



Strategic Policy Initiatives

The Department of Education has identified several strategic policy initiatives for FY 2023-24. For this performance evaluation, the Department has updated progress on the initiatives identified in the FY2024 Performance Plan that capture the Department's strategic and operational priorities, and reflect the overall direction as identified by Department leadership. The updates reflect data as of November 1, 2024. Additional detail for these, and other, strategic policy initiatives is available in the [Department's Performance Plan](#). A new Performance Plan for 2024-25 is being developed with different strategic initiatives, measures and goals and will be available in the coming months.

Key Initiative 1: Strong Foundations. Support high quality early learning and literacy for all students.

Research shows that proficiency in reading by the end of third grade enables students to make the shift from learning how to read to using reading skills to master other subjects. In fact, students who cannot read by the end of third grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school. By focusing on support for our youngest students and their educators, the department can ensure more students are reading at grade level by the end of third grade and build a strong foundation for continued success in school. 45.4 % of students first identified with a significant reading deficiency (SRD) in kindergarten or first grade were still identified in third grade in FY2024, a 8.8 percentage points decrease from FY2023.

Key Initiative 2: All Means All. Expand access and opportunity for historically underserved students.

In Colorado, students from a number of historically underserved backgrounds – specifically those from economically challenged communities, highly mobile families, racial minority groups, English Learners and students with disabilities – continue to fall short of their academic potential. By concentrating on equity as a foundational construct of our work at CDE, we will empower schools and districts in their efforts to increase access and opportunity and ultimately reduce the pervasive influence that systemic inequities have on student outcomes. Of students involved in exclusionary discipline actions (expulsions, students suspension, etc) in FY2024 , 64.4% were students of color, which is an over-representation (49.5% of Colorado students were students of color in FY2024).

Key Initiative 3: Quality Schools. Prioritize and maximize support for schools and districts identified for academic improvements.

Schools and districts that are identified for improvement through the state and federal systems all have different needs based on the context of their communities. By working with each district and school to understand their needs and invest in evidence-based strategies to be successful, we will help them progressively improve and maintain their academic performance. The percent of districts with eligible schools that applied for support and/or funding increased from 38 % in FY 2023 to 45% in FY 2024.

Key Initiative 4: More Options. Expand high school options to ensure all students are ready for college and/or living-wage jobs.

Students who graduate and work in Colorado need in-demand skills that meet business, industry and higher education standards. Three out of four jobs in Colorado (three million jobs currently) require education or training beyond high school. By increasing options for high school students and fostering expansion of successful high school models, we can increase the share of students who will earn a postsecondary credential, certificate or degree within five years. In FY 2023, 88.9% of students obtained a high school credential within six years (down slightly from 89.3% in FY 2022). Data on FY 24 high school completion rates will be available in January 2025.

Key Initiative 5: Educators Matter. Develop a strong pipeline of high-quality teachers and principals and provide deeper support for school and district leaders

Research shows that teachers have a bigger impact on student performance than any other school-based factor. And the number one reason teachers leave is lack of support by a high-quality principal. We can learn from the workforce development approaches of public and private industries that focus on growing talent in a strategic and intentional way by recruiting, developing and supporting their workforce. By developing, deploying and supporting talent management and human capital development strategies for districts and schools, we can ensure that every classroom has an effective educator and all students are prepared for college, career and life. In FY 2024, CDE issued 4,871 initial licenses, representing a 8.5% increase over the prior year, when 4,490 licenses had been issued.



Operational Measures

Strong Foundations: Support high quality early learning and literacy for all students.

Strategic Activities: Promote and develop high-quality, evidence-based early learning and literacy strategies; strengthen partnerships with CDHS and other state and local agencies, communities and libraries to support early learning and literacy in preschool through third grade; support districts in implementing full-day kindergarten programs.

