overall Improvement

Grantees annually report to CDE the progress they make on their performance objectives. 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 approaching. If you have made minimal gains on your objective, select not making progress.*

7 out of 10

GRANTEES IMPROVED  
PERFORMANCE OVER TIME

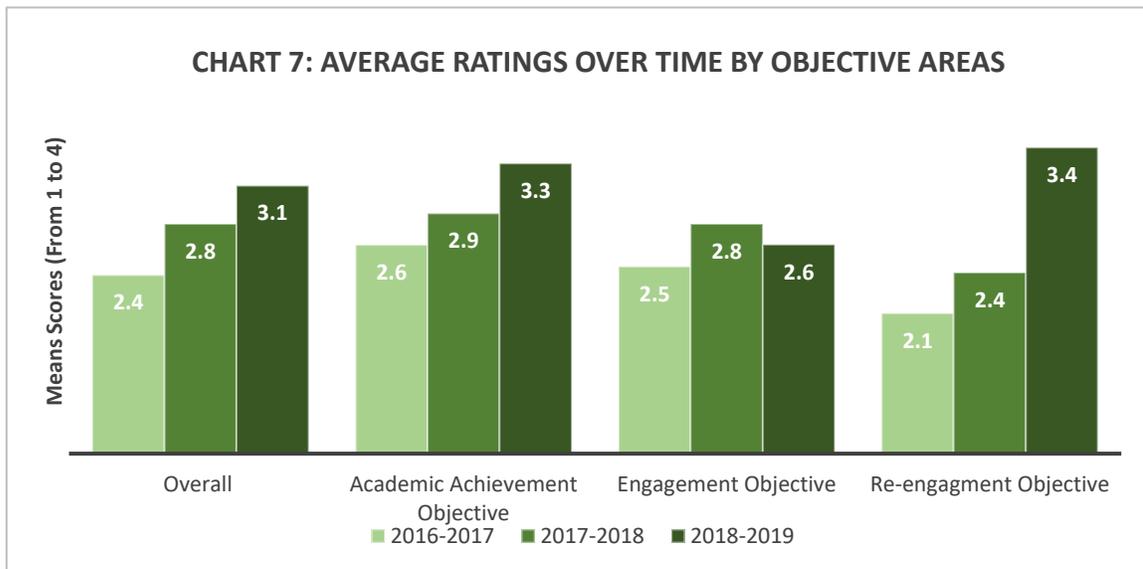
Longitudinal analyses were used to determine whether grantees improved their performance from 2016-2017 to 2018-2019. Performance objectives were assigned numerical values ranging from 1 (Not Making Progress) to 4 (Exceeded) for each year of the grant. The results showed that ratings significantly improved over the three school years ( $p < .01$ ). On average, grantees went from making progress ( $Mean=2.4$ ) in 2016-2017 to meeting their objectives ( $Mean=3.1$ ) in 2018-2019. Seven out of 10 grantees showed significant improvement overall when comparing their ratings over time.

### Improvement by Objective Area

Results showed differing patterns by objective areas. By the last year of the grant (2018-2019 academic school year), grantees made the largest gains in their re-engagement and academic objectives.

- Seven out of 10 grantees reported meeting or exceeding their academic performance objectives.
- Five out 10 grantees reported meeting or exceeding their engagement performance objectives.
- Six out of seven grantees reported meeting or exceeding their re-engagement performance objectives.

**CHART 7** highlights mean trends over the course of three years for each of the three objective areas.



**Source:** Colorado Department of Education, SRG End-of-Year Report from 2016-2017, 2017-2018, and 2018-2019.

**Note:** Performance objective data was collected at the grantee level in 2016-2017, but at the school level in 2017-2018 and 2018-2019. Ratings for 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 were averaged across schools within a funded district for the analysis. Some variation in ratings were observed for seven schools within two funded districts. To better understand program progress and outcomes, future evaluations will collect performance measure data at the funded school level.

## Lessons Learned

In Year 3 of the grant, grantees were asked to reflect on best practices that positively contributed to meeting or exceeding their program objectives as well as implementation challenges. A thematic analysis of the responses was conducted, and the most common themes reported by grantees are highlighted below.

