



H.B. 11-1254

School Bullying Prevention and Education Grant 2021 Annual Report

Submitted to:

Colorado State Board of Education and House and Senate Education Committees of the Colorado General Assembly

By:

The Colorado Department of Education

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Introduction and Background

The School Bullying and Prevention Education Grant (BPEG) program was created in 2011 when the Colorado General Assembly passed House Bill 11-1254. The grant program was funded in 2015 through the passage of Proposition BB, the Colorado Marijuana Tax Payer Bill of Rights Refund Measure. Originally this funding provided \$2 million each year for the BPEG program to support Colorado schools in their efforts to prevent bullying. Since the inception of the program, over \$9.3 million has been distributed to schools to support bullying prevention education across the state.

The goal of the BPEG program is to reduce bullying in Colorado schools. Grantees are authorized to use funding from the program in accordance with Colorado State Board of Education rules to:

- (a) implement evidence-based best practices for preventing bullying;
- (b) ensure sustainability of the bullying prevention efforts over time;
- (c) include families and the community in bullying prevention efforts;
- (d) include student leadership and voice in bullying prevention efforts;
- (e) adopt policies concerning bullying education and prevention;
- (f) survey students on their experiences with bullying; and
- (g) determine the degree to which evidence-based best practices were implemented with fidelity.

To date, the BPEG has funded two cohorts of grants to local education agencies (LEAs). This first cohort spanned 71 schools and 14 school districts and the Charter School Institute from 2016 to 2019. Five of the eight education regions across the state were represented, impacting approximately 34,000 students each year. By the end of the three-year grant cycle, schools in Cohort 1 of the BPEG program significantly increased their implementation of bullying prevention best practices by 47 percent. This led to an overall 33 percent reduction in student-reported bullying and 17 percent reduction in student-reported witnessing of bullying. Beginning with the 2019-20 school year, the second cohort of grantees was funded by the BPEG program. This cohort is in its second year of implementation and will continue with the grant through the end of the 2021-22 school year.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted both school wide implementation and state level support. The absence of in person learning in the spring of 2020 constrained the ability for school leaders to administer the annual student perceptions of bullying survey to measure the outcomes of bullying prevention and education activities. At the state level, the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the state budget led to a 50 percent reduction in BPEG program funding for the 2020-21 school year. This immediately resulted in an across-the-board funding reduction for schools and districts in the grant combined with a reduction in technical assistance support from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). These issues will be further explored in the final section of the report.

Grant Activities

Grantees engage in many activities through the implementation of the BPEG program. These activities are organized by bullying prevention best practice components. These components include:

- (1) bullying prevention committee;
- (2) climate and culture;
- (3) evidence-based curriculum;
- (4) surveys and data;
- (5) family, school, and community partnering (FSCP);



- (6) student voice; and
- (7) policy.

The CDE Statewide Bullying Prevention Manager leads the technical assistance provided to grantees across all seven of the bullying prevention best practice components. Resources are developed on a regular basis to provide asynchronous training on the basics of bullying prevention, access to up-to-date research, and clarity on grant requirements. Additionally, the Statewide Bullying Prevention Manager presents quarterly live webinars for BPEG program grantees. These webinars serve to provide grantees with the opportunity to learn from their peers, receive updates about the grant, and obtain focused training on specific bullying topics. All webinars are recorded and posted on the CDE website.

Each participating school has an implementation team that meets monthly to lead the school's bullying prevention work. This team is encouraged to include not only a diverse range of staff, but family members, students, and community members as well. Throughout the year, staff deliver a self-selected, evidence-based, bullying prevention curriculum. These curricula are in addition to implementing activities that improve the overall climate and culture in the school.

Grant Implementation

Current Grantees

The current cohort of BPEG program grantees represent the second three-year grant cycle. These grantees were selected through a competitive application process in the fall of 2018 and began implementation of the grant in the fall of 2019. Local education agencies were able to apply on behalf of a group of schools. Each school was eligible to receive a maximum of \$25,000 per year with a cap of \$200,000 set for each grant application. Grantees new to the BPEG program also received up to \$1,000 in 2019-2019 to conduct a baseline survey on the prevalence of bullying. In total, 22 grantees representing 20 LEAs and 109 schools were accepted into the BPEG program for Cohort 2. This represents an increase of 48 percent in the number of grantees and 54 percent in the number of schools receiving services compared to Cohort 1. Table 1 shows the Cohort 2 funding amounts across all three years of the grant cycle with updates for fiscal years 2021 and 2022 representing the reductions in funding due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The assumption is for fiscal year 2022 funding to remain the same as fiscal year 2021.



