

*...Learning, Thriving, Leading*

# ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020

## A message from Superintendent Nancy E. Benham



*Nancy E. Benham, Ph.D.  
Superintendent*

2019-2020 has been a very busy year, at CSDB. We began developing our new strategic plan which will take us through the next five years. We were fortunate to have had Dr. Ron Stern and Jane Mulholland, both retired superintendents, help lead our school and stakeholders through the initial process. We gained lots of great feedback to help us move CSDB to the next level! The CSDB Board of Trustees approved the strategic plan, Fall 2020, so now the real work begins!

During the Spring of 2020, the United States and the world found themselves in the beginning stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. The environment in Colorado altered. March 2020 schools in the El Paso County area, including the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind, made the decision to close and deep-clean buildings for two weeks, with the intent of returning to finish the school year in a traditional fashion. Soon, Colorado

Governor Polis made the decision that Colorado schools transition to remote learning for the remainder of the year. State educational assessments were waived due to concerns of test fidelity. CSDB staff worked hard connecting with CSDB families, creating and implementing a remote learning plan, including identifying which students needed devices and delivering them to homes. Teachers prepared lessons to teach remotely and developed a schedule for students to follow. Though a unique experience for students and staff, remote-learning data showed an average 96% attendance rate for CSDB. At the end of the year, with special permissions, graduation at CSDB was held. Attendees were grateful to celebrate the graduating Class of 2020.

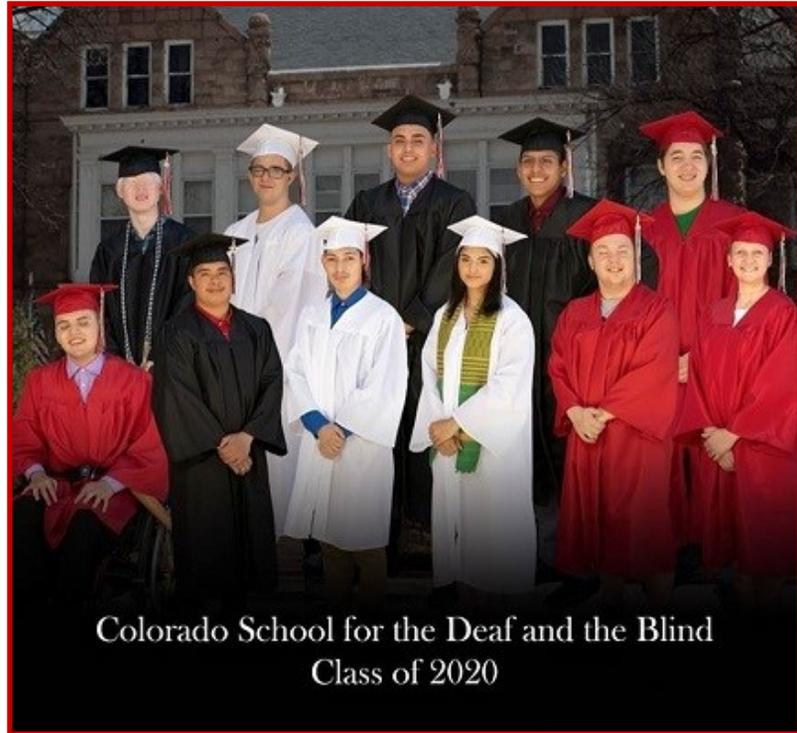
We want to thank all of our families, districts and community stakeholders for your support, especially during this time! We could not do it without you and look forward to when we can welcome everyone back to campus! Until then, stay well and take care!!

Sincerely,  
Nancy E. Benham, Ph.D.  
Superintendent

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nancy E. Benham". The signature is fluid and cursive, matching the professional appearance of the woman in the photo above.