### Best Practices

- Multiple pathways** – The importance of having a variety of structured academic opportunities for students to achieve their goal for high school graduation or completion (e.g., CTE programs, credit recovery and acceleration, concurrent enrollment, project based and experiential learning opportunities) was mentioned repeatedly by grantees. Grantees also mentioned the importance of considering academic *rigor*, *students' unique interests*, and *individualized academic needs* when determining pathways.
- Alternative learning environments and options** – Grantees reported success with keeping students engaged by providing varying educational and credit attainment options as a traditional classroom setting was not effective for all students. Examples included *smaller classroom size*, *online classes*, *Friday or evening classes*, and *flexible school schedules*.
- Data tracking and analysis** – Use of data to identify at-risk students and track student progress was a common strategy identified as directly contributing to the success of SRG programs. Common data elements tracked by grantees included *school attendance*, *discipline*, *behavioral incidents*, *course completion*, *grades*, and *credits attained*.



- **Positive relationships with caring adults** – To increase student engagement and help students stay on track, grantees emphasized the importance of empowering staff to build relationships with students, especially those most at-risk for dropping out. Example strategies mentioned included increasing opportunities for more **one-on-one interactions** with students and establishing programs with a **mentorship model**.
- **Dedicated program staff and teams** – The importance of having staff and teams dedicated to program implementation (e.g., graduation coaches, counselors, teachers) was highlighted a lot. Staff and teams focused on continuously **identifying at-risk students, connecting with students, providing students with available services or support**, and **assisting students with staying on track** to graduate or complete their education.

---

*“On Track to Graduate teams that include an administrator, counselor, and the student was an individualized and supportive way to help students along their graduation pathways when they were struggling. Administrators involved focused more on holding students accountable, while counselors were focused on what supports were needed to make a student more successful.”*

– Submitted by a Funded School in the Metro Area

---

- **Collaboration and integrating programming** – Grantees mentioned the need to integrate programming into the existing school programs and systems. One effective strategy mentioned was **engaging and collaborating with nonprogram staff** (e.g., within MTSS teams) and leadership in program development and implementation.
- **Focus beyond the diploma** – Grantees tied program success to supporting and providing resources to help students explore **postsecondary options** and providing students with knowledge and skills needed to succeed in their **career pathways**.
- **Community partnerships** – Community engagement refers to partnerships shared between schools, families, and communities to support the social, emotional, and educational development of youth. Many grantees mentioned the critical need to build partnerships with **community service providers, businesses, and higher education institutions** to help enrich and expand services for students during in and out of school time.

---

*“...Because our school is such a small school with such a small staff, elective and extracurricular offerings can be a challenge. Since these are crucial to student engagement, we have created partnerships with external organizations to create these offerings, which has had significant impact on student engagement and success. These include a chess group, engagement groups and alliances. One partner hosts internships as well as apprenticeships, and they also provide mentors from their staff. This partnership has been successful and there are now several students involved in internships and apprenticeships...”*

– Submitted by a Funded School in an Outlying Town

---



## Implementation Challenges

- **Systemic or environmental factors** – Grantees reported that external factors sometimes impacted programs, such as *caring for siblings or children, work schedule, limited transportation, and health and mental health issues*.
- **Low student engagement** – Grantees mentioned that students continued to struggle due to *negative attitudes towards school, lack of motivation, and low attendance patterns*. These attitudes and behavioral patterns were engrained and even multigenerational, which was difficult to change with a brief program.
- **Limited resources** – Although grant funds provided much needed resources to schools, grantees reported still struggling with *staffing challenges* to provide accommodations and personal instruction to students based on individualized student needs, as well as, limited resources related to *technology, space, and data systems* needed for implementation. Grantees also mentioned *taxed existing systems* when enrollment and demand for programming increased.

---

*“The only barrier the program faced was staffing...The only full-time staff member for the program was a school social worker... It remains difficult to provide services to students who have IEPs, 504s, behavior plans, etc. with our current staffing.”*

– Submitted by a Funded School in a Suburban Setting

---

## Student Outcomes

In addition to tracking progress on grant performance objectives, the effectiveness of the program is determined by annual aggregated reporting of student outcomes.

### Dropout Prevention

Grantees reported a downward trend in the percentage of served students dropping out of school. In 2016-2017, grantees reported that 8.4 percent of students served (309 students) dropped out compared to 8.0 percent (380 students) in 2017-2018 and 4.5 percent (240 students) in 2018-2019.