TABLE 1: Average Funding for Grantees Participating in Cohort 2¹

Grantees	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Total
Boulder Valley Re 2	\$0	\$75,000	\$38,250	\$38,250	\$151,500
Center 26 JT	\$1,000	\$75,000	\$38,250	\$38,250	\$152,500
Charter School Institute	\$999	\$75,000	\$38,250	\$38,250	\$152,499
Denver County 1	\$2,000	\$150,000	\$76,500	\$76,500	\$305,000
Greeley 6	\$1,000	\$125,000	\$63,750	\$63,750	\$253,500
Lamar RE- 2	\$0	\$123,435	\$57,801	\$57,801	\$239,037
Mapleton 1	\$0	\$200,000	\$102,000	\$102,000	\$404,000
McClave Re-2	\$1,000	\$49,925	\$25,220	\$25,220	\$101,365
Monte Vista C-8	\$888	\$61,481	\$23,553	\$23,553	\$109,475
Montrose County RE-1J	\$10,000	\$200,000	\$102,000	\$102,000	\$414,000
Mountain Valley RE 1	\$1,000	\$25,000	\$12,750	\$12,750	\$51,500
Omar D Blair Charter School	\$1,000	\$25,000	\$12,750	\$12,750	\$51,500
Poudre R-1	\$1,000	\$200,000	\$102,000	\$102,000	\$405,000
Pueblo City 60	\$3,396	\$200,000	\$102,000	\$102,000	\$407,396
Ricardo Flores Magon Academy	\$1,000	\$25,000	\$12,750	\$12,750	\$51,500
Sheridan 2	\$0	\$25,000	\$12,750	\$12,750	\$50,500
South Central BOCES	\$6,000	\$75,000	\$38,250	\$38,250	\$157,500
South Conejos RE-10	\$1,000	\$74,992	\$38,250	\$38,250	\$152,492
Thompson R2-J	\$0	\$75,000	\$38,250	\$38,250	\$151,500
Weld Re-4	\$1,000	\$25,000	\$12,750	\$12,750	\$51,500
Total	\$32,283	\$1,884,833	\$948,074	\$948,074	\$3,813,264
Average Per Grantees	\$1,467	\$85,674	\$43,094	\$43,094	\$173,330

In Figure 1, a map of school districts participating in the BPEG program as grantees in the 2020-21 school year is shown, representing five of the eight education regions across the state. Those highlighted in blue continued in the BPEG program from Cohort 1 into Cohort 2. Those highlighted in yellow were accepted into the BPEG program in Cohort 2.

¹ Ricardo Flores Magon Academy is authorized by the Charter School Institute but applied as an individual charter school.

Cohort 1 & 2
Districts

Cohort 2
Only Districts

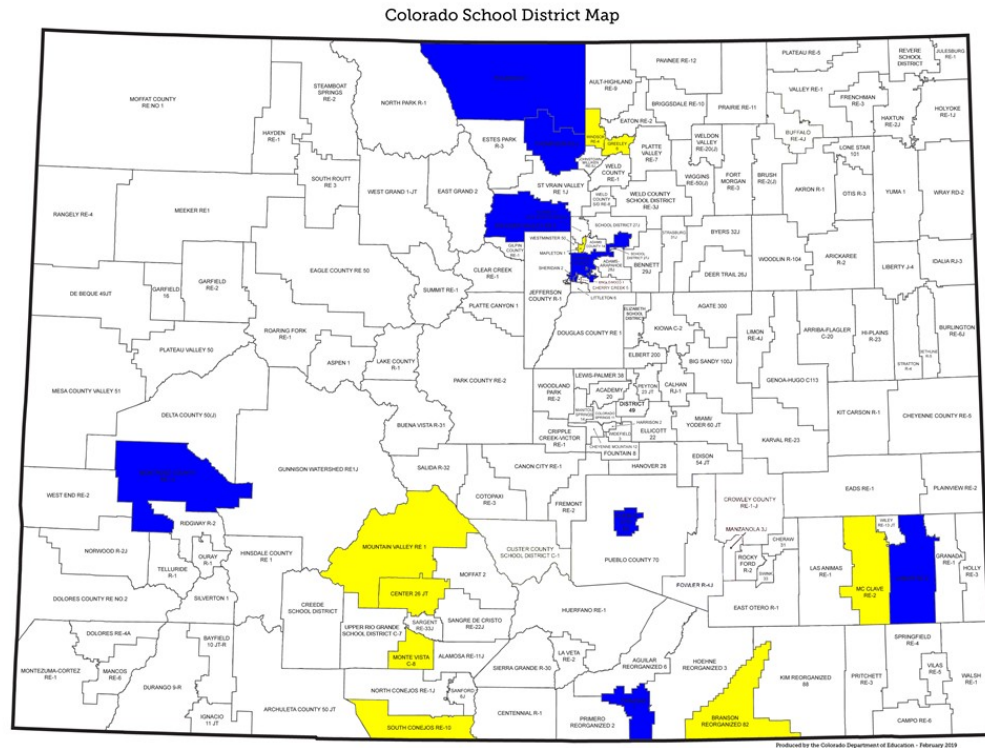


Figure 1. Location of BPEG Program Cohort 2 Grantees in 2020-2021

Table 2 displays the LEAs, schools, and number of students enrolled in the BPEG program for the 2020-21 school year. It should be noted that in the fall of 2020, Custer School District had three schools withdraw from the BPEG while Poudre School District had one. This results in a current total of 105 schools receiving funding from the BPEG program.