## CSDB is comprised of the following departments

- Student Services
- School for the Blind
- School for the Deaf
- Employability Center
- Student Life
- Athletics
- Facilities
- Outreach
  - ~ Early Education
  - ~ CIMC
- Finance and Personnel



*Photo courtesy of Skrastins Photography*

# CSDB serves a diverse



## Our student body

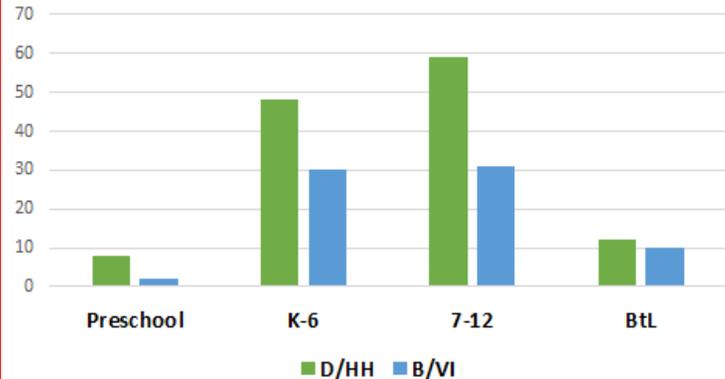
- Average length of stay **4.47 years**
- Eligible for free/reduced lunch **57%**
- Student contact days **\*185 scheduled days**  
\*175 actual contact days due to the COVID-19 pandemic closures

*"We love this school! Awesome teachers and staff. They really care about our children. Thank you for all you have done for us." ~Linda Sue, Parent*



*Students in a classroom*

## Enrollment by (on-campus) Program

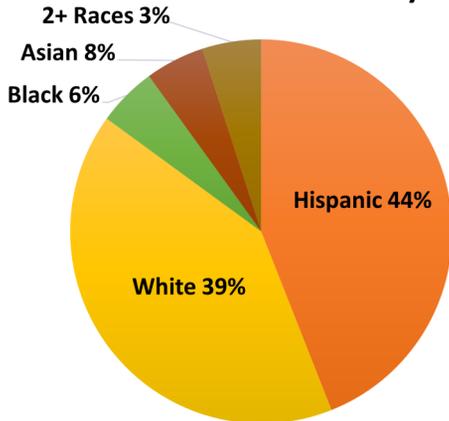


# population of students

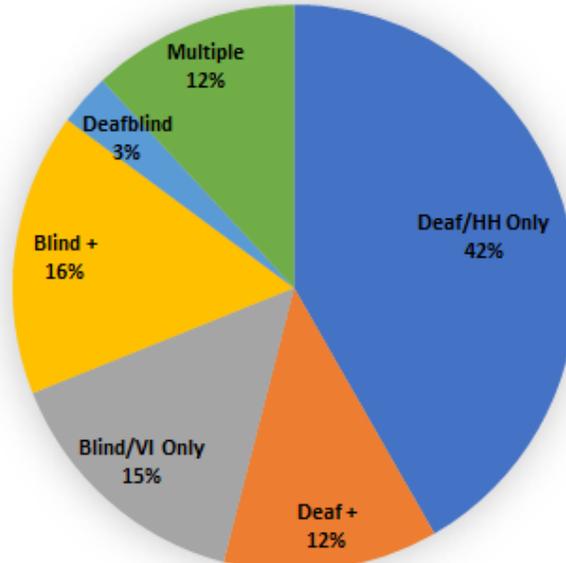


*Students on a field trip*

## Student Diversity



## Student (on-campus) Primary Disability



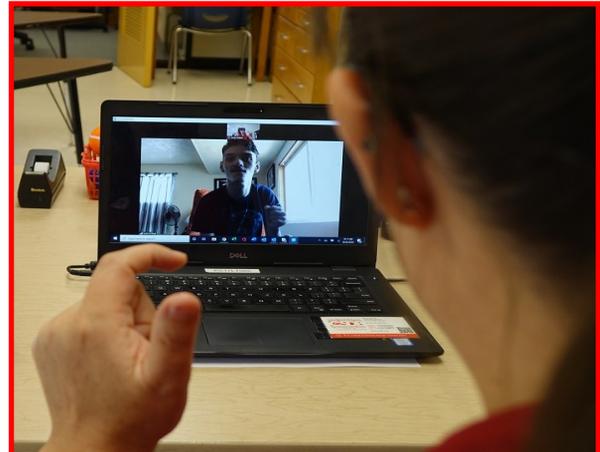
Students, served by school districts in Colorado, who require a specialized, unique, learning environment in the area of deafness and/or vision loss, as outlined in their current Individual Education Program (IEP), may be eligible to enroll as a student, if the needs can be met in the environment, at CSDB.

## Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, beginning March 2020, CSDB transitioned to a remote learning platform for all students. Some of the ways in which instructional programming was changed to support a remote learning platform included:

- Created a COVID-19 area on the website to include information for families and staff. Communicated updates regularly to both.
- The superintendent provided weekly video updates to staff, parents, and the community.
- Provided internet access via hotspots that were delivered to students in need.
- Coordinated the pick-up and drop-off of student technology devices, assistive technology devices, braille writers, low vision aides, braille books, and other materials to ensure students had the materials and technology needed at home to learn remotely.
- Social Media platform utilizations tripled and were used to provide information to parents and students to include information about COVID, free learning websites, staff appreciation testimonials, senior spotlights, ASL stories, and many other topics.
- Hosted a weekly statewide “Bulldog Social Club” to connect students across the state via Zoom meetings held once a week.
- End of the year celebrations such as athletic awards, academic awards, and staff recognition awards were held virtually.
- Graduation, was held in-person, in a modified format, with limited attendance including CSDB staff, the graduates and two members from each family. The graduation was videoed and shared on social media as well as on the website.

- Implemented distance learning for preschool, K-12, and transition age students.
- Re-designed instructional delivery model to utilize Canvas as the Learning Management System and utilize Zoom for instruction.
- Related Services (Speech, O&M, Social emotional support, and OT/PT) were delivered using the Zoom platform.
- IEPs were held through the Zoom platform.
- Deep cleaned campus and developed COVID safe practices and protocols for staff and students.
- Implemented an online daily staff health survey form and developed a process for staff to consult with school nurses when exhibiting any COVID-19 symptom to make safety determinations regarding staff on-campus.
- Year-round staff began returning to campus in July to transition back to on-campus work and plan for students and staff to return, Fall 2020.
- Developed a three-phase Return to Learn Plan that included staggering cohorts of students returning to campus, Fall 2020.



*Student and teacher using Zoom for instruction*



*Student Life staff assisted with instructional support to students including small group and 1-1 tutoring, as well as delivering equipment and materials to students' homes.*

# School Performance Frameworks

Plan Type			
AEC: Improvement		55.47 / 100.00	
Indicator Rating Totals			
Indicator	% Pts Earned	Eligible	Pts Earned/ Rating
Academic Achievement	25.0%	3.75 / 15.00	Does Not Meet
Academic Growth	44.9%	15.72 / 35.00	Approaching
Student Engagement	75.0%	15.00 / 20.00	Meets
Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness	70.0%	21.00 / 30.00	Meets

CSDB has a specialized mission and is designated as an Alternative Education Campus (AEC). CSDB qualifies as an AEC because more than 90% of the students are on an Individualized Education Program. The AEC School Performance Framework (SPF) is composed of required state measures but may also include additional optional measures. CSDB submits optional measures that are approved by CDE for inclusion in the AEC framework. The optional measures include NWEA MAP, BASC-Bess SURVEY and, Post-Completion Success Rate. CSDB received a rating of AEC: Improvement on the 2019 AEC School Performance Framework.

Due to the impact of COVID-19, the pause on state assessments last year, and the subsequent 2020 accountability pause, the 2019 plan types were rolled over to 2020.

## Cut-Points for Each Performance Indicator

Academic Achievement; Academic Growth; Student Engagement; Postsecondary Workforce Readiness	at or above 87.5%	Exceeds
	at or above 62.5% - below 87.5%	Meets
	at or above 37.5% - below 62.5%	Approaching
	below 37.5%	Does Not Meet

## Student Services

The Student Services team is ready to meet related service needs for CSDB students. We work with students to build skills that will allow them to access instruction in the classroom and around campus. Related services at CSDB include Speech Language Pathology, Audiology, Psychological and Counseling Services, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Orientation and Mobility, and School Health Services.

The FM Loan Bank provides hearing assistive technology systems (such as Phonak Roger and Oticon Amigo) to districts that do not have the funds to purchase these devices. These systems are for students, who are hard of hearing, to help them hear spoken classroom lessons more clearly. For the school year 2019-2020, the FM Loan Bank served 29 Colorado school districts.



