2025 Legislative Recap

# 

[Authorization & Accountability 2](#_Toc204770422)

[Legal & Policy 2](#_Toc204770423)

[School Performance 3](#_Toc204770424)

[Data Submissions 5](#_Toc204770425)

[Finance & Operations 6](#_Toc204770426)

[Finance 6](#_Toc204770427)

[Grants 10](#_Toc204770428)

[Facilities 11](#_Toc204770429)

[Student Meals 12](#_Toc204770430)

[School Programs 12](#_Toc204770431)

[Academics 12](#_Toc204770432)

[Educator Qualifications 13](#_Toc204770433)

[Health and Safety 14](#_Toc204770434)

[High School 16](#_Toc204770435)

[Student Populations 17](#_Toc204770436)

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# Authorization & Accountability

## Legal & Policy

[**HB25-1135**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb25-1135) **Communication Devices in Schools**

No later than July 1, 2026, the bill requires that school districts, school boards, and charter schools adopt and publicly post on their websites a policy concerning student communication device use and possession during the school day. The policy must include any prohibitions of communication device use during the day but does not require specific prohibitions.

Policies must not prohibit students from possessing or using a communication device if it is necessary for compliance with disability standards, special education programs, or to monitor a medical condition. These adopted policies must be posted on the website of the LEP or charter school.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** CSI schools should adopt a policy concerning student communication use and possession during the school day. Schools are not limited to specific prohibitions around use and possession; however, the bill provides some potential considerations and requires CDE to provide resources and research to support policy development. Schools that already have a policy prior to August 2025 do not need to adopt a new one.

CSI’s sample Cell Phone Use Policies can be found on the [Sample Policies & Templates Page](https://resources.csi.state.co.us/legal-policy/sample-policies/).

[**HB25-1152**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb25-1152) **Tech Accessibility Liability Contractor**

Clarifies that, in a public school contract, a contractor is required to comply with [accessibility standards](https://oit.colorado.gov/accessibility-law) for an individual with a disability adopted by the Office of Information Technology. If not included in the contract, the law deems this provision automatically included. Requires the contractor to assume liability on behalf of the public school in the event of a lawsuit for noncompliance.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** Schools will need to ensure that future contracts adhere to the requirement. Potential contractors will need to be aware of the accessibility standards.

For information about school accessibility requirements, see CSI’s [Accessibility Resource Page](https://resources.csi.state.co.us/legal-policy/accessibility/).

[**HB25-1312**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb25-1312) **Legal Protections for Transgender Individuals**

Establishes legal protections for transgender individuals. Among other things, the bill:

* Provides that, if an LEP, its employees, an educator, or a contractor chooses to enact or enforce a policy related to names, that policy must be inclusive of all reasons that a student might adopt a name that differs from the student's legal name.
* Provides that a dress code adopted or implemented by an LEP must allow each student to choose from any of the options provided in the dress code policy.
* Adds protections for a person’s chosen name and how they want to be addressed to the [Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act](https://ccrd.colorado.gov/ccrd-home/regulatory-information). Clarifies that discrimination based on gender expression also includes discrimination based on a person’s chosen name. This includes in employment practices, housing practices, and in places of public accommodation.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** Schools should ensure that Nondiscrimination, Name Change and Student Dress Code Policies comply with the bill’s requirements.

CSI’s sample Nondiscrimination, Non-legal Name Changes and Student Dress Code Policies can be found on the [Sample Policies & Templates Page](https://resources.csi.state.co.us/legal-policy/sample-policies/).

[**SB25-276**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-276) **Protect Civil Rights Immigration Status**

Prohibits all public schools, including charter schools, from collecting information about immigration or citizenship status, unless required by law, and from sharing such information unless required by a valid court order or with written consent from the student or the student’s parent or guardian. Charter schools must adopt a written policy that aligns with these restrictions and includes procedures for releasing information, documenting requests and notifying affected individuals or their families.

Creates a civil penalty for an intentional violation of these requirements. These requirements cannot be waived.

**Potential Implications:** Schools will need to adopt policies and train staff on personal identifying information requests and interactions with/property access for federal immigration authorities.

CSI’s sample Policy on Disclosure of Information to Federal Immigration Authorities can be found on the [Sample Policies & Templates Page](https://resources.csi.state.co.us/legal-policy/sample-policies/).