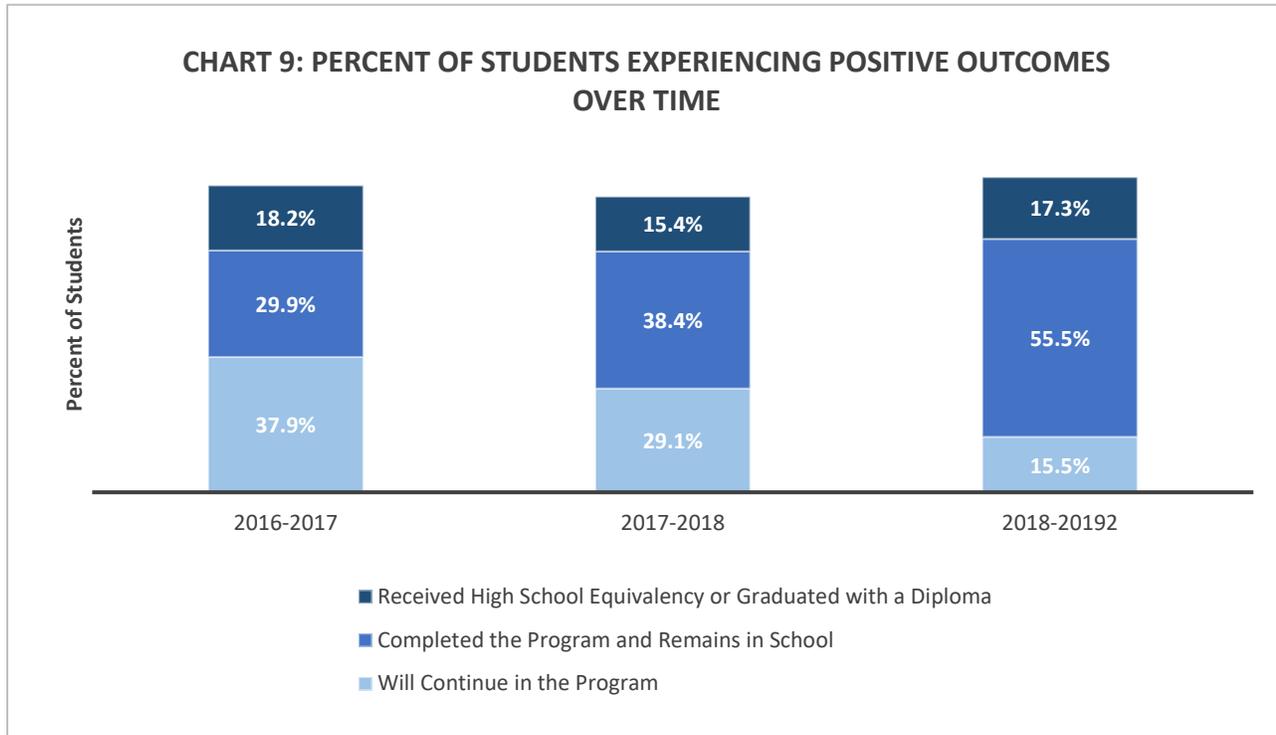
### Positive Student Outcomes

Overall, grantees reported an overall increase in positive outcomes from 2016-2017 (86.0 percent of students) to 2018-2019 (88.3 percent of students) and a slight decrease in 2017-2018 (82.9 percent of students). Examples of positive outcomes included school completion, persistence in their education, and continuing services to overcome education barriers. By the end of the grant, all grantees reported positive outcomes for more than 70 percent of students served. Over time, 194 students served by the program received their high school equivalency diploma, and 2,138 students graduated with a high school diploma. Future evaluations will continue to track outcomes of students served beyond the awarded years using student SASIDs data annually reported to the CDE.

4 out of 5

STUDENTS EXPERIENCE  
POSITIVE OUTCOMES

**CHART 9** breaks down positive outcomes over the course of three years.



**Source:** Colorado Department of Education, SRG End-of-Year Report from 2016-2017, 2017-2018, and 2018-2019.

### Student Success Story

Submitted by a Funded School in Metro Area

*“One of our students began her senior year with us significantly behind in credit. However, she was able to graduate on time as a result of several opportunities offered to her via the program. ... She was able to earn 9 credits in one year in order to graduate. She did this by taking her core classes with us via [a video-based curriculum] which allowed her to move at her own pace and onto a new course each time she completed one. She also participated in our program that focuses on social and emotional wellness to earn elective credits. With workplace experience credit and also her participation in our bi-weekly workshops and new mentoring program she received all of her necessary elective credits. As an added bonus to receiving some elective credit for mentoring elementary school children, this graduate gained confidence and positive leadership skills. The growth and maturity that we all witnessed in this student will definitely carry over into her future.”*



## School Outcomes

CDE annually collects and publishes disaggregated data at the school, district, and state level. The following section takes a closer look at data reported to the state by schools funded by the grant from 2016-2017 to 2018-2019. See [Appendix A: Useful Definitions](#) for the definitions of the rates listed below. **Note:** The following results include data for all students enrolled at funded schools. SRG programs only served 30 percent of enrolled students at funded schools, on average.