*Student Services team*

Each discipline uses a systematic and integrated approach to deliver schoolwide and individual strategies with the overall goal of assisting students to achieve academic, health, career, personal, and interpersonal competencies. Service delivery models include pushing into the classroom to partner with the classroom teacher while working with the student, or individual time outside of the classroom to provide one-on-one therapy.



*Student participating in an Orientation and Mobility lesson via Zoom*

## School for the Blind



*Reading braille at a classroom table*

CSDB held Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) workshops, twice a month. These workshops connected families to one another and provided tips for embedding the ECC into everyday life. Finally, we offered staff braille classes. A variety of departments participated in braille classes.

CSDB believes that focused professional learning communities (PLCs) can impact achievement. Our professional learning communities concentrated on literacy, numeracy, and career education. Some accomplishments included selecting a new tier 1 literacy curriculum, creating, adapting, and implementing Wilson Reading System braille text and materials, monitoring graphing skills and tactile graphing opportunities offered in all classes, and collecting career education information on all students, in the School for the Blind. An assistive technology teacher position was established to provide additional technology instruction as well as to provide evaluation, modeling, and training to staff and parents regarding available assistive technology options.

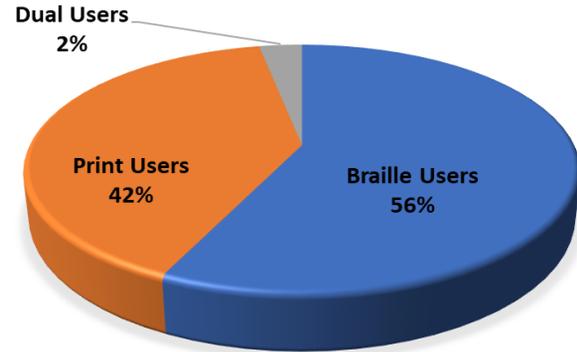


*Reading a braille chart*



*"I am completely overwhelmed by the effort and care that your staff has demonstrated. Please let them all know how much we appreciate them! The CSDB teachers are so awesome! We call Tuesday, "Tuesday Zoom day"! Your teachers have given us so much insight on how to help our son. They are truly first class!" ~June, Parent*

## STUDENTS (ON-CAMPUS) LITERACY MODALITY SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND



Students have an identified primary modality(ies) in which they access literacy that is either Braille, Print, or Dual (Braille and Print offered simultaneously).

*Child and adult smile in class*

## School for the Deaf

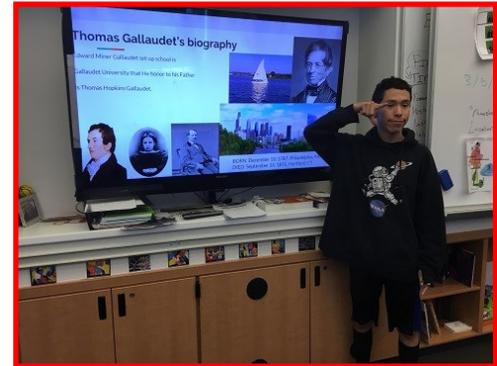


*Young students play with sand*

During the 2019-2020 school year, the School for the Deaf adopted a new literacy curriculum, working toward a rigorous, standards-based K-12 program.

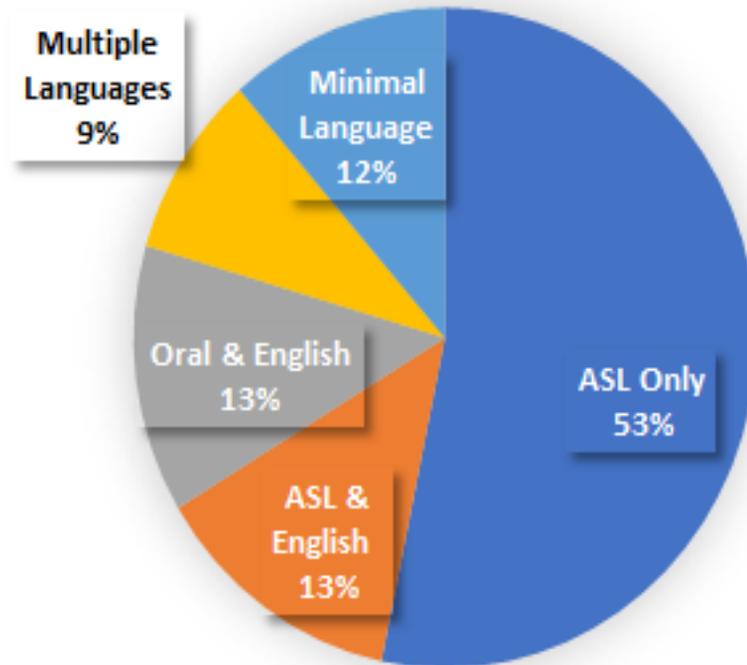
The on-campus Preschool, Toddler and Early Education programs focused on developing literacy and language through play-based learning, while students in the upper grades focused on language to develop all areas of academics including the “soft-skills” needed for independent living.