Additionally, both Monterey Community School in the Mapleton School District and Eckhart Elementary in the Trinidad School District were closed during the 2020-21 school year due to renovations. Reflecting the reduction in student enrollment in the state more broadly, there was an overall reduction in the number of students enrolled in schools participating in the BPEG program during the 2020-21 school year. In total, there were 3,918 fewer students in BPEG program schools, representing a reduction of nine percent from the previous school year.



TABLE 2: Number of Students in BPEG Program Cohort 2 Schools in the 2020-21 School Year.²

District/School	Students	District/School	Students
Adams 12 Five Star Schools		Cottonwood Elementary School	390
New America School - Thornton	260	Johnson Elementary School	474
Boulder Valley Re 2		Northside Elementary School	335
Alicia Sanchez International School	303	Oak Grove Elementary School	374
Columbine Elementary School	432	Olathe Elementary School	398
Pioneer Bilingual Elementary School	478	Olathe Middle School	222
Center 26 JT		Peak Virtual Academy	204
Center High School	134	Pomona Elementary School	335
Haskin Elementary School	287	Mountain Valley RE 1	
Skoglund Middle School	142	Mountain Valley School	173
Charter School Institute		Poudre R-1	
New America School - Lowry	180	Bacon Elementary School	531
Ricardo Flores Magon Academy	262	Cache La Poudre Middle School	331
Denver County 1		Lesher Middle School	799
Bear Valley International School	468	Preston Middle School	1,048
Eagleton Elementary School	289	Timnath Elementary School	417
Hamilton Middle School	723	Wellington Middle School	531
Highline Academy Northeast	525	Pueblo City 60	
Highline Academy Southeast	521	Belmont Elementary School	419
Merrill Middle School	591	Bessemer Academy School	235
Omar D Blair Charter School	675	Beulah Heights Elementary School	277
Greeley 6		Bradford Elementary School	330
Jackson Elementary School	411	Carlile Elementary School	217
Martinez Elementary School	487	Centennial High School	939
Meeker Elementary School	483	Central High School	836

² The Charter School Institute application included all New America Schools even though two of the New America Schools are authorized by other districts (Adams 12 and Jefferson County). Monterey Community School and Eckhart Elementary were not open in 2020-21.



Monfort Elementary School	463	Columbian Elementary School	322
District/School	Students	District/School	Students
Shawsheen Elementary School	379	Corwin International Magnet School	553
Jefferson County R-1		East High School	924
New America School - Lakewood	122	Eva R. Baca Elementary School	260
Lamar RE-2		Fountain International Magnet School	340
Alta Vista Charter School	131	Franklin School of Innovation	360
Lamar High School	462	Goodnight Elementary School	571
Lamar Middle School	330	Haaff Elementary School	277
Parkview Elementary School	263	Heaton Middle School	761
Washington Elementary School	238	Heritage Elementary School	317
Mapleton 1		Highland Park Elementary School	418
Academy High School	448	Irving Elementary School	309
Achieve Academy	420	Minnequa Elementary School	306
Adventure Elementary	386	Morton Elementary School	368
Big Picture College and Career Academy	113	Paragon Learning Center	269
Clayton Partnership School	532	Park View Elementary School	329
Explore Pk-8	521	Pueblo Charter School for Arts & Sciences	527
Global Intermediate Academy	292	Risley International Academy of Innovation	453
Global Leadership Academy	269	Roncalli STEM Academy	504
Global Primary Academy	269	South High School	961
Mapleton Early College High School	270	South Park Elementary School	343
Mapleton Expeditionary School of the Arts	610	Sunset Park Elementary School	430
Meadow Community School	406	Sheridan 2	
Monterey Community School	N/A	Fort Logan Northgate	511
Trailside Academy	505	South Central BOCES	
Welby Community School	371	Eckhart Elementary School	N/A
York International	972	Trinidad Middle School	232
McClave Re-2		South Conejos RE-10	



McClave Elementary School	113	Antonito High School	44
District/School	Students	District/School	Students
McClave Undivided High School	101	Antonito Middle School	21
Monte Vista C-8		Guadalupe Elementary School	91
Bill Metz Elementary School	380	Thompson R2-J	
Marsh Elementary School	94	Berthoud High School	649
Monte Vista Middle School	232	Cottonwood Plains Elementary School	363
Monte Vista Senior High School	288	High Plains School	503
Montrose County RE-1J		Weld RE-4	
Centennial Middle School	588	Windsor High School	1,116
Columbine Middle School	472	Total	41,938

Table 3 provides the percentage of students attending BPEG program schools who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch as well as the students' gender and race/ethnicity data. More males than females were enrolled in the BPEG program during the 2020-2021 school year, though females increased their representation by one percent compared to the previous year.

Students reporting as Hispanic or Latino (58%) represent the most common racial group receiving services from the BPEG program. This was followed by students identifying as White (34%), Black or African American (3%), and two or more races (3%). Compared to the previous school year, there was an increase in the percentage of students enrolled in BPEG program schools who identify as Hispanic or Latino (+8%) but a decrease in the percentage of students identifying as White (-5%) and Black or African American (-2%). Finally, there was an increase compared to previous years in the percentage of students qualifying for free-and-reduced lunch for the 2020-21 school year. On average, 67 percent of students attending schools in the BPEG program qualified for free or-reduced-price lunch, which is an increase of 5 percent over the previous year.