### Attendance and Truancy Rates

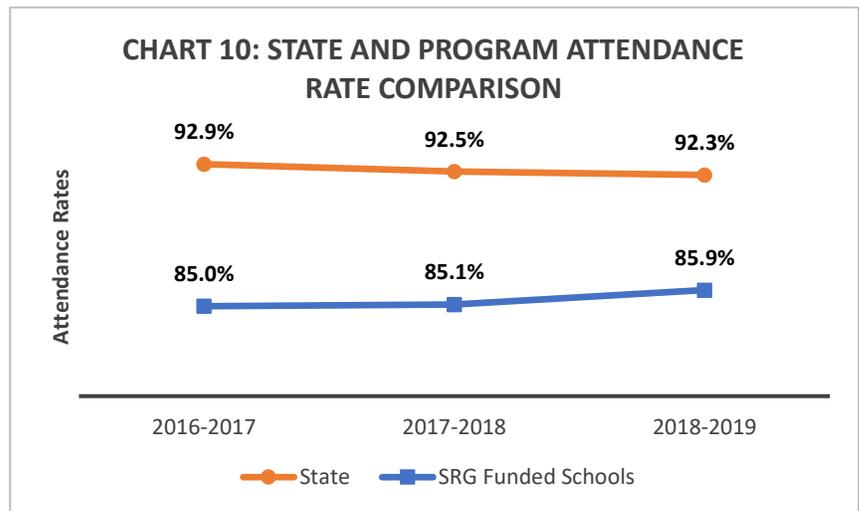
In general, funded schools reported lower attendance rates and higher truancy rates compared to the state rates. Grantees commonly report that low attendance is a significant risk factor at funded schools and with students served by the program.

Overall, Colorado attendance rates decreased slightly from 2016-2017 to 2018-2019 (a 0.6 percentage point decrease). In comparison, a 0.9 percentage point increase in attendance rate was seen for funded schools.

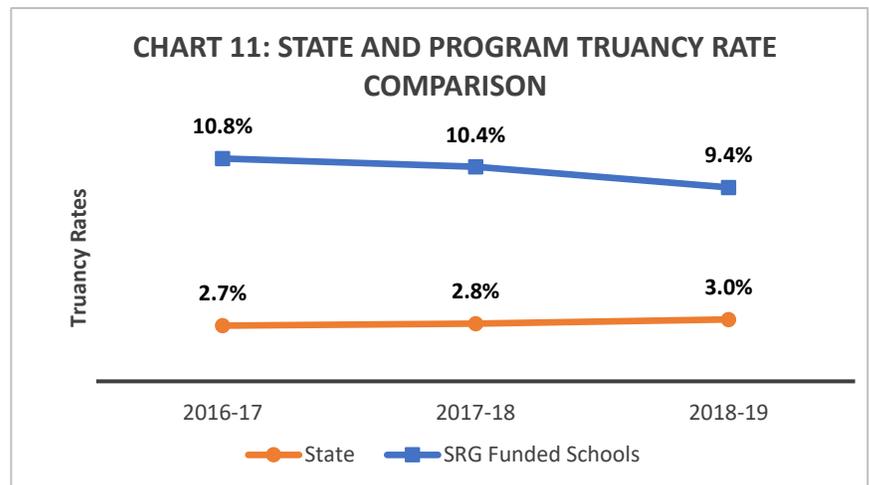
**CHART 10** compares the attendance rates for the state and funded schools.

As the truancy rate for the state increased between 2016-2017 and 2018-2019 (a 0.3 percentage point increase), funded schools experienced a decrease in truancy rates by a 1.4 percentage point.