During the winter, the School for the Deaf team hired a Bi-Lingual Literacy Coach/Specialist to provide best practices in reading instruction across all grade levels, including developing and implementing supports for staff. This guidance fostered consistent bilingual/biliteracy instruction practices. In addition, the team streamlined data into one document, allowing comparison of student growth across multiple measures. This format will continue during the 2020-2021 school year.



*Student presents in front of the class*

## Communication Preference - Students (on-campus) Deaf/Hard of Hearing



*"I just want to thank everyone at CSDB for all they have done and are still doing to make sure our children are getting the best education as they can at this difficult time. I know some days are harder than others, we all have our different scenarios. What I do know for sure is that CSDB is doing everything they can to help our children. I just want to recognize them, and I know a lot of other parents feel the way I do. Thank you all again. We stand strong."  
~Jennifer, Parent*

## Employability Center



*Former BtL student, who is Deaf, stands joyfully in front of a semi-truck after earning his licensure.*

The Employability Center, serving students who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired or deafblind, partnered with 49 community employers to provide invaluable work experiences and volunteer opportunities for Bridges to Life (BtL) and high school students enrolled in career education courses.

A BtL student exited the program to pursue his career dream of becoming a long-distance truck driver. He successfully completed his licensing requirements and was hired by a trucking firm. He is now gaining experience as a CDL-licensed semi-truck driver.

The Employability Center supported students in taking college-level courses at Pikes Peak Community College (PPCC). High school students, from the School for the Deaf and the School for the Blind, enrolled in a variety of courses including Advancing Academic Achievement, mathematics and history.



*Three male seniors in front of a Parks and Wildlife exhibit*

# Student Life



*Students' hayride*

## Residential Students

Middle School and High School residential students applied and interviewed for Level 1 status within their traditional dorm units. Students achieved Level 1 by demonstrating excellence in academics, responsibility, leadership, time management, and participation. Level 1 status allowed students increased independence, as well as participation in special events and activities.



*Collage of students cooking and eating dinner in the dorms*

## After-School Programs

After-school adventure clubs provided an opportunity for elementary students to socialize with their peers during on and off campus social activities. Students had the opportunity to visit local playgrounds, jump at the trampoline park, hike, bake, create, perform, and compete.

When the pandemic interrupted our regular programs, Student Life continued to provide on-line social, recreational, and learning opportunities. Student Life developed a Facebook page and an Instagram account to encourage and support student learning, as well as social and emotional growth. Trivia events, "show and tell," and group activities helped students stay connected and feel supported.

*"Kudos! The dorm staff do a great job of communicating—they keep us up-to-date and address any issues or concerns." ~Mary, Parent*

## Athletics



*Goalball defense stretches for a save*

Student athletes competed with other 1A schools and Schools for the Deaf in football, volleyball, basketball, and wrestling. CSDB also supported a team for goalball, a sport for students who are blind or visually impaired, to compete with teams from other Schools for the Blind.

Special Olympians, from both schools, participated in bowling and basketball. Athletes learned the importance of determination and teamwork as they developed skills and friendships.



*High School volleyball players and coaches*



*Students, on the Special Olympics team, practice basketball*

## BUILDING A COMMUNITY WITH PRIDE

The locker rooms in our gymnasium were renovated to make Safety and ADA upgrades, to meet current code. The original portion of the Hubert Work Gymnasium was constructed in 1919 and had received only modest upgrades since construction. The boys' and girls' locker rooms were completely renovated and a team room added for large group meetings.