**TABLE 3: Demographics of Students across BPEG Program Schools for the 2020-21 School Year**

Descriptor	Number	Percentage
Gender		
Female	20,358	49%
Male	21,580	51%
Race/Ethnicity		
American Indian or Alaskan Native	205	<1%
Asian	697	2%
Black or African American	1,413	3%
Hispanic or Latino	24,116	58%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	63	<1%
White	14,379	34%
Two or More Races	1,065	3%
Free or Reduced-Price Lunch		
Percentage of Students Served by the BPEG		67%

Grant Outcomes

The collection and use of data to make decisions is vital to the success of the BPEG program. Schools collect several forms of data including student survey data on the prevalence of bullying and office referral data to inform intervention strategies. Finally, at the school and district level, the implementation team reviews and/or revises school board bullying prevention policy and/or school handbook bullying prevention policy. Many schools use the [Colorado Bullying Prevention and Education Best Practices and Model Policy document](#) that was developed by the CDE in accordance with S.B. 18-151 to support this work.

Grantees submit data each year on their progress in implementing bullying prevention best practices across the seven components identified in the BPEG self-assessment. This assessment was created at the beginning of the BPEG program and provides grantees with a broad understanding of the practices that they can implement as part of a comprehensive approach to bullying prevention. Schools self-report their scores for each item on the BPEG self-assessment. Score options include 0 (Not in Place), 1 (Partially in Place), and 2 (Fully in Place). If a school earns a score of 1 or 2 on the self-assessment, they must also include notes and evidence for each item.

For the following analysis, results from schools that continued from Cohort 1 to Cohort 2 of the BPEG program are separated from those schools that are new to Cohort 2. This allows for a more meaningful comparison of implementation progress that is based on the amount of time schools have been receiving support from the grant. Figure 2 shows the percentage of possible points earned on the BPEG self-assessment by content area in the 2019-20 school year for all Cohort 2 grantees. Due to these being the baseline data for schools new to the

BPEG in Cohort 2, only the earliest administration was included in analyses for this group. These results show that grantees that continued from Cohort 1 implemented a greater percentage of bullying prevention best practices; however, new Cohort 2 grantees earned about half of the points possible on the self-assessment in their first year.