[**SB25-063**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-063) **Library Resource Decision Standards for Public Schools**

Requires LEPs that maintain print and electronic materials in a centralized school library to establish policies for the acquisition, retention, and display of school library resources, and for removing any materials from circulation, by September 1, 2025 (unless a compliant policy already exists). Requires policies to meet certain standards, including freedom of speech provisions in the Colorado and U.S. Constitutions, protections against harassment and discrimination (with respect to author, content, and intended audience), and obscene material as defined by the U.S. Supreme Court.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** Schools that maintain print and electronic resources in a centralized library will need to adopt a written policy that complies with the bill’s standards by September 1, 2025, unless one already exists. The policy (or policies) must cover the acquisition, retention, display, and use of library resources, as well as the reconsideration and potential removal of library resources.

CSI’s sample Library Resources Policy can be found on the [Sample Policies & Templates Page](https://resources.csi.state.co.us/legal-policy/sample-policies/).

## School Performance

[**HB25-1278**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb25-1278) **Education Accountability System**

Makes changes to state assessments and school accountability laws, and implements some of the recommendations of the Accountability, Accreditation, Student Performance, and Resource Inequity Task Force.

***Assessments***

* Selecting paper tests at the school or district level will no longer be an option. Beginning in spring 2026, paper-pencil format for CMAS assessments will only be available as an accommodation for students with IEP or 504 plan;
* Requires CDE to collaborate with LEPs to divide state tests into shorter sections with age-appropriate time frames for students with disabilities;
* Requires CDE to administer, in collaboration with LEPs, versions of the state assessments for mathematics, science, and social studies in languages other than English and Spanish when the number of ELLs with a specific language background reaches at least 1,500 students statewide within an assessed grade level. To be eligible for a translated assessment, ELLs must receive instructional support for the content area in the proposed test language;
* Requires CDE to administer reading and writing assessments in Spanish for students enrolled in grades 5 through 8 when the number of English language learners who receive instructional reading and writing services in Spanish reaches at least 1,500 students statewide within an assessed grade level; and
* Requires CDE to provide guidance to LEPs and CSI on encouraging student participation in state assessments.

***Accountability***

* Creates the Accountability Work Group to provide feedback to CDE related to state and federal accountability policies and decisions and to make recommendations to the SBE;
* Requires CDE to include curriculum-based achievement college entrance exams for purposes of calculating performance for the academic achievement performance indicator;
* Requires the SBE to ensure that the calculation of performance for the performance indicator includes the academic achievement of students with disabilities but who no longer meet the eligibility criteria for an IEP;
* Requires CDE, beginning in the 2027-28 school year, to measure the postsecondary and workforce readiness performance indicator on 4 performance sub-indicators: 1) The college and career readiness before graduation sub-indicator, 2) the postsecondary progress sub-indicator, 3) the graduation sub-indicator, and 4) the dropout rate sub-indicator; and
* Requires CDE to calculate measures for each performance indicator for the overall student population and for the combined disaggregated group. In determining the overall performance on a performance indicator, CDE must ensure that each student in the combined disaggregated group is counted once even if the student belongs to multiple student groups.

***Continuous Improvement & Planning***

* Creates a multi-year pathway plan for school improvement for LEPs and CSI. The pathway plan connects an LEP’s or CSI’s proposal for significant state action with broader strategies for the improvement of the LEP or CSI;
* Encourages LEPs and CSI to adopt solutions to provide educator professional development and transform instruction in public schools in order to receive a grant award from the school transformation grant program; and
* Encourages CSI and LEPs that are implementing priority improvement or turnaround plans to use local assessment data to identify performance indicator gaps and provide supports and interventions in order to receive a grant award from the school transformation grant program.

***Feedback and Further Study***

* Requires CDE, in consultation with the technical advisory panel, the accountability work group, and other advisory groups with relevant expertise, to study lowering student count thresholds on accountability calculations and reporting, addressing inherent volatility of test score measurements for LEPs with small student populations, and shortening statewide assessments and implementing adaptative assessment technology; and
* Requires CDE to gather stakeholder input on the specific data elements and visual reporting format for the statewide education accountability dashboard on or before November 1, 2026. CDE must summarize the information into a report and submit the report to the SBE.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** Most immediately schools will be required to administer CMAS online. In future years, the CDE School Performance Framework (SPF) will be updated to reflect the changes to the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) indicator and create an all student group reporting field (all disaggregated groups will be reported but not for points). Additionally, updates will be made to CDE dashboards (consolidate, update, streamline all the dashboards), end of clock pathways, and translations and language accessibility for CMAS assessments. Several study groups will be convened to study additional topics and make recommendations. No changes to the accountability system are anticipated until 2026 at the earliest.