- Individual showers that meet ADA standards were added for student privacy
- Modern heating and ventilation systems added to meet current code
- Unisex privacy changing and shower rooms added
- Modern cleanable surfaces added throughout



*Team room for large group meetings*



*Left, hallway with  
historical photos  
Right, girls' locker  
room*



## Outreach: Statewide Services

Outreach Programs are designed to meet the needs of students, who do not attend CSDB, their families and school district staff. A variety of services for students, birth through high school, who are blind , visually impaired, deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind are available.

The American Sign Language (ASL) Community instructors taught 151 education professionals, parents and community members. Sixteen professionals participated in ASL Immersion classes.

A day of ASL Instruction for students, parents and school staff was provided in collaboration with the Roaring Fork Elementary School in New Castle. CSDB also supported the instruction of ASL for a community group, in this area.

Itinerant teachers served 125 school-age students in their home schools.

A collaboration with the Colorado Digital Learning Solutions (CDLS) supported 47 high school students, receiving instruction in American Sign Language (ASL), through online classes.

Outreach hosted an exhibit table at the Denver Zoo, during the Deaf Awareness Day, and the Pikes Peak Regional Child Find Coordinators' meeting.

For students who are blind or visually impaired, Outreach co-hosted the Denver Braille Challenge with the Colorado Center for the Blind and partnered with Hike for Life for an outdoor adventure using Orientation and Mobility skills.



*Boys using braillewriters*



*Zoom collage of 12 photos: young families and staff*

## Outreach: Early Education



*Young children and parents run through rainbow sprinklers*

Colorado Regional Hearing Coordinators (CO-Hears), employed by CSDB, provided services to 476 children, birth to three years of age, who are deaf or hard of hearing, and their families.

In-home Language and Literacy support was provided to 166 families, through the Colorado Shared Reading Project (CSRP).

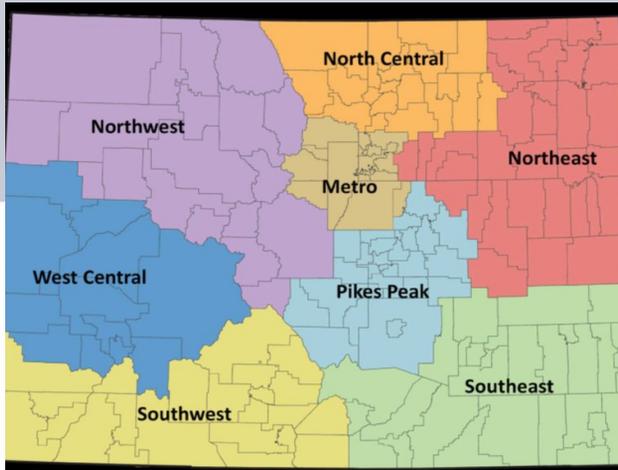
A total of 41 infants/toddlers, who are blind or visually impaired between the ages of newborn to three, and their families were supported in their homes through a collaboration with The Resource Exchange (TRE) and Blue Sky Community Centered Board (CCB), in Pueblo.

A total of 12 early literacy events were offered in various areas of the state with 13 families attending events in the Pikes Peak region, 36 families attending Denver Metro events, and an average of 8 families attending each event in Northern Colorado.

Three collaborative events were held in partnership with Hands and Voices, Marion Downs Center, Listen Foundation, Natural Wisdom Counseling and Happy Dog Ranch, with more than 200 total families attending these events for children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Collaborative trainings for professionals were held in partnership with Children's Hospital Colorado, MGA Home Service Providers, CDE, Anchor Center for the Blind, A Shared Vision, Arizona School for the Deaf and the Blind, Arizona Deafblind Project, New Mexico School for the Blind/Visually Impaired, New Mexico School for the Deaf, SkiHi Institute, Utah Deafblind Project, Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, University of New Mexico, Center for Development and Disability, EHDl Wyoming and Wyoming Department of Education.

# Statewide Participation Summary—CSDB Outreach Programs



Regions	Deaf/HH	Blind/VI
Pikes Peak	301	95
Northeast	39	No service requested
Southeast	2	No service requested
Metro Denver	668	24
North Central	92	No service requested
Southwest	22	No service requested
West Central	21	No service requested
Northwest	12	3

## Total Participants/Region

Numbers represent people served through Outreach Services, including family members, students and professionals participating in activities such as the Colorado Shared Reading Project, Early Literacy activities, professional development, ASL family and community classes, school-age itinerant services, ASL Immersion activities.