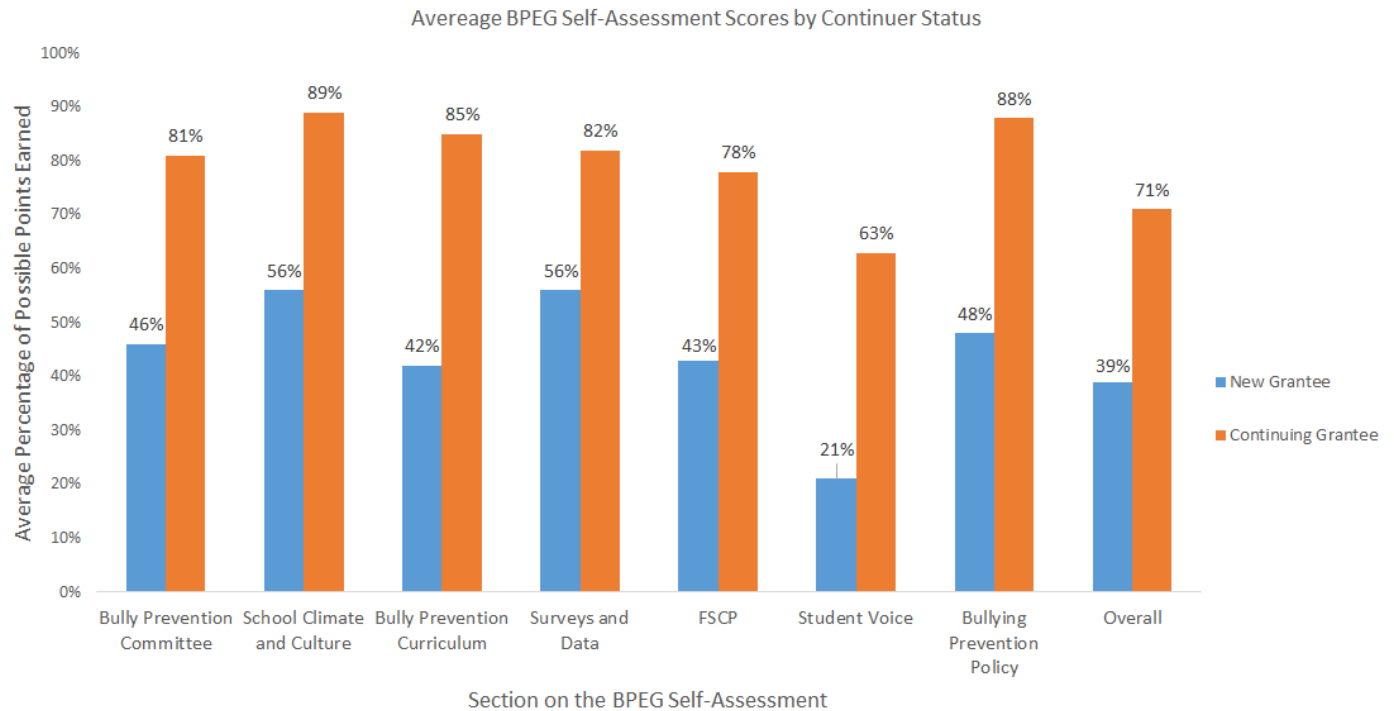


Figure 2. Average BPEG Self-Assessment Scores by Continuer Status

Outcomes for the BPEG program are measured through a student perception survey administered in the spring of each year. Schools may use any survey instrument, including an instrument already in use, so long as the following two questions are included: (1) has the student been the target of bullying in the past year, and (2) has the student witnessed bullying in the past year? As described previously, only 14 of the possible 109 grantees were able to administer a survey of student's perceptions of bullying in the spring of 2020 due to the suspension of in-person learning. Given the low representation of grantees submitting survey results, the data presented here should be interpreted with extreme caution. Figure 3 displays the rate of bullying over time for grantees who were new to the BPEG program in Cohort 2. A total of eight schools out of a possible 58 new Cohort 2 schools submitted data for the 2019-20 school year from this group compared to a total of 55 schools the previous year.

Results indicate that there was a 23-percentage point drop in students reporting being the target of bullying and a 19 percentage point drop in students reporting witnessing bullying from the 2018-19 to the 2019-20 school year. These percentage point drops represent a 51 percent decrease in student-reported bullying and a 37 percent decrease in the witnessing of bullying from the spring of 2019 to the spring of 2020. However, it is important to remember that the 2019-20 data represents a small percentage (14%) of participating schools.

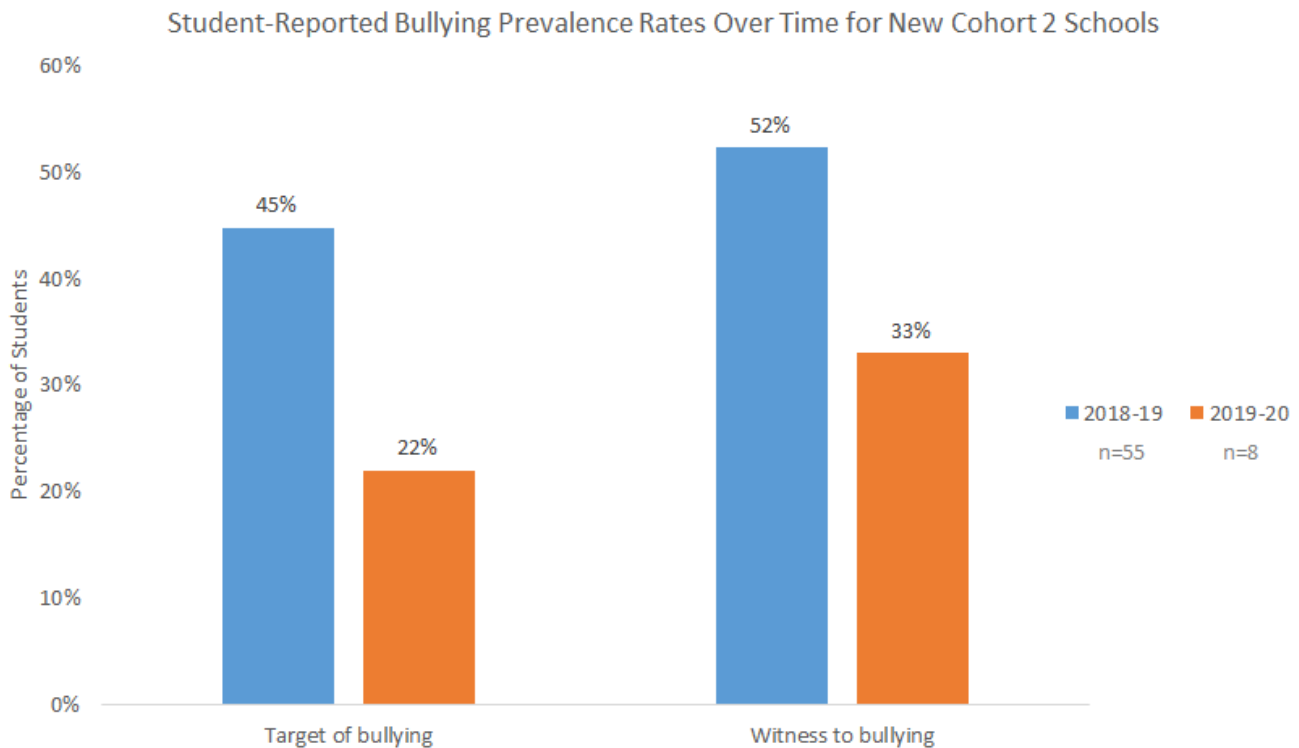


Figure 3. Student-Reported Bullying over Time for New Cohort 2 Schools

Results from those schools continuing from Cohort 1 into Cohort 2 of the BPEG program showed lower reduction. Figure 4 shows data from the six schools (out of 51 total schools) submitting student survey data for the spring of 2020. These data show that there was no change in the percentage of students reporting being the target of bullying, though there was a 12 percentage point drop in students reporting witnessing bullying. This means that students in Cohort 2 continuing schools reported 27 percent less witnessing of bullying from the spring of 2019 to the spring of 2020.