[**SB25-218**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-218) **Permissible Colorado Department of Education Uses of School Transformation Grants**

Expands allowable uses of School Transformation Grant Program funds. CDE may use these funds to:

* Offset the direct and indirect costs of administering the program; and
* Enter into one or more contracts with a public or private entity to provide turnaround assistance to school districts or charter schools.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** CDE can contract with third parties for school support services for turnaround schools, including staff and leadership development and school redesign implementation.

# Data Submissions

[**HB25-1210**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb25-1210) **Data Reporting Requirements for Kindergarten Through 12th Grade Schools**

Requires CDE to develop a streamlined format for school and district performance plans that consolidates various state, federal, and grant reporting requirements and allows a school district/school board or CSI to attach a locally developed action portion of the plan that addresses action steps, resources, and any other plan components identified in SBE rule.

Requires CDE to maintain a centralized system for plan submissions so CDE can conduct a statewide analysis of plans to determine how to best distribute state resources and supports.

Requires CDE to regularly collect user feedback to assess the extent to which the streamlined format for plans is used, whether it is helpful, and how to use this feedback to improve the centralized system.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** Locally developed action plans may be added to updated UIP online tool.

[**SB25-050**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-050) **Racial Classifications on Government Forms**

Requires that any form issued by the state or a local government that requests race/ethnicity data must include a space to indicate if the individual's race or ethnicity is Middle Eastern, North African, or South Asian, as well as spaces for any other racial or ethnic categories required by the federal Office of Management and Budget.

State and local governments are exempt from the bill's requirements if:

* The demographic data collected in the form is reported by the state or local government to the federal government; and
* The federal government rejects or will reject the demographic data because it includes Middle Eastern, North African, or South Asian as a primary demographic category.

When exercising the exemption, the state and local governments shall include Middle Eastern, North African, or South Asian as a demographic subcategory of the nonspecific racial category on the form.

The bill takes effect September 1, 2026.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** Schools will need to update any forms collecting demographic data, such as forms used for enrolling students to reflect the new requirements.

# Finance & Operations

## Finance

[**HB25-1167**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb25-1167) **Alternative Education Campuses**

Amends the laws relating to Alternative Education Campuses (AECs), which serve special needs or high-risk students using non-traditional methods of instruction. Specifically, the bill:

* Raises the age of certain high-risk student groups that AECs may serve, allowing AECs to serve students who are pregnant/are parents or who will be eligible for a diploma at the end of the school year and are 21 or younger (rather than 20 or younger);
* Requires CDE to prioritize an AEC for state grants if the AEC satisfies state grant requirements;
* Requires CDE to prepare and post a report on enrollment trends, student demographics, and student mobility at AECs; and
* Allows an AEC with less than 250 students to maintain its designation as an AEC if its student population drops below the 90 percent threshold by no more than three students, before meeting the 90 percent threshold again in the next year.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** AECs will be able to enroll pregnant and parenting students who turn 21 on or before October 1st **and** who will be able to complete graduation requirements by the end of the school year. October Count Audit documentation of the plan for the student to meet graduation requirements will be required to receive PPR. Additionally, the bill should result in more AECs receiving state grant funds, revenue and expenditures to those districts/CSI and schools will increase.

[**HB25-1320**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb25-1320) **School Finance Act**

Sets FY 2025-26 funding levels for Colorado’s 178 school districts and modifies the transition from the Public School Finance Act of 1994 (old formula) to the new school finance formula adopted in House Bill 24-1448 (new formula).

For FY 2025-26, the bill:

* Increases base per pupil funding by $195.42, to $8,691.80; and
* Establishes statewide total program funding at $10.036 billion.

Among other things, the bill also:

* Increases the cap on the [Moral Obligation Program](https://treasury.colorado.gov/programs/support-for-charter-schools) for qualified charter schools from $750 million to $1.0 billion;
* Modifies the calculation of the amount of total program funding that school districts distribute to district-authorized charter schools and the state distributes to CSI schools (For FY 2025-26 only);
  + In addition to the amount calculated under the current allocation system using the old formula, charter schools will receive an incremental per pupil funding amount based on the 15% phased in, total program funding received by their authorizing or geographic district under the new formula.
* Retains at-risk supplemental aid for 2025-26 at the funding level received in 2024-25 and retains at-risk supplemental aid for 2026-27 at 50% of the funding level received in 2024-25; and
* Delays implementation of the new at-risk measure, a mechanism for counting at-risk students in the new formula, from FY 2025-26 to FY 2026-27 and allows the State Board of Education (SBE) to promulgate rules to suspend and/or re-start the at-risk measure data collection.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** The statute calls consultations with a statewide association representing districts and a statewide association representing charter schools to ensure alignment with implementation of the new school finance formula. A working group is being assembled that will look to address FY26-27 and beyond. We’ll be working over the coming months to ensure CSI schools are appropriately considered.