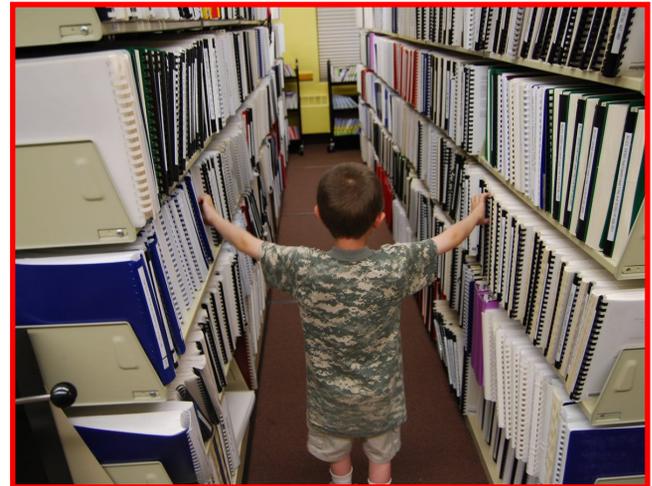
## Colorado Department of Education (CDE)/CSDB

### Colorado Instructional Materials Center for the Visually Impaired (CIMC)

The CIMC, funded by CDE, is housed on the campus of CSDB. CIMC provided braille and large print textbooks and novels, as well as instructional products, to licensed teachers of students with visual impairments. These products are used by students who have been identified as having “Visual Impairment Including Blindness (VIIB)”, in Colorado schools, at less than college level. The CIMC purchased books through funds provided by CDE, Colorado administrative units, and the APH Federal Quota Program.

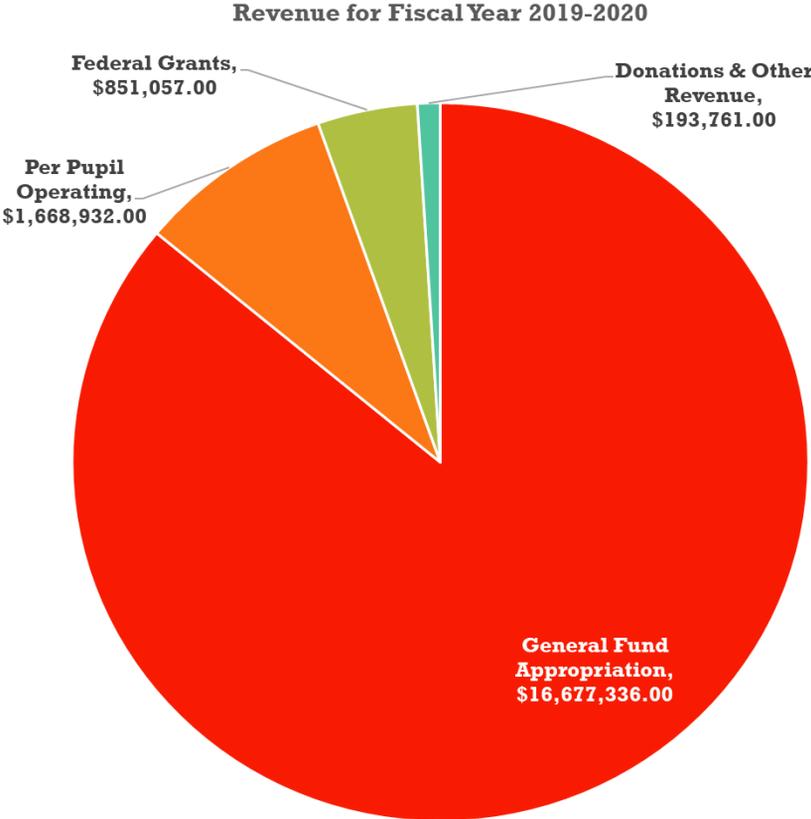
#### School Year 2019-2020

- Students, age 0-21, identified with a qualifying educational disability of VIIB – 1,276
- Students, age 0-21, on the January Federal Quota count of eligible students who meet the definition of blindness – 605 (January 2019 count)
- Textbook and novel requests fulfilled in braille and large print format – 485



