2023 Legislative Recap

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| Authorizing |
| [HB23-1025](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb23-1025) Extends the timeline from 12 months to 18 months for prospective charter schools to submit applications to a school district. |
| Adult Education |
| [SB23-003](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-003) Establishes the Colorado Adult High School Program at CDE to create a pathway for Coloradans who are 21 years of age or older and do not have a high school diploma to attend high school and earn a diploma at no cost. Students may also earn industry-recognized certificates, career and technical education certificates, or college credits at no cost through the program. Requires the CDE award a grant to a Colorado community-based nonprofit organization to operate the program as an education provider and establishes related requirements for the organization that is selected. |
| [SB23-007](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-007) Adds "digital literacy" to the basic education offered to eligible adults and adds that an eligible adult may earn a high school diploma or equivalency certificate. The act describes services that providers may offer, which include in-person or online instruction, the development of learning plans, coaching, and mentorship. The act amends the reporting requirements for providers of the program, including that administrative costs not exceed 10% of the awarded funds. Allows community colleges, area technical colleges, and local district colleges to develop and implement minimum graduation requirements for a high school diploma based on the high school graduation requirements of a school district within the geographic area of the colleges. Colleges are required to award a high school diploma to a student who successfully completes the high school graduation requirements implemented by the colleges. |
| Discipline |
| [HB 23-1191](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb23-1191) Prohibits corporal punishment on a child. Defines "corporal punishment" as the willful infliction of, or willfully causing the infliction of, physical pain on a child. |
| [HB 23-1291](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb23-1291) Establishes additional due process requirements for school expulsion hearings and requires school hearing officers undergo training in applicable state and federal law, child and adolescent brain development, restorative justice, alternatives to expulsion, the effects of trauma, and conflict and bias. Requires the CDE to develop the free training on or before June 30, 2024, and requires school hearing officers complete an initial and ongoing training beginning January 1, 2025. Schools can also show that the training they already provide meets the same criteria. |
| Educator Workforce |
| [SB23-004](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-004) Authorizes "school-based therapists" (as defined) who are not licensed by the CDE but who hold a Colorado license for their profession to work under the supervision of a CDE-licensed Special Service Provider to coordinate mental health supports for students. School-based therapists hired under this provision must meet requirements for background checks and, where applicable, have qualifications consistent with a student's IEP. |
| [HB23-1001](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb23-1001) As a continuation of HB 22-1220, expands eligibility for financial assistance and offers loan forgiveness to a larger pool of educators who qualify for state programs. The bill modifies the Temporary Educator Loan Forgiveness Program, Educator Test Stipend Program, and Student Educator Stipend Program. |
| [HB23-1064](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb23-1064) Creates the Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact, which is designed to make it easier for teachers from member states, especially active military members and eligible military spouses, to receive a teacher's license from other member states. The compact becomes effective when 10 or more states enact it. |
| [SB23-087](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-087) Creates a Teacher Degree Apprenticeship Program as an alternative route to teacher licensure. Permits CDE to issue a teacher apprenticeship authorization to a person who is employed by a school who is actively registered in an apprenticeship program, and who is actively enrolled in an affiliated bachelor's degree program from an accredited institution. Establishes requirements for apprenticeship programs. |
| [HB23-1198](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb23-1198) Requires the Department of Labor and Employment to establish a teacher externship program to allow K-12 teachers to participate in experiential learning opportunities with employers, outside of the school environment, to gain knowledge and expand their curriculum in the STEM or STEM-related disciplines. |
| [SB23-258](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-258) Consolidates the review and approval process for educator preparation programs under CDE and the State Board of Education. Creates an advisory committee to the State Board and the CDE to provide input on relevant topics related to educator preparation and educator quality. |
| [HB13-1231](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb23-1231) Requires CDE by January 2024, to offer free optional trainings in evidence-informed practices in mathematics, including a training specifically designed for elementary school educators and a training specifically designed for secondary school mathematics educators. Establishes requirements for the trainings and specifies that the trainings must be available to CSI charter schools.  Includes requirement that candidates for an elementary education endorsement, a middle school mathematics endorsement, or a secondary mathematics endorsement be trained in evidence-informed practices in mathematics, including interventions to help students who are below grade level or struggling in mathematics, children with disabilities, and students who are English language learners.  Adds developmentally appropriate early numeracy to continuing professional development requirements for teachers employed by a preschool. |
| Finance |
| [SB 23-099](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-099) Beginning in 23-24 school year, increases state funding for Tier B special education by $40.2 million per year. Funds children who have one or more disabilities and receive special education services from a school district, board of cooperative services, a charter school network, a charter school collaborative or CSI that is providing educational services to exceptional children. |
| [SB 23-303](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-303) Reduces assessed valuations for many classes of real property, including certain new subclasses of property. Extends these reductions for the next ten years. Allows the state to backfill the lost revenues to public schools (and local government) by increasing the cap on tax revenues that state may retain (by reducing TABOR refunds to taxpayers). |