[**SB25-167**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-167) **Invest State Funds to Benefit Communities**

***Public School Fund:***

Specifies that investment priorities for the [Public School Fund](https://treasury.colorado.gov/about-the-treasury/boards-and-committees/public-school-fund-investment-board) (also known as the Permanent Fund) include preserving the principal and providing benefits through community investing.

***Community Investment Portfolio***:

Creates the Community Investment Portfolio within the Public School Fund and provides examples of allowable investments, such as housing that includes preferences for public school employees. Establishes the Educator First Home Ownership Program within the Community Investment Portfolio. For this program, established by July 1, 2026, the Treasurer must aim to invest:

* 75% of the money is for a down payment assistance program for public school employees managed by CHFA; and
* 25% of the money in the program is invested in other approved community investments.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** When the Community Investment Portfolio and Educator First Home Ownership Program are established, school staff may have access to more affordable housing options. Check the [Colorado Housing and Finance Authority’s website](https://www.chfainfo.com/) for future information.

[**SB25-221**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-221) **School District Reporting Additional Mill Levy Revenue**

Requires each school district, beginning in the 2025-26 budget year, and each budget year thereafter, to report to CDE the total amount of mill levy override revenue, stated as a dollar amount, that the school district distributes to CSI schools within the geographic boundary of the school district.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** Currently, only the Durango School District shares MLO revenue with CSI schools in their geographic boundaries.

[**SB25-315**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-315) **Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness Programs (High School)**

Comprehensive reorganization of Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) programs and associated funding streams to address the recommendations of the [1215 Taskforce created by HB22-1215](https://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/secondary_postsecondary_and_work-based_learning_integration_task_force) and to improve equity of student access to postsecondary credit, industry-recognized credentials, or work-based learning before PWR indicator in the state accountability system changes.

***Repealed and Phased-Out Programs***

Repeals the following programs:

* The [Concurrent Enrollment Expansion and Innovation Grant Program](https://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/ceexpansiongrant) beginning in FY 2025-26; and
* The [John Buckner Automatic Enrollment in Advanced Course Grant Program](https://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/autoenrollment) beginning in FY 2025-26.

Phases out the following programs:

* Reduces funding for and then repeals the [Career Development Success Program](https://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/hb18-1266) (also referred to as the Career Development Incentive Program, or CDIP) beginning in FY 2026-27.
  + Funding reduced from $9.5 million to $5.0 million in FY 2025-26. A portion of the $5.0 million may be used for PWR administrative costs.
* Reduces funding for and then repeals the [ASCENT program](https://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/ce_ascent) beginning in FY 2026-27.
  + Reduces the per pupil funding rate for the ASCENT program from $10,480 to $7,140 in FY 2025-26.

Additionally, the bill requires that CDE convene a working group to make recommendations concerning the effectiveness of the TREP and PTECH programs, to be reported to the Joint Budget Committee by December 1, 2025.

***Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Funding Distribution Mechanism***

* **Start-Up Fund:** provided to LEPs that currently offer students limited access to postsecondary credit, industry-recognized credentials, or work-based learning to allow the LEP to develop and implement PWR programs.SBE will conduct rulemaking in Fall 2025 to define distribution criteria.
  + Funding timeline: Distributed in FY 2025-26 through FY 2027-28.
* **Sustain Fund:** provides LEPs reimbursement for students who obtained postsecondary credit, received a credential, or satisfied work-based learning requirements in the prior year, including students enrolled in a P-TECH or TREP program. Funding must be used to maintain or expand PWR programs. Districts must distribute 100% of funding associated with charter school students to the charter school. Reimbursement rates and other parameters are to be determined by the SBE.
  + Funding timeline: Beginning in FY 2026-27.
* **Innovation Grant Program (John W. Buckner Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Innovation Program):** provides funding to LEPs that are required to adopt Priority Improvement or Turnaround plans, or that demonstrate a low level of attainment on the PWR indicator for the prior school year. Funds must be used to develop and implement programs that support students in completing postsecondary credit, industry-recognized credentials, or work-based learning.
  + Funding timeline: Beginning in FY 2028-29; Grants may continue for up to three budget years, reviewed annually by CDE.