**CHART 11** highlights the truancy rates for the state and funded schools.



Source: Colorado Department of Education, 2016-2017 to 2018-2019 Attendance Collection  
Note: Only Funded schools with three years of data were included (N=31)



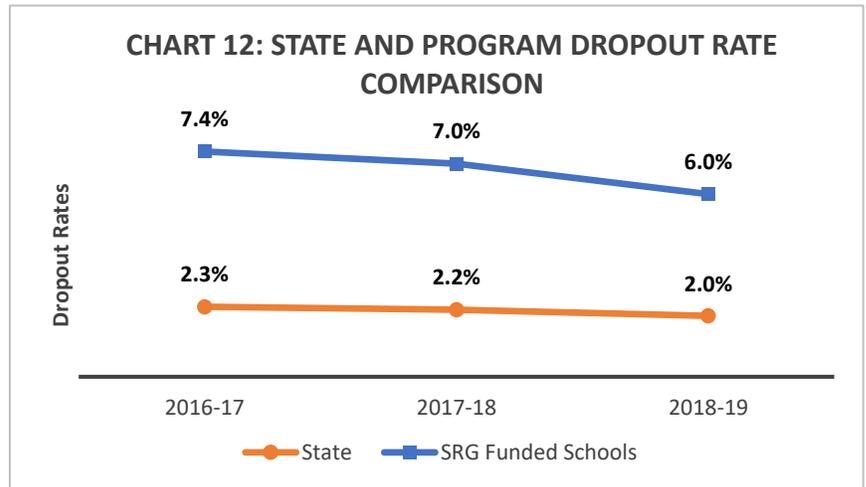
Source: Colorado Department of Education, 2016-2017 to 2018-2019 Attendance Collection  
Note: Only Funded schools with three years of data were included (N=31)



### Dropout Rates

In general, funded schools reported a higher dropout rate compared to the state rates. Grantees reported that funded schools significantly struggle with issues tied to low school attendance, course failure, and disciplinary actions, which are predictive of dropping out of school.

Overall, Colorado dropout rates decreased by a 0.3 percentage point between 2016-2017 and 2018-2019. In comparison, the dropout rates at funded schools decreased by a 1.4 percentage point. This equates to 230 additional students who remained in school.



Source: Colorado Department of Education, 2016-2017 to 2018-2019 Attendance Collection  
Note: Only Funded schools with three years of data were included (N=31)

**CHART 12** compares the dropout rate for the state and funded schools.

### Graduation and Completion Rates

Between 2016-2017 and 2018-2019, Colorado made the greatest gains in 4-year graduation rate (2.1 percentage points increase). For funded schools, the greatest gains were seen in the 6-year graduation rate (2.9 percentage point increase) and 7-year graduation rate (2.6 percentage point increase). Similar patterns were present for completion rates.

On average, more than half of Colorado 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. Students served by the program typically 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.

**TABLE 1** compares the state 4-year and extended graduation and completion rates to rates reported by funded schools.

#### Student Success Story

Submitted by a Funded School in a Metro Area

*“A student with a history of school suspensions started the 2017-2018 school year as a credit-deficient 12th grader. The student participated in grant funded credit recovery and received restorative training as a member of the alternative to suspension program. To the school and parents' surprise and delight, the student was given an opportunity to be a positive leader in the school and graduated on-time in May.”*

TABLE 1. COMPARISON OF STATE AND PROGRAM GRADUATION AND COMPLETION RATES						
Year	Graduation Rates			Completion Rates		
	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
4-Year Rates	State: 79.0% SRG: 58.5%	State: 80.7% SRG: 60.5%	State: 81.1% SRG: 58.6%	State: 80.8% SRG: 61.3%	State: 82.5% SRG: 63.5%	State: 82.9% SRG: 63.6%
5-Year Rates	State: 84.1% SRG: 67.7%	State: 84.2% SRG: 67.1%	State: 84.9% SRG: 67.9%	State: 86.1% SRG: 71.5%	State: 86.5% SRG: 71.1%	State: 87.2% SRG: 72.0%
6-Year Rates	State: 84.9% SRG: 67.2%	State: 85.6% SRG: 70.3%	State: 85.7% SRG: 70.1%	State: 87.5% SRG: 72.1%	State: 88.0% SRG: 74.7%	State: 88.3% SRG: 75.0%
7-Year Rates	State: 85.3% SRG: 69.0%	State: 85.6% SRG: 68.7%	State: 86.4% SRG: 71.6%	State: 88.3% SRG: 75.0%	State: 88.4% SRG: 74.0%	State: 89.1% SRG: 76.7%

**Source:** Colorado Department of Education, 2016-2017 to 2018-2019 Student End-of-Year Snapshot Collection  
**Note:** Only funded schools with three years of data were included (N=33). The rates depicted are annual rates and not cohort rates.