| [SB23-287](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-287) Names charter schools (inclusive of charter networks and charter collaboratives) as public entities and therefore needing to file certain materials to properly establish their public status. Specifically, all board members of applicable boards must file an oath with the local County Clerk's Office by August 3, 2023, and within 80 days of becoming a board director thereafter. Additionally, all charter schools/charter networks must register their public entity’s information with the Colorado Department of Local Affairs by August 13, 2023.   Makes the state's triennial Charter Schools Report annual.   Specifies that a charter school has the same public entity status as a public school that is geographically located in the same school district. This will help ensure charter schools are eligible for many of the same beneficial exemptions now readily available to other public schools.   Requires that, beginning in 2024-25 and each year thereafter, the General Assembly appropriate from the General Fund the amount necessary in each budget year to fund full mill levy equalization for all CSI schools. |
| Graduation Ceremonies |
| [SB 23-202](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-202) Requires a school or school district to allow a qualified student or qualified student's immediate family to wear and display traditional Native American regalia at all school graduation ceremonies, including kindergarten, middle school, junior high school and high school graduations. |
| High School |
| [SB23-086](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-086) Continues the Colorado Student Leaders Institute Program, a summer residential education program for high school students. Changes responsibility for the program from the Department of Higher Education to the CDE. |
| [HB23-1212](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb23-1212) Directs the Office of Future of Work in the Department of Labor and Employment to create an Apprenticeship Navigator Pilot Program to employ two full-time navigators who will focus on increasing awareness of registered apprenticeship programs among graduating high school students in two selected school districts, and may include CSI. |
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| [SB 23-205](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-205) Establishes the Universal High School Scholarship Program in the Office of Economic Development to provide scholarships for the 2024-25 academic year to students who pursue an in-demand or high-priority postsecondary pathway with a provider on the eligible training provider lists disseminated by the department of labor and employment, a provider in the Colorado state apprenticeship resource directory, a public or private institution of higher education operating in Colorado, or an organization approved by the office. A student is eligible for the program if the student graduated from a Colorado high school or was awarded a high school equivalency credential during the 2023-24 academic year; completes the free application for federal student aid or the Colorado application for state financial aid; and did not receive a grant from the Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative. |
| [SB23-065](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-065) Makes some changes to the Career Development Success Program. Provides 120% PPR for students who are identified as at-risk due to economic disadvantage and successfully earn an industry certificate by completing a qualified industry-credential program, workforce training program or qualified Advanced Placement course. Provides additional funds for schools that require students to enroll in and successfully complete a qualified program or complete an AP course prior to graduation. |
| Human Resources |
| [SB23-111](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-111) Codifies certain rights of public employees, including the right to participate in the political process while off-duty, the right to express views regarding public employee representation or workplace issues, and the right to engage in protected, concerted activity for the purpose of mutual aid or protection. |
| [HB 23-172](http://leg.colorado.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2023A/bills/2023a_172_01.pdf) Modifies the law related to discriminatory and unfair labor practices. |
| Operations – Food Services |
| [SB 23-221](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-221) Creates a fiscal framework to implement the Healthy School Meals for All Program, approved by voters in November 2022. Includes an appropriation of $115 million for reimbursements to SFAs. The funds will be distributed based on the number of meals served and the portion of meals eligible for state reimbursement. |
| Safety |
| [HB23-1058](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb23-1058) Current law defines "child-occupied facility" for the purposes of lead-based paint abatement as a building or portion of a building that is visited by a child on 2 or more days within any week, with each visit totaling 6 or more hours. The act reduces the total daily visit time to 3 or more hours. |
| [SB23-070](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-070) Requires the Department of Law to convene an annual training meeting for school resource officers and school officials to discuss best practices in responding to Safe2Tell reports. Authorizes Safe2tell to conduct a survey to collect data and discussions regarding its operations. (Previously, it was only encouraged for SROs to have specialized school training.) |
| [HB 23-1213](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb23-1213) Requires the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment to distribute stop the bleed training materials and bleed control kits to K-12 schools that opt into receiving them. |
| [SB23-241](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-241) Creates the Office of School Safety within the Department of Public Safety. Tasks the Office of School Safety with overseeing the School Safety Resource Center, implementing a newly created crisis response unit to help schools in responding to a crisis or emergency event, overseeing the School Access for Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program, and administering a new Youth Violence Prevention Grant Program to provide grants to schools, community organizations and local governments to address youth violence. Requires the appointment of a grants manager to assist schools in obtaining funding related to school safety. Specifies that eligible entities may use money received from the School Security Disbursement Program to implement School Resource Officer programs and co-responder programs. |
| [SB 23-296](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-296) Defines "harassment or discrimination" and requires public schools to accept reports of harassment or discrimination in writing or in person by phone, email or online. Also requires schools post notices in multiple places informing students how to report harassment or discrimination, and adopt procedures for investigating reports. Requires accommodations and supportive measures for students experiencing harassment or discrimination and requires schools adopt a written policy (separate from, and in addition to, a school's Title IX policy) by July 1, 2024 that protects students experiencing harassment or discrimination. Requires the school make the policy available annually to students, students' parents and legal guardians, and employees. Requires schools provide training to school staff about harassment and discrimination, including training about the school's policy. Requires CSI schools report information about harassment or discrimination to CSI, who will report the information to CDE. Exempts from the existing school attendance requirement excused absences for an appointment, or for behavioral or mental health concerns, related to harassment or discrimination. |