***PWR Communication Requirement***

The bill also requires that LEPs regularly communicate with middle and high school students and their families about the availability of concurrent enrollment, industry credentials, and work-based learning programs. Communications should, to the extent possible, be provided in a language families can understand.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** This bill will have implications for CSI schools with students in grades 9-12. In 2025-26 schools participating in ASCENT and CDIP will experience a reduction in state funding. Schools with limited PWR programming may receive Start-up Fund distributions to develop and implement PWR programs. Schools will be required to report on student attainment of postsecondary credits, industry-recognized credentials and work-based learning.

Beginning in 2026-27 and every subsequent year, all schools will receive Sustain Fund distributions based on their prior year reporting of PWR program outcomes.

After the new state accountability PWR Indicator is reported in 2027-2028, schools identified for Priority Improvement, Turnaround, or receiving a low rating on the PWR indicator will receive Innovation Grant Funds.

[**SB25-223**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-223) **Mill Levy Equalization & Institute Charter Schools**

Under current law, state CSI mill levy equalization funding is distributed to CSI schools that are geographically located in school districts that have passed MLOs. The General Assembly is required to appropriate the amount necessary for full mill levy equalization for CSI schools; this amount was $48.4 million statewide in FY 2024-25. Funding is distributed on a per pupil basis to CSI schools, based on MLO revenue per pupil collected by the district in which the school is located.

* Ensures full funding equalization beginning in FY2026;
* Establishes a process for estimating budget requests and for supplemental;
* Excludes multidistrict online schools authorized by CSI from receiving mill levy equalization distributions; and
* Requires that any school district mill levy override (MLO) revenue that is shared with CSI schools be deducted from the calculation of mill levy equalization funding, ensuring that CSI schools receive no more than their district peers.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:**

* Multi-district online schools authorized by CSI will not receive Mill Levy Equalization;
* Codifies existing practice of deducting district MLO revenue that is shared with CSI schools from the Mill Levy Equalization calculation to ensure that students in CSI schools do not receive more funding than their district peers.

Please reach out to Terry if your geographic district plans to have a MLO ballot measure this November.

## Grants

[**HB25-1061**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb25-1061) **Community Schoolyards Grant Program**

Creates the Community Schoolyards Grant Program and associated cash fund within the Department of Local Affairs to fund the design and construction of community schoolyards in communities socially or economically affected by minerals and mineral fuels activity.

“Community schoolyard” means a “park-like environment” at a school that “strengthens local ecological systems” and improves student and community health, well-being, and social opportunities.

The grants require eligible applicants (local governments or school districts) to work with community-use partners (schools, including charters, districts, BOCES, and CSI) to create schoolyards for use by students and community members. Eligible applicants that are school districts must partner with a local government.

There are two grant opportunities:

* *Planning:* Grant recipients can be awarded up to $150,000 for planning and design of a community schoolyard, and
* *Construction:* Grant recipients can be awarded up to $850,000 for the construction of these schoolyards.

Recipients of construction funds do not need to have received a planning and design grant if they provide appropriate documents in their application.

Planning and construction grant recipients must use a community-centered design process that includes students, educators, and community members.

Planning and construction grant applicants must provide, among other application materials, documentation of the following:

* A community-use agreement between the applicant and a community-use partner
* A partnership between the applicant and a community-based organization with expertise in outdoor learning spaces and experience working with LEPs.
* The amount of matching funds/in-kind contributions that the applicant intends to provide to augment the grant money.

The Division of Local Government within the Department of Local Affairs must implement a timeline for the planning and construction grant programs, including announcing the grant programs, by January 15, 2026.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** Interested CSI schools should investigate opportunities to partner with local governments (a municipality, county, special district, or other political subdivision). Further information on the application process should be available starting in 2026.

[**SB25-220**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-220) **Accelerated College Opportunity Exam Fee Grant Program**

Repeals the [Accelerated College Opportunity Exam Fee Grant program](https://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/apexam_fee), established by [House Bill 18-1396](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb18-1396), which provides grants to cover a portion of Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) exam fees for low-income students.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** Schools no longer have access to grant funds to pay for AP/IB exams for low-income students.

## Facilities

[**HB25-1245**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb25-1245) **Heating Ventilation & Air Conditioning Improvement Projects in Schools**

Requires LEPs to satisfy certain requirements concerning installation, inspection, and maintenance of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems in schools if the LEP undertakes HVAC infrastructure improvements using money from the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) [cash fund](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb22-215). Requirements include using only contractors on the certified contractor list established by the Department of Labor and Employment, unless none are available.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** Schools seeking HVAC improvements should investigate the availability of funding through the IIJA cash fund.