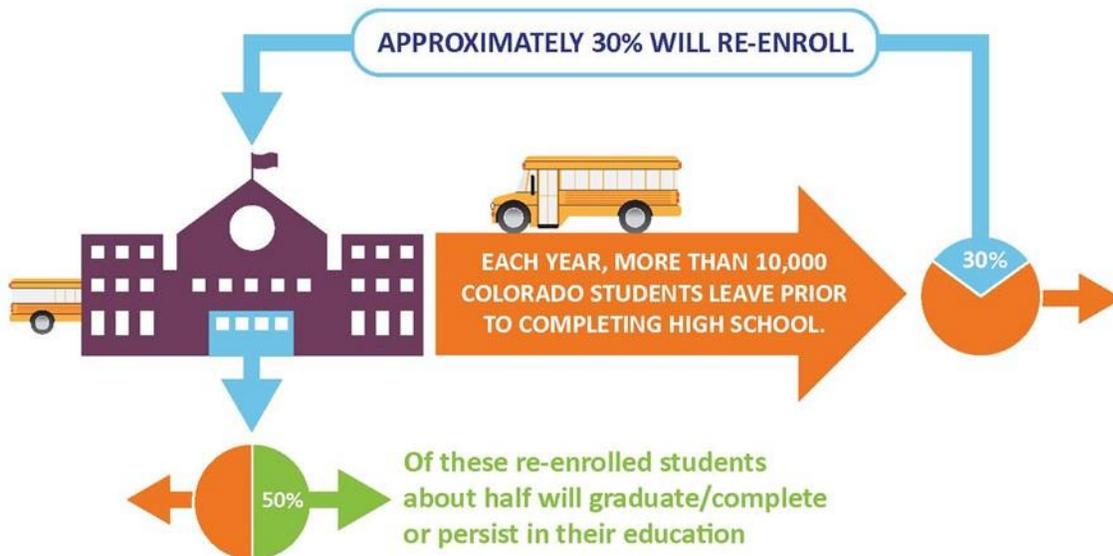
### Re-Engagement Rates

Each year, more than 10,000 Colorado students leave school prior to completing high 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.

The re-engagement rates for students served by funded schools gradually increased over time.

- 43.2 percent in 2016-2017.
- 57.2 percent in 2017-2018.
- 66.6 percent in 2018-2019.

Rates for funded schools for 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 were higher than the estimated 50 percent re-engagement rate for the state.





---

## Leveraging Resources and Sustaining Strategies

---

### **Actions Taken Toward Sustainability**

Grantees were asked to report what actions were taken to sustain their program. All 10 grantees reported implementing at least one sustainability strategy by the end of the grant. Across all grantees, the most common actions were as follows:

- Seven out of 10 grantees shared program results with district administrators.
- Six out of 10 grantees reported being able to budget for continued supports.
- Five out of 10 grantees reported that they applied for grants.
- Five out of 10 grantees reported that they recaptured per pupil revenue to re-reinvest in the SRG-funded strategies.

---

*“Increased PPR from re-engaged students will support sustained efforts that began through the re-engagement grant funding. Additionally, our general budget will absorb sustainability costs. Our school board will continue to work on partnering with the community...”*

– Submitted by a Funded School in an Outlying City Setting

---

### **Sustainability Planning**

All grantees were asked to include a plan on how they would prepare to sustain their program as part of their proposal for funding. In their proposal, applicants explain how services and programs will continue past the 3-year funding period. On average, grantees report beginning sustainability efforts in the first year of their grant with sustainability efforts increasing in year 2 and 3.

All grantees reported having a clear plan in place to sustain programming beyond the grant. The strategy cited most often by grantees for successful program sustainability was continuing to develop and maintain strong community partnership. Future evaluations will focus on determining whether programs are sustained beyond the awarded years.



---

## Conclusion

---

Between 2016-2017 and 2018-2019, 10 grantees reported serving more than 10,000 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade students through the Student Re-engagement Grant Program. Students were primarily served due to course failure, low attendance, and insufficient credit accrual. An average of 12 percent of students served each year were retrieved out-of-school youth.

Grantees used several methods and tactics highlighted in the Colorado Dropout Prevention Framework to serve students. Common methods and tactics include data analysis for student identification, enhanced counseling, mentoring, course completion, and credit recovery.

By the final year of grant funding, most grantees reported meeting or making progress in meeting their performance objectives in academic achievement, engagement, and re-engagement. Seven out of 10 grantees showed significant improvement when comparing their ratings over time.