| [SB 23-170](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-170) Expands the list of who can file an Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPOs) to school teachers, administrators and school mental health workers (as defined), among others. The purpose of ERPOs is to prevent people who are exhibiting a high risk of hurting themselves or others from possessing firearms. |
| Special Education |
| [HB23-1089](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb23-1089) As it relates to special education services for students in foster care, designates students in out-of-home placements as residents of the school district of their school of origin as long as the student attends the school of origin, other than an approved facility school, or a state-licensed day treatment facility.  Requires the state Department of Human Services to organize a working group to identify and address issues related to foster youth education, transportation, and stability and requires the department to provide written recommendations to the general assembly before the 2025 regular legislative session. |
| [HB23-1168](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb23-1168) Requires the CDE to enter into a service agreement with a nonprofit organization to create and maintain a list of attorneys qualified to represent a parent in a due process complaint hearing filed by an Administrative Unit (AU) concerning issues disputed in the state complaint in which the parent prevailed. Requires the appointed organization appoint an attorney to defend a parent against due process complaints filed by an AU. Creates a fund to pay attorneys. |
| [HB 23-1263](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb23-1263) Permits the multidisciplinary team that creates an IEP for a child, who may be eligible for special education services, to translate or contract with a translation services provider to translate the IEP draft documents into the dominant language spoken in the home of the child's parent/guardian. Upon request of the child's parent, the multidisciplinary team is required to translate or contract with a translation services provider to translate the final IEP document into the dominant language spoken in the home of the child's parent. Requires the IEP team verbally inform the child's parent of the right to request translation services. |
| Standards and Instruction |
| [SB23-008](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-008) Creates opportunities for youth to be involved in education standards review processes. |
| [SB23-023](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-023) Strongly encourages, but does not require, all public high schools to adopt a curriculum on CPR and the use of AEDs. Also requires CDE's comprehensive health education curriculum guidelines for grades 9-12 include curriculum for CPR and the use of AEDs and strongly encourages schools that provide instruction in grades 9-12 to implement the curriculum. Requires the curriculum be hands-on, practice-based and include use of an AED. |
| [HB13-1231](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb23-1231) Strongly encourages schools to adopt procedures for schools to provide support for students in PK-12 and their families to improve mathematics outcomes. Creates the Colorado Academic Accelerator Grant Program to create community learning centers that provide opportunities for free academic enrichment and support and offer families opportunities for engagement in students' education.  Requires school districts, public schools, CSI, and CSI schools that are on an improvement plan, priority improvement plan, or a turnaround plan to identify strategies to address the needs of students who are below grade level or struggling in mathematics and set or revise, as appropriate, ambitious but attainable targets that the public school shall attain in reducing the number of students who are below grade level or struggling in mathematics to increase the number of students who achieve grade-level expectations in mathematics. |
| Student Health |
| [SB23-014](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-014) Creates the Disordered Eating Prevention Program in the Department of Public Health and Environment to provide information and resources and increase awareness related to disordered eating, including in schools. |
| [HB23-1003](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb23-1003) Allows any public school to opt into participate in the sixth through twelfth grade Mental Health Assessment Program, to be administered by a qualified provider through the Colorado Behavioral Health Administration. |
| Task Force |
| [SB23-029](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-029) Creates a School Discipline Task Force to study and make recommendations regarding school discipline policies and practices, state and local discipline reporting requirements, and local engagement on or before August 1, 2024. |
| [HB23-1009](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb23-1009) Creates the Secondary School Student Substance Use Committee at CDE to develop a practice, or identify or modify an existing practice, for secondary schools to implement that identifies students who need substance use treatment, offers a brief intervention, and refers the students to substance use treatment resources.  Requires CDE publicly publish a report of the committee's findings and submit the report to the superintendent of every school district and chief administrator of every CSI school that is a secondary school. |
| [SB23-094](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-094) Creates the Colorado School Transportation Modernization Task Force in the CDE to create a report containing findings and recommendations to improve school transportation services for students. The report will be published publicly on or before December 1, 2024. |
| [HB 23-1223](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb23-1223) Creates a task force to establish shared goals, objectives, and guidelines for entities to utilize in prioritizing new and existing grant money to achieve maximum impact to reduce youth violence, suicide, and delinquency risk factors for target communities. Requires a preliminary "SMART Act" report in January 2024 followed by a final report in January 2025. |
| [HB 23-1241](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb23-1241) Creates a task force to study academic opportunities, inequities, promising practices in schools, and improvements to the accountability and accreditation system. Requires the task force submit an interim report by March, 2024 and a final report by November, 2024. |
| [SB23-287](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb23-287) Establishes the Public School Finance Task Force to make recommendations for changes to the school finance formula for FY 2024-25. Among other things, requires the task force make recommendations for securing equalization in mill levy overrides for CSI schools based on the school district the CSI school is located. |