[**SB25-143**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-143) **Extend Prohibition on School Facial Recognition**

Extends the prohibition on schools contracting for facial recognition services that was set to repeal on July 1, 2025. Creates new exceptions to the facial recognition service contract prohibition, including if:

* the service allows for analysis of facial features that relates to approved curriculum;
* school officials or peace officers use facial recognition to identify a known threat to school safety whose facial imaging was obtained legally; or
* there is a reasonable belief that the technology may assist in locating a missing student based on data that could indicate the student’s presence near a school.

Requires each institute charter school to develop a policy governing the use of facial recognition technology, including clear guidelines on access and oversight. The policy must designate specific authorized personnel, such as school administrators and law enforcement officials, who are permitted to process facial recognition data in response to an articulable and significant threat against the school.

Provides a process for judicial relief if a person believes the school, its employee, or a contractor of the school engages in practices that violate this law.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** Schools that wish to use facial recognition technology for an acceptable use should ensure an appropriate governing policy and public notice of its use are both in place.

## Student Meals

[**HB25-1059**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb25-1059) **Food Waste Reduction in Public Schools**

Encourages, but does not require, LEPs to adopt a policy to reduce food waste in school cafeterias and food preparation facilities, including through composting and share tables, which allow students to return whole food or beverages for redistribution or donation. Provides what the policy may include and address. Requires the [Colorado Circular Communities Enterprise](https://coloradocircularcommunities.org/) to consider incentivizing food waste reduction practices in public schools.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** Future funding to support food waste reduction practices may be available through the Colorado Circular Communities Enterprise.

[**SB25-214**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-214) **Healthy School Meals for All Program**

Modifies the Healthy School Meals for All (HSMA) program, which reimburses participating [school food authorities (SFAs)](https://resources.csi.state.co.us/school-food-authority/) for free meals provided to all students.

Allows for meal reimbursements to be modified, depending on whether voters approve a referred measure at the November 2025 election that, in conjunction with Proposition FF, is estimated to result in state tax revenue for HSMA of at least $150 million per year starting in tax year 2026, or if CDE determines that funding is insufficient.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** If voters do not approve the additional tax revenue for HSMA, or if CDE determines funds are insufficient, reimbursements to eligible sites may be limited, and schools may see a decrease in available funding for school meals for the second half of the 2025-26 school year. Eligible sites are defined as those that qualify for Community Eligibility or those identified by CDE.

# School Programs

## Academics

[**HB25-1149**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb25-1149) **Comprehensive Black History & Culture Education in K-12**

Requires LEPs to incorporate new standards related to Black historical and cultural studies into courses for public elementary and secondary school students. These standards will be adopted by the SBE, based on the recommendations of the Committee (see below), during the SBE’s scheduled six-year review of state social studies standards, which is [scheduled](https://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/casreviewandrevision) to occur in 2028.

Creates the Black Historical and Cultural Studies Advisory Committee (Committee) within CDE to make recommendations to the SBE and to provide technical assistance in curriculum design to LEPs, at their request. Specifically, requires the Committee to include among its recommendations suggested updates to make the state's history and civics standards current, accurate, and comprehensive.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** Within two years of the SBE’s adoption of new standards (likely in 2028), schools will need to review their social studies curriculum to align with the new standards. Schools will be able to access CDE’s resource bank of research-based, scholarly articles and promising program materials and curricula pertaining to Black historical and cultural studies. CDE may provide technical assistance in curriculum design, at the request of an LEP.

[**SB25-200**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-200) **- Dyslexia Screening and READ Act Requirements**

Amends the READ Act to include universal screening for dyslexia in Kindergarten through 3rd grade. Requires an LEP to either adopt a universal dyslexia screening tool (screener) approved by CDE or develop its own process for identifying students with characteristics of dyslexia beginning no later than the start of the 2027-28 school year.

Specifies that if the dyslexia screener identifies risk factors, the teacher must administer a diagnostic assessment and proceed with READ Plan implementation. Requires parental communication regarding the identification of significant reading deficiency and READ Plan development to indicate whether or not the deficiency includes characteristics of dyslexia.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** Schools have until Fall 2027 to either adopt a dyslexia screener recommended by CDE or develop their own dyslexia screening procedures. In the 2027-2028 school year, schools will need to screen all 1st through 3rd grade students during the first 90 days of the school year and all Kindergarten students during the last 90 days of the school year.

## Educator Qualifications

[**SB 25-154**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-154) **Access to Educator Pathways**

Extends the use of the [Multiple Measures (MM) grades option](https://www.cde.state.co.us/educatortalent/multiplemeasuresinfo)–previously only for first-time licensure—to licensed teachers seeking to add endorsements in:

* Elementary Education
* Early Childhood Education
* Special Education Generalist
* Early Childhood Special Education

Additionally, the bill allows eligible 4-year institutions of higher education to participate in the [Teacher Recruitment Education and Preparation (TREP) program](https://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/trep).