Measure	FY20 Actual	FY21 Actual	FY22 Actual	FY23 Actual	FY24 Actual	1-Year Goal
Percentage of students identified with SRD in kindergarten or first grade who are still identified in 3 rd grade.	N/A	67.8%	64.0%	54.2%	45.4%	2% point annual decrease
State-funded programs rated as high quality by Colorado Shines Quality Rating Improvement System	49%	62.5%	59.51%	56%	N/A (Now managed by Department of Early Childhood)	N/A
Third grade students meeting or exceeding expectations on the CMAS assessment in English Language Arts	N/A**	39.1%	40.7%	39.9%	42.1%	Return to or exceed 41.3%

*These data represent the percentage of students still identified with an SRD in third grade when previously continuously identified with an SRD during their K-2 experience (starting either in kindergarten or first grade). Due to the nature of this analysis, students were required to have data at every time point for the specific cohort. FY20 data are not available as the READ Act data collection was suspended in Spring 2020 due to the suspension of in-person instruction. FY21 data reflect students spent most of their 2nd grade year potentially in remote learning settings, with no testing in 2nd grade. FY22 data reflects students who were still identified in third grade in 21-22 and who were first identified in K or 2nd grade, since their first grade assessment in 2019-20 didn't happen. FY23 data reflects students who were still identified in third grade in 2023 and who were first identified in 1st or 2nd grade, since their kindergarten assessment in 2019-20 didn't happen).

**Due to the suspension of in-person instruction in Spring 2020, CMAS assessments were not administered in FY20.

All Means All: Expand access and opportunity for historically underserved students.

Strategic Activities: Develop the capacity to expand access, opportunities and a sense of belonging for students to close equity gaps; expand engagement with districts and other external partners to address issues of equity, access, and opportunity through our grant programs; support school and district efforts to develop school climates that create a sense of belonging; implement and evaluate the impact of department programs that deploy resources and supports aimed at increasing equity for different disaggregated groups of historically underserved students.

Measure	FY20 Actual	FY21 Actual	FY22 Actual	FY23 Actual	FY24 Q1	FY24 Q2	FY24 Q3	FY24 Q4	FY24 Actual	1-Year Goal
State-reported exclusionary discipline actions involving students of color (unduplicated count) vs share of students of color in Colorado	57.8% (47% of population)	49.1% (48% of population)	58.2% (48% of population)	61.7% (49% of population)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	63.2%* (49.5% of population)	49.5%
Underserved students who complete an AP course or obtain college credit while still in high school	45,000	45,000	47,000	N/A (As a result of CDHE's data incident in Summer 2023 , data from Academic Year 2022-2023 and forward are not yet available)						N/A

*For the first time in 2023-24, discipline data was collected at the student level and not at the school level. As such, the data is not comparable with previous years.



Quality Schools: Prioritize and maximize support for schools and districts identified for academic improvements.

Strategic Activities: Strategically allocate both human and financial resources to maximize impact for schools and districts needing improvement; develop and promote a single menu of all CDE supports and interventions for districts and schools needing improvement; evaluate the effectiveness of support for districts and schools and make adjustments needed to increase students' academic outcomes.

Measure	FY20 Actual	FY21 Actual	FY22 Actual	FY23 Actual	FY23 Q1	FY23 Q2	FY23 Q3	FY23 Q4	FY24 Actual	1-Year Goal
Percent of districts with eligible schools that apply for support and/or funding through the new single application.*	54%	64%	34%**	38%**	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	45%	75% by 2024
Number of 2017 Priority Improvement or Turnaround schools (169 total) that improved enough to earn and sustain an Improvement or Performance rating.	N/A***	N/A** *	81***	97	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	92****	136 by 2024

*The percentage of districts applying each year is not cumulative as funding is available and awarded on a cohort basis.

** The FY22 data do not reflect the total number of districts receiving support. Those data reflect districts in the 5th cohort who were eligible and had not applied for/received funding in the previous two years of their eligibility cohort. In FY23, schools that have an "Improvement" rating became eligible for this year only (whereas until then only "Priority Improvement" schools and "Turnaround" schools were eligible). This, in addition to a decrease in many schools' performance ratings due to the impacts of COVID-19, resulted in a sharp increase in the number of schools that were eligible for support, mechanically deflating the percentage of them that applied in 2022-23.

***Due to COVID-19 impacts, the state's accountability system was paused for 2020 and 2021. FY22 actual data reflect outcomes from the 2022 Transitional Performance Frameworks, which followed specific rules in the transition back to the "normal" accountability clock.

**** The data for FY24 comes from Preliminary Performance Frameworks released in September 2024. Following the optional Request to Reconsider process and subsequent approval by the State Board of Education, final data will be available in December 2024. Data exclude schools that received insufficient state data or closed. By 2024, 30 of these schools had closed, and 6 of them did not have sufficient data to give them a rating, so the maximum possible number of schools rated "Improvement" or "Performance" for FY24 would have been 133. The maximum number would have been 121 in FY22 and 137 in FY23.