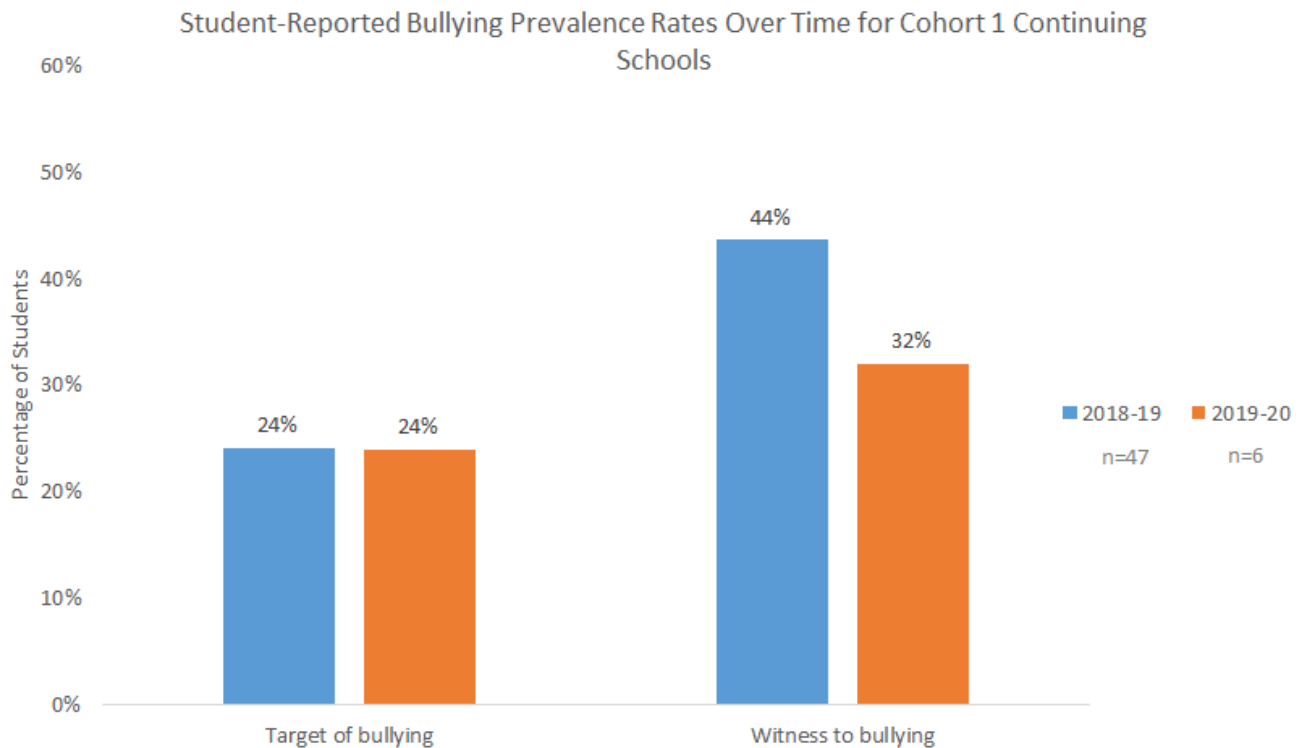


Figure 4. Student-Reported Bullying Prevalence Rates over Time for Cohort 1 Continuing Schools

COVID-19 Pandemic Impact

Due to the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, in July of 2020, funding for the BPEG program was reduced by 50 percent from \$2 million each year to \$1 million for fiscal year 2021. Due to the funding cuts, grantees shifted their bullying prevention and education priorities to include only those costs that are required as part of the grant (e.g., surveying students and purchasing an evidence-based curriculum). One school, Cache La Poudre Elementary School in the Poudre School District, dropped out of the grant program due to the budget cuts. Funding for the CDE administration of the grant was also reduced from 1.0 to .25 FTE.

Table 4 compares the originally approved fiscal year 2021 budget for each LEA participating in Cohort 2 with the amount that was distributed. The difference between these two amounts is also included. Across all three years of the current grant cycle, LEAs are estimated to receive over \$1.8 million less in funding through the BPEG program than was originally budgeted.