Program results showed that more than four out of five students served by the program were able to make progress towards educational success (e.g., continuation of education or supports and school completion) each year. Over time, 2,332 students completed or graduated with the assistance of the SRG program. Funded schools also reported increases in overall attendance and re-engagement rates as well as decreases in truancy and dropout rates from 2016-2017 to 2018-2019. These results confirm the effectiveness of the SRG program at implementing strategies and services and improving student outcomes.



## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Alliance for Excellent Education. (2017) *The Graduation Effect: Every Student Potential to Impact a Community*. Retrieved from <http://impact.all4ed.org/Infographics/State/CO-GradEffect-Infographic-FINAL.PDF>.

<sup>2</sup> Alliance for Excellent Education. (2013) Colorado High Schools. Retrieved from [https://mk0all4edorgjxiy8xf9.kinstacdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Colorado\\_hs.pdf](https://mk0all4edorgjxiy8xf9.kinstacdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Colorado_hs.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Colorado Department of Education (2019). Retrieved from <https://www.cde.state.co.us/dropoutprevention/2019statepolicyreportondropoutpreventionandstudentengagement>



## Appendices

---

### Appendix A: Definitions

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

**Attendance Rates:** The rate indicates the percent of full or partial days possible to attend that students were present. It is calculated by dividing the total days attended by the number of total days possible to attend. The “total days possible” is the sum of Total Days Attended, Total Days Excused Absent, and the Total Days Unexcused Absent. For more information, please visit: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/truancystatistics>

**Average Pupil Membership:** This rate indicates the average percentage of student per demographic category between 2016-2017 to 2018-2019 reported by districts during the October Count Collection.

**Completion Rates:** The completion rate is also a cohort-based rate which includes the number of students who graduate plus those who receive a high school equivalency certificate 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. For more information, please visit: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/gradratecurrent>.

**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.

**Dropout Rate:** The Colorado dropout rate is 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. It is calculated by dividing the number of dropouts by a membership base which includes all students who were in membership any time during the year. For more information, please visit: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/dropoutcurrent>

**Free/Reduced Lunch:** Student meets the eligibility criteria for free or reduced lunch pursuant to the provisions of the "Federal National School Lunch Act". Eligibility may be documented using one of the following methods: Direct Certification, Application for Free and Reduced-Price Meals, District migrant, homeless, runaway, or foster lists, Head Start documented participation, and Family Economic Data Survey form. This rate includes the number of students identified as qualifying for free/reduced lunch by the enrollment count. For more information, please visit: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/pupilcurrent>

**Graduation Rates:** The graduation rate is a cohort rate. When a student completes eighth grade, an Anticipated Year of Graduation (AYG) is assigned; giving the year the student should graduate if the student follows a four-year trajectory. High school students with the same AYG are treated as a self-contained cohort (graduating class). Regardless of whether it takes four years or up to seven years to graduate, they 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). The four-year graduation rate reflects the percentage of students from a given graduation class who receive a diploma within four years of completing eighth grade. Students who graduate in the following year are then added to the numerator and the five-year graduation rate



is calculated. Students graduating who need two years or three years past their AYG to successfully graduate are added to the numerator for the six-year or seven-year graduation rates. For more information, please visit: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/gradratecurrent>.

**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.

**Out-of-School Youth:** Includes students who have exited as a dropout or those who are classified as “opportunity youth”, which refers to those who are out of school.

**Pupil Membership:** Number of students enrolled at a school or district as reported in the October Count Collection. For more information, visit: [https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdefinance/auditunit\\_pupilmount](https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdefinance/auditunit_pupilmount)

**SRG Funded School:** Schools who received funding and participated in Cohort 1 of the grant. Note that not all students enrolled students at funded schools participated in the SRG program. The purpose of the grant was to serve students most at risk for dropping out of school.

**Student-Level Data:** State Assigned Student Identifiers (SASIDs) for all students served by SRG submitted by grantees using the Student Engagement Evaluation System (SEES).

**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](http://www.sos.state.co.us/CCR/GenerateRulePdf.do?ruleVersionId=3542).