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** Teachers who currently hold a professional license may be eligible to add endorsements for these in-demand teaching positions beginning August 1, 2025.

Schools participating in TREP may now be able to partner with 4-year institutions of higher education that were previously excluded from the program.

[**SB25-219**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-219) **Repeal Colorado Career Advisor Training Program**

Repeals the [Colorado Career Advisor Training Program](https://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/careeradvisorgrant), established by [Senate Bill 22-165](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb22-165), which supports training for career advisors. CDE has developed an online course and several other online tools for career advisors and advisees.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** While funding to support career advisors is reduced, the [Colorado Career Advising website](https://www.coloradocareeradvising.com/) is still available.

## Health and Safety

[**HB25-1027**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb25-1027) **Update Disease Control Statutes**

Among other things, this bill modifies school immunization provisions to do the following:

* Allows the records of a physician assistant to be used to create an official certificate of immunization for a student;
* Specifies that certificates of immunization can be either paper or electronic documents;
* Extends the period within which a student whose certificate of immunization is not up to date must comply with immunization requirements to attend school, from 14 days to 30 days after receipt of the noncompliance notice;
* Extends from February 15 to April 15 the deadline for a school to distribute the annual letter to parents specifying the school's aggregate immunization rates and the immunization requirements applicable for the next school year; and
* Repeals the requirement for schools to notify CDPHE or the local public health agency when a student is suspended or expelled from school for noncompliance with immunization requirements.

Amendments are to "School Entry Immunization" policy (C.R.S. 25-4-901 - 25-4-912). More information can be found at [CDPHE’s school immunizations website](https://cdphe.colorado.gov/immunization-requirements-school-entry).

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** Schools must adjust health records procedures to allow families 30 days after receipt of an immunization non-compliance letter to respond. Schools no longer need to notify their local public health agency when students are suspended/expelled for not meeting immunization requirements.

Annual parent notice of immunization information letter distribution date is changed to April 15th.

[**HB25-1248**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb25-1248) **Protect Students from Restraint & Seclusion Act**

Removes public schools from the "Protection of Individuals from Restraint and Seclusion Act" and creates the "Protection of Students from Restraint and Seclusion Act" that is specific to LEPs. The bill expands training (including how to explain restraint to students and families), strengthens parent notification, updates written report requirements, and requires schools to report annual seclusion data to CDE along with restraint data. The SBE will adopt implementing rules by January 1, 2026.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** CSI’s guidance is available on the [Physical Intervention, Restraints and Seclusion Resource Page](https://resources.csi.state.co.us/legal-policy/physical-intervention/). A sample policy will be provided in 2026, after the SBE regulations are released.

[**HB25-1250**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb25-1250) **Gun Violence Prevention & Parents of Students**

Requires the Office of Gun Violence Prevention in the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment to post certain materials on its website for schools to use pertaining to gun violence, firearms safe storage, and suicide prevention. LEPs must distribute these materials to caregivers of elementary and secondary school students at the start of each school year and also post the materials on their website.

The [Office of Gun Violence Prevention](https://cdphe.colorado.gov/office-of-gun-violence-prevention) within CDPHE must post its gun violence prevention materials in an accessible manner on its website.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** Schools should distribute the gun violence prevention materials to families at the beginning of the 2025-26 school year, and each year thereafter.

[**HB25-1293**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb25-1293) **Drug Overdose Education & Opioid Antagonists in Schools**

Requires the SBE to adopt high school health education standards regarding drug overdose identification, risks, prevention, and response. Authorizes the SBE to seek, accept, and expend gifts, grants, or donations for the purpose of adopting these standards because adoption will occur outside the normal six-year adoption cycle. Authorizes schools to seek, accept, and expend gifts, grants, or donations for maintaining, administering, and training related to opioid antagonists.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** CSI schools may need to update their health curriculum to include information about drug overdose identification, risks, prevention, and response if new Health Standards are adopted by the SBE in July 2028.

CSI’s sample Medication Administration Policy can be found on the [Sample Policies & Templates Page](https://resources.csi.state.co.us/legal-policy/sample-policies/).