TABLE 4: Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on BPEG Funding to Grantees¹

Grantee	2020-21 (Originally Budgeted)	2020-21 (Distributed)
Boulder Valley Re 2	\$75,000	\$38,250
Center 26 JT	\$75,000	\$38,250
Charter School Institute	\$75,000	\$38,250
Denver County 1	\$150,000	\$76,500
Greeley 6	\$125,000	\$63,750
Lamar RE- 2	\$123,435	\$57,801
Mapleton 1	\$200,000	\$102,000
McClave Re-2	\$49,925	\$25,220
Monte Vista C-8	\$61,481	\$23,553
Montrose County RE-1J	\$200,000	\$102,000
Mountain Valley RE 1	\$25,000	\$12,750
Omar D Blair Charter School	\$25,000	\$12,750
Poudre R-1	\$200,000	\$102,000
Pueblo City 60	\$200,000	\$102,000
Ricardo Flores Magon Academy	\$25,000	\$12,750
Sheridan 2	\$25,000	\$12,750
South Central BOCES	\$75,000	\$38,250
South Conejos RE-10	\$74,992	\$38,250
Thompson R2-J	\$75,000	\$38,250
Weld Re-4	\$25,000	\$12,750
Total	\$1,884,833	\$948,074
Average Per LEA	\$85,674	\$43,094

In an effort to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Polis issued an Executive Order (D 2020 007) on March 18, 2020 requiring all public and private schools to suspend in-person instruction for four weeks beginning on March 23, 2020. This Executive Order was later extended through the remainder of the 2019-20 school year. The suspension of in-person learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the implementation of the BPEG program, including administration of the student survey.

All BPEG program grantees are required to survey students during the spring of each year. This ensures that the survey results capture a significant portion of the events that took place during the year. Due to the discontinuation of in-person learning in the spring of 2020, students who would typically be surveyed at school were learning remotely. Moreover, teachers and school staff were inundated with the additional challenges that came with remote learning: modifying lesson plans, learning new technology, and figuring out how to engage students in a virtual environment. All of these factors led to the majority of schools not being able to survey their students' perception of bullying experiences in the spring of 2020. Of the 109 schools in the BPEG program, only 14 submitted survey results. As a result, all outcome data for the 2019-20 school year should be interpreted with extreme caution.

Most grantees were able to complete the BPEG self-assessment. As illustrated in Figure 5, of the 109 schools in the BPEG program during the spring of 2020, 95 (87 percent) completed the BPEG self-assessment. Since the beginning of the grant program, an average of 90 percent of grantee schools complete the BPEG self-assessment each year.

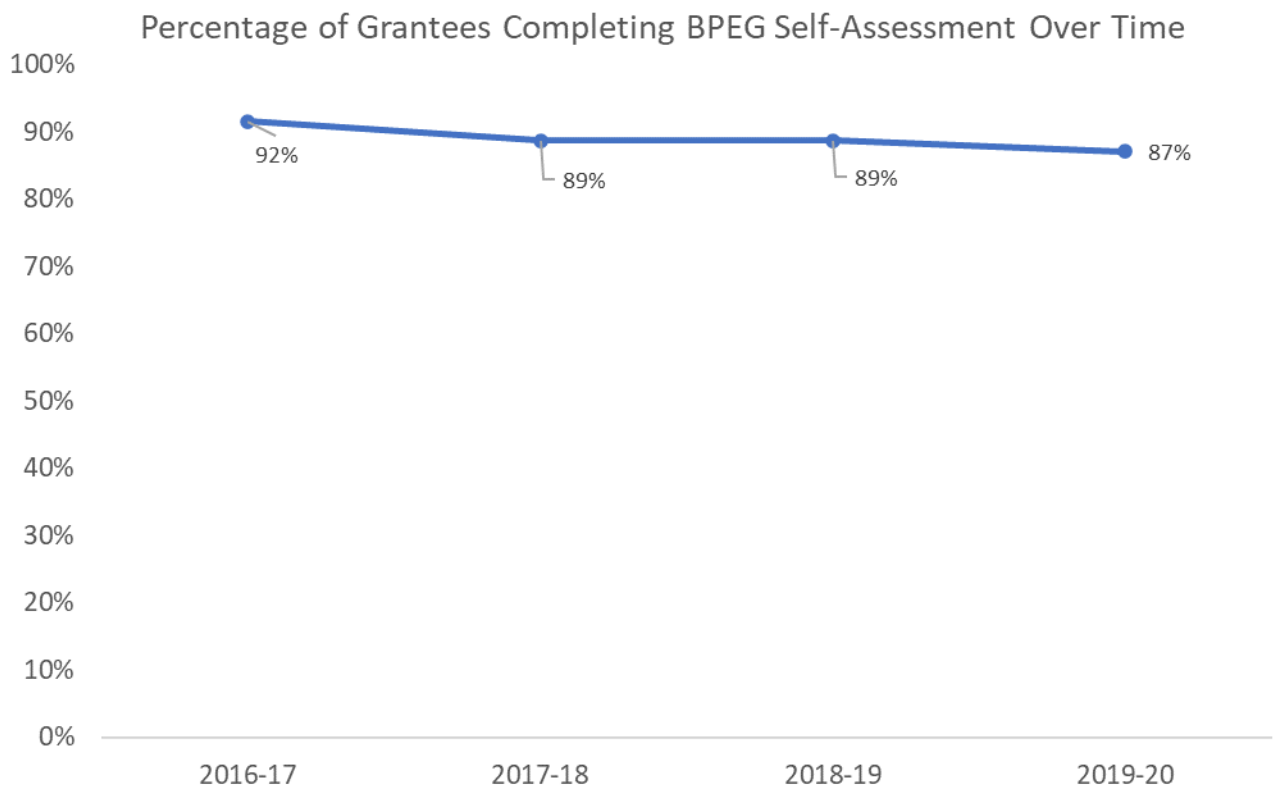


Figure 5. Percentage of Grantees Completing the BPEG Self-Assessment over Time

Examining the percentage of total possible points earned on the BPEG self-assessment does show some regression for grantees. Figure 6 shows that schools that have continuously been in the grant since the 2016-17 school year reported an 11 percent drop in implementation of bullying prevention best practices for the 2019-20 school year. This is the first time a decrease has occurred in best practice implementation since data have been collected.