More Options: Expand high school options to ensure all students are ready for college and/or living-wage jobs.

Strategic Activities: Help school districts implement rigorous and useful Graduation Guidelines to expand options to support student engagement; foster expansion of innovative models and promising practices that are making a difference; promote Individual Career and Academic Planning (ICAP) as a tool to help students complete high school, gain work experience and plan for their futures; engage community partners as an effective resource for getting students planning and ready for their futures.

Measure	FY20 Actual	FY21 Actual	FY22 Actual	FY23 Actual	FY24 Q1	FY24 Q2	FY24 Q3	FY24 Q4	FY24 Actual	1-Year Goal
Percent of students obtaining a high school credential within six years of entering HS	88.8%	89.0%	89.3%	88.9%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Available January 2025	91% by 2024
Percent of students that earn a postsecondary credential, degree, or certificate within 6 years after high school*	56.6% (Class of 2014)	58.9% (Class of 2015)	60.7% (Class of 2016)	N/A (Data reported annually on a lag. As a result of CDHE's data incident in Summer 2023 , data from Academic Year 2022-2023 and forward are not yet available)						60%
Percent of students earning college credit in high school	39.5%	40%	N/A (Data reported annually on a lag. As a result of CDHE's data incident in Summer 2023 , data from Academic Year 2021-2022 and forward are not yet available)							50%

*Data do not include industry credentials.



Educators Matter: Develop a strong pipeline of high-quality teachers and principals and provide deeper support for school and district leaders.

Strategic Activities: Work in partnership to support high-quality educator preparation programs; improve support to future and current educators and expand educator pipelines; deepen our support for principals as they work to hire, develop, and retain high-quality teachers to provide the highest outcomes for students.

Measure	FY20 Actual	FY21 Actual	FY22 Actual	FY23 Actual	FY24 Q1	FY24 Q2	FY234 Q3	FY234 Q4	FY24 Actual	1-Year Goal
Number of initial educator licenses issued by CDE.*	6,341	4,620**	5,958	4,490	1670	688	878	1635	4,871	5,958
Statewide teacher turnover rate.	15.78%	14.35%	17.10%	19.10%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	17.43%	14.35%

*Data reflect teacher, specialized service professional, and alternative initial teacher licenses.

**Transition to the new e-Licensing system made the licensure cycle time temporarily higher in 2021.

Organizational Excellence:

By committing to excellence in our core programs and functions, we can support each of our key initiatives and ultimately accomplish our goals. Several teams within the department are responsible for essential programmatic and operational functions that allow the department to achieve our broader goals. These teams include School Finance, Human Resources, Accountability and Improvement, Standards and Assessments, Educator Talent, Communications and Information Management Services.

Measure	FY20 Actual	FY21 Actual	FY22 Actual	FY23 Actual	FY24 Q1	FY24 Q2	FY24 Q3	FY24 Q4	FY24 Actual	1-Year Goal
Percent of error-free grant distributions by line item, per cycle	100%	99.9%	99.9%	99.9%	99.9%	100%	99.9%	99.9%	99.9%	100%
Percent of district and school performance frameworks produced error-free*	N/A	N/A	100%	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%	100%
Average licensure cycle time – from receipt of a completed application and cleared fingerprint report to a PDF license sent via email (in days)	8	26.5**	19	6	21	19	19	28	22	10
Staff compliance (full-time CDE employees) with annual cyber security training***	100%	100%	100%	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%	100%

*Data are aligned to the School and District Performance Framework year reporting cycle. Due to the impacts of COVID-19 on school performance, the state's accountability system was paused for 2020 and 2021 and partially resumed on a transitional basis in FY22.

** Transition to the new e-Licensing system made the licensure cycle time temporarily higher in 2021.

***Data reflect all full and part-time staff working in CDE systems and are reported for the fiscal year.

Note: The state fiscal year runs from July 1st to June 30th. "FY23" indicates the 2022-23 fiscal year from July 1st, 2022 to June 30th, 2023. The quarters of the state fiscal year are as follows: Q1: July-September, Q2: October-December, Q3: January-March, Q4: April-June. "FY24 Q1" indicates the period from July 1st, 2023 to September 30th, 2023.