**Truancy Rates:** The rate indicates the percent of full or partial days possible to attend that students were absent without an excuse. It is calculated by dividing the total days unexcused absent by the number of total days possible to attend. The “total days possible” is the sum of Total Days Attended, Total Days Excused Absent, and the Total Days Unexcused Absent. For more information, please visit: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/truancystatistics>



**Appendix B: Funded SRG Grantees**

Grantee/LEA	School Name	Years of Funding between 2016-17 and 2018-19	Funds Used to Implement Programming
Boulder Valley School District RE-2	Arapahoe Ridge High School (Engage)	2016-17 to 2018-19	\$696,503
	Boulder Universal Online School	2016-17 to 2018-19	
	Boulder Prep Charter High School	2016-17 to 2018-19	
	Halcyon Middle-Senior HS	2016-17 to 2018-19	
	Justice Charter High School	2016-17 to 2018-19	
Charter School Institute	New America School - Thornton	2016-17 to 2018-19	\$915,290
	New America School - Lowry	2016-17 to 2018-19	
	New America School - Lakewood	2016-17 to 2018-19	
Delta County School District 50J	Grand Mesa Choice Academy	2016-17 to 2018-19	\$196,057
Denver Public Schools	Abraham Lincoln High School	2016-17 to 2018-19	\$1,055,932
	Collegiate Prep Academy	2016-17 to 2018-19	
	High Tech Early College	2016-17 to 2018-19	
	Manual High School	2016-17 to 2018-19	
	North High School Engagement Center	2016-17 to 2018-19	
	South High School	2016-17 to 2018-19	
	DELTA High School	2016-17 to 2018-19	
Jefferson County Public School District	Alameda International High School	2016-17 to 2018-19	\$1,482,585
	Brady Exploration High School	2016-17 to 2018-19	
	Jeffco 21st Century Virtual Academy	2016-17 to 2018-19	
	Jefferson Jr/Sr High School	2016-17 to 2018-19	
	Sobesky Academy	2016-17 to 2018-19	
Mapleton School District	Mapleton Expeditionary School	2016-17 to 2018-19	\$595,825
	Mapleton Early College	2016-17 to 2018-19	
	Academy High School	2016-17 to 2018-19	
	York International School	2016-17 to 2018-19	
	North Valley Young Adult School	2016-17 to 2018-19	
Monte Vista School District	Byron Syring DELTA Center	2016-17 to 2018-19	\$185,418
	Online Academy	2016-17 to 2018-19	
Montrose County School District RE-1J	Vista Charter School	2016-17 to 2018-19	\$338,900
	Passage Charter	2016-17 (School Closed)	
Poudre School District	Poudre High School	2016-17 to 2018-19	\$782,157
	Poudre Community Academy	2016-17 to 2018-19	
	PSD Global Academy	2016-17 to 2018-19	
School District 27J	Brighton Heritage Academy	2016-17 to 2018-19	\$329,656
	BOLT Academy	2016-17 (Funding Reallocated)	



## Appendix C: Evaluation Methodology

**Programmatic Data Collection and Analysis:** The results reported in this document reflect data collected at the end of each school year for services implemented and students served from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2019. Evaluation data were collected from all 10 grantees funded by the CDE grant. Grantees were responsible for submitting an annual end-of-year survey to CDE using Qualtrics, a survey platform. As part of this requirement, grantees securely submit State Assigned Student Identifiers (SASIDs) for all students served by SRG using the Student Engagement Evaluation System (SEES).

In effort to prepare grantees for their end-of-year survey, two webinars were conducted to provide grantees the necessary preparation and tools to successfully collect and submit the required data. Throughout the reporting period, SEDP staff were available to assist with problems with questions and concerns.

The data were downloaded from SEES and Qualtrics in Excel and SPSS by CDE staff and were then used to facilitate the statistical analyses of processes and outcomes. Several strategies supported the assurance of accurate year-end reporting. CDE staff conducted mathematical operations to correctly calculate and tabulate the data. The student-level data reported by the participating SRG districts was validated using available data linked to SASIDs. CDE staff analyzed the data for any irregularities, and grantees were contacted if clarification and revisions were needed. CDE staff conducted quantitative (i.e., descriptive statistics and inferential statistics) and qualitative analyses (i.e., thematic analysis). For quantitative analyses, statistical significance was set at  $p < .01$ . When appropriate, inferential analyses included an investigation of statistical differences.

**Analysis of Secondary Data Sources:** Additional disaggregated data collected by CDE at the school, district, and state level (e.g., assessment results, graduation rates, dropout rates, and completion rates) were also used in this report. Data from schools and students served by the SRG program were isolated and compared to state level data. The CDE custodians of these data verified the data presented in this report for accuracy. For more information about data collected by the CDE, visit the [CDE Data Collections webpage](#).