Looking forward to the 2021-22 school year, many BPEG program schools may continue to provide education in a remote or hybrid learning environment. Thus, some limitations to data collection and the validity of data are

expected to continue. For example, the administrators of a commonly used survey have stated that students who are learning remotely will not have access to the survey due to privacy concerns and lack of support from school staff. Potential solutions are already underway for addressing these barriers such as surveying students with shorter measures and modifying existing district-level climate surveys to include the BPEG program required questions. It is anticipated that a much larger percentage of grantees will administer the student bullying perception survey in the spring of 2021 compared to the spring of 2020.

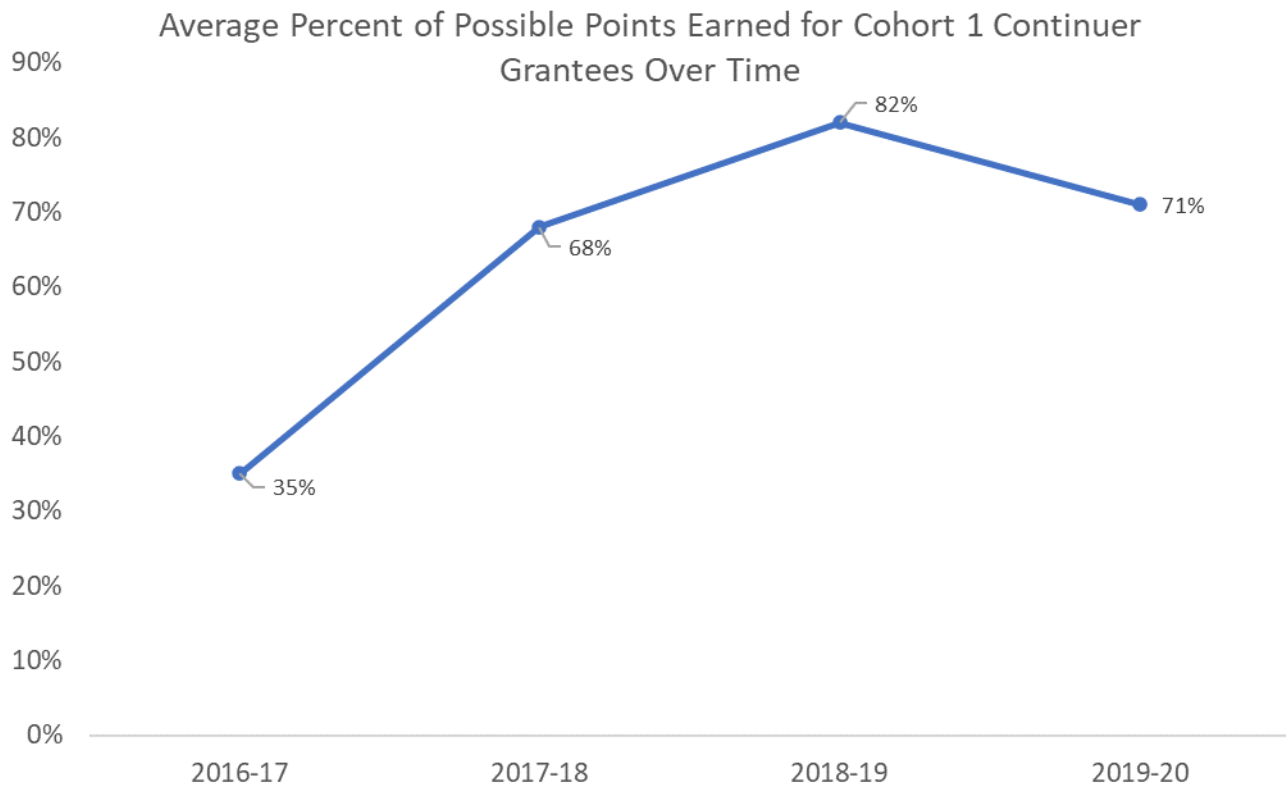


Figure 6. Average Percent of Possible Points Earned for Cohort 1 Continuer Grantees over Time

Conclusion

The BPEG program is currently in the middle of its second grant cycle and continues to see positive outcomes for the students of Colorado. The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent discontinuation of in-person learning had a significant impact on the grant program. The fact that many of the required grant activities were still administered speaks to the dedication and perseverance of Colorado educators. Although the number of sites submitting student survey data was very limited, based on the data reported, overall bullying rates decreased for the fourth consecutive year of the BPEG program. Looking forward, CDE anticipates a significant improvement in grantee administration of grant activities as the pandemic subsides. Additionally, a larger percentage of schools are anticipated to report improvement in rates of bullying in the spring of 2021 with students returning to in-person learning more frequently.