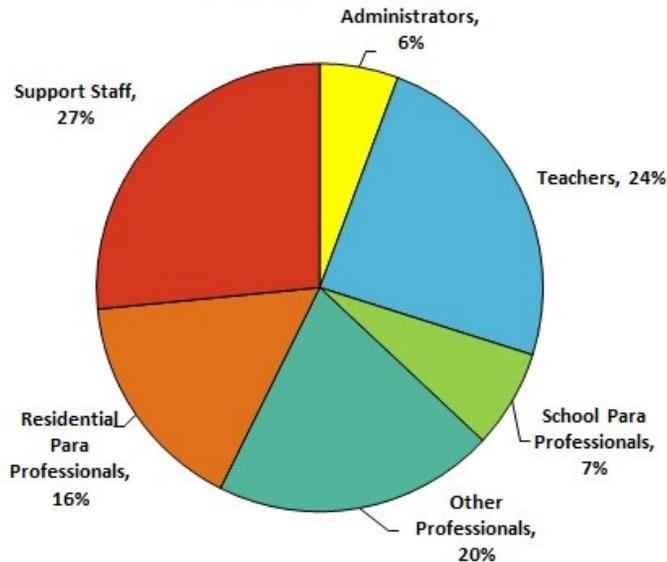
*Student stands before rows of braille books*

# Finance and



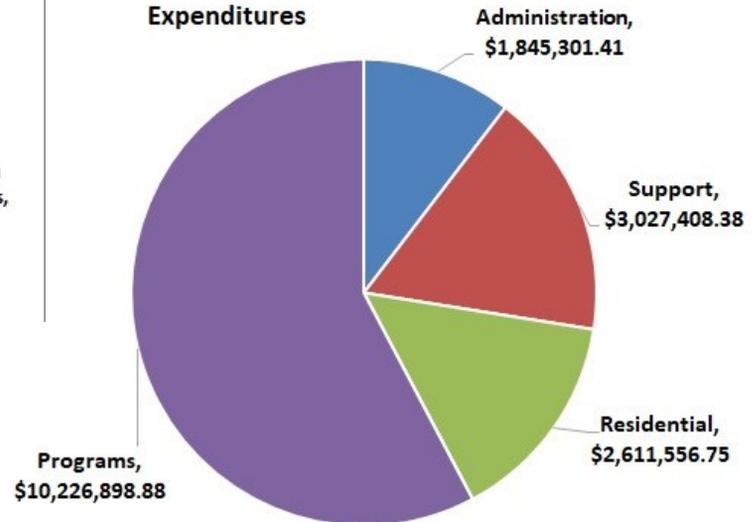
# Personnel

## Staff Allocation



*It's a wonderful campus filled with amazing humans where magic happens. I'm pleased to be able to walk among them and watch them grow up...they are family! ~Deb, Parent*

## Expenditures



*"Thank you CSDB!!! The school is so amazing! I can't imagine what we would do without you! Our little guy has just blossomed there!"~June, Parent*

## **Mission**

The Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB) provides children and families, statewide, with comprehensive, specialized educational services in safe, nurturing environments. We empower learners to become self-determined, independent contributing citizens within their communities.

## **Vision**

CSDB...*Learning, Thriving, Leading*

## **Core Values**

- Collaboration
- Open, Honest Communication
- Respect
- Responsibility



## **Board of Trustees**

***Teresa Raiford, Chair***

***Allan Ward, Vice-Chair***

***Brent Batron***

***Nancy I. Brown***

***Michelle Butler***

***Paul Foster, CDE Ex-Officio Member***

***Andy McElhaney***

***Walter VonFeldt***

***33 North Institute Street ~ Colorado Springs, CO ~ 80903  
719-578-2100 ~ 719-358-2600 (VP) ~ [www.csdb.org](http://www.csdb.org)***

The Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind and its Board are committed to providing a safe learning and work environment where all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. CSDB does not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or veteran status. Accordingly, no otherwise qualified student, employee, applicant for employment or member of the public shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to unlawful discrimination, harassment, or unwelcome behavior under any CSDB program or activity on the basis of disability, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or veteran status. Nondiscrimination in relation to genetic information is applicable to employment only.