[**SB25-164**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-164) **Opioid Antagonist Availability & State Board of Health**

Among other things, this bill:

* Permits a school to maintain an opioid antagonist in an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) or defibrillator cabinet in the school or on a school bus;
* Repeals the requirement that a school employee or agent must receive training prior to administering an opioid antagonist; and
* Creates an exception that a school employee or agent may furnish an opioid antagonist to a student who has not received relevant training if the employee or agent believes that the student is in a position to assist an individual who is suffering from an opioid-related drug overdose event or who is at risk of experiencing an opioid-related drug overdose event.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** CSI schools that have Medication Administration policies allowing for opioid antagonist administration may need to update the policy to align. Note that schools are not required to have an opioid antagonist policy. See CRS 22-1-119.1.

CSI’s sample Medication Administration Policy can be found on the [Sample Policies & Templates Page](https://resources.csi.state.co.us/legal-policy/sample-policies/).

[**SB25-027**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-027) **Trauma-Informed School Safety Practices**

Creates a work group to develop recommendations to support schools in training school personnel on the use of trauma-informed practices in conducting school safety drills, how to best conduct school safety drills in a trauma-informed manner, and how to best respond to a school safety incident. Members of the work group include CDE, a student, a parent, teachers, and a principal from a charter school, among others.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** CSI School Leaders may want to apply to be the charter school principal representative. Schools can expect recommendations for best practices by the end of 2026.

[**SB25-191**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-191) **Cardiac Emergency Plans for School Sports**

Requires all schools that have or acquire an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) to place and maintain the AED in accordance with nationally recognized, evidence-based standards for emergency cardiovascular care. Eliminates the requirement that AED written plans be reviewed by a physician and that the plans identify who is authorized to use the AED.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** Schools with AEDs should seek guidance on nationally recognized, evidence-based standards for emergency cardiovascular care. AED written plans may be easier to complete moving forward.

[**SB25-236**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-236) **Consolidation of Crisis Response Services**

Combines the Colorado Crisis Services Line and the 988 Colorado Mental Health Line, designating [988 Colorado Mental Health Line](https://bha.colorado.gov/988) as the primary way to connect to free, immediate emotional, mental health, or substance use support 24/7. Requires that, starting July 1, 2025, calls or texts to the Colorado Crisis Services Line will be forwarded to the 988 Colorado Mental Health Line for support and services.

Amends public school student ID card requirements in Colorado Revised Statute 22-1-136 to reflect the consolidation.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** For the 2025-2026 school year and beyond, public schools are required to include the 988 Colorado Mental Health Line and Safe2Tell information on all student ID cards, or in displayed materials and materials sent to families, removing information about the Colorado Crisis Services Line. Until ID cards are updated appropriately, schools must distribute the information to families at the beginning of the school year.

In the fall, CDHS will send a sampling of 988 Colorado print materials to schools. Free print and digital materials are also available on the [988 Colorado website](https://www.988colorado.com/en/resources#toolkit). More information on the consolidation can be found [here](https://www.988colorado.com/en/colorado-crisis-services).

## High School

[**HB25-1192**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb25-1192) **Financial Literacy Graduation Requirement**

Requires successful completion of a course in financial literacy as a condition of high school graduation beginning with students in the ninth grade on and after September 1, 2026 (Class of 2030).

Requires that, beginning in the 2027-28 school year, each ICAP includes evidence that, during the student's graduation year, the student has had exposure to federal financial aid eligibility tools and state-based net price calculators and practices filling out a FAFSA or the CASFA. Students may be exempt from the FAFSA/CASFA if a parent/student refusal can be documented, or authorized personnel determine and document that it is not feasible for a student to practice FAFSA/CASFA.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** High schools will need to amend graduation policies for the Class of 2030 and beyond (before the start of 2026-27 school year). Coursework will need to be adjusted to ensure that a course required for graduation incorporates the Colorado financial literacy standards. Beginning in 2027-28, graduating seniors are required to complete the ICAP requirements listed above, or have a documented allowable exemption.

## Student Populations

[**SB25-073**](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb25-073) **Military-Connected Children with Disabilities**

Clarifies that the child of an inbound active duty military member who has an existing individualized education program (IEP) or existing section 504 plan is eligible for open enrollment and guaranteed matriculation.

The bill requires the LEP where the child enrolls to ensure the student receives the appropriate services and accommodations, consistent with the child's existing IEP or section 504 plan, without unreasonable delay upon enrollment.

The bill requires each LEP to take reasonable steps to notify members and their families of their rights related to special education services.

**Additional Context/Potential Implications:** Under current law, schools should not impose restrictions on mid-year enrollments except when no seats are available in the applicant’s grade or when valid grounds for denying enrollment exist. Schools should review their enrollment processes to ensure appropriate protections and accommodations are provided for military families of students with disabilities.