

POLICY PREVIEW WEBINAR

EARLY CHILDHOOD & K-12 EDUCATION

COLORADO CHILDREN'S CAMPAIGN
FOR EVERY KID. FOR 40 YEARS.





Riley Kitts
Chief Policy & Research Officer

COLORADO CHILDREN'S CAMPAIGN

FOR EVERY KID. FOR 40 YEARS.



**KIDS!
COUNT!**
in Colorado
2025 DATA BOOK

Vision

A Colorado where all children thrive.

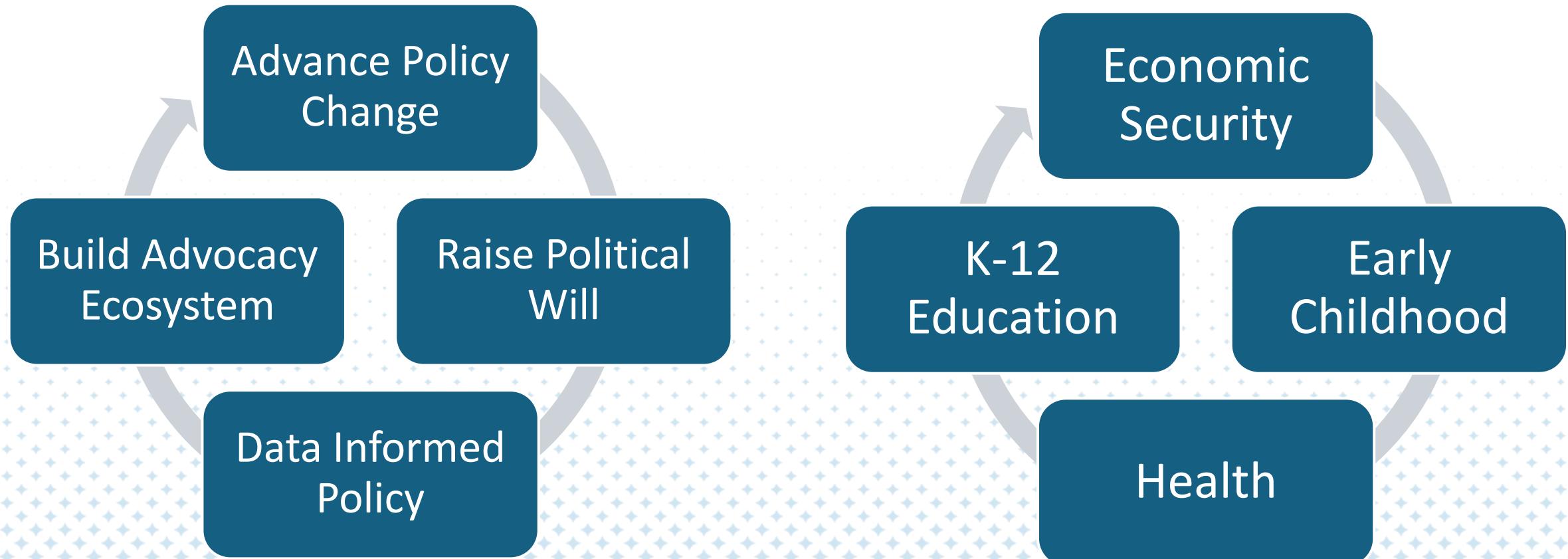
Mission

We create opportunity for every child in Colorado by catalyzing innovative policy, research, and advocacy solutions.

COLORADO CHILDREN'S CAMPAIGN



FOR EVERY KID. FOR 40 YEARS.





Dr. Mathangi Subramanian
*Director of Early
Childhood Policy*



Madi Ashour
*Director of K-12
Education Policy*

Election Update

Props LL & MM passed!



Federal Impacts



- **Government Shutdown affecting SNAP and Head Start**
- **Thousands of children risk losing Medicaid coverage**
- **Federal costs shift weaken programs like Medicaid, SNAP, TANF, CCCAP, and the overall state budget**
- **Rising premiums and uncompensated care threaten market stability**
- **Shifting federal response to student civil rights and Special Education services**

Federal Impacts

One Big Beautiful Bill (H.R. 1) Timeline: 2025-2027

July 4, 2025

Immigration and Nutrition:

Non-citizens such as refugees, asylees, and victims of sex trafficking no longer eligible for SNAP

Nutrition:

Increased work requirements for ABAWDs and restricted ability for states to waive work requirements

Jan. 1, 2026

Immigration,

Marketplaces and Medicaid:

Lawful Permanent Residents no longer eligible for PTCs during the 5-year waiting period for Medicaid / CHIP

Dec. 31, 2026

Medicaid:

Medicaid work requirements take effect and Medicaid expansion population required to renew eligibility every 6 months

Dec. 31, 2025

ACA Marketplaces:

Enhanced Premium Tax Credits Expire

Oct. 1, 2026

Immigration and Medicaid:

Non-citizens such as refugees, asylees, and victims of sex trafficking no longer eligible for Medicaid

Medicaid:

Federal funding for emergency Medicaid decreases

Nutrition:

States' SNAP administrative cost sharing increases from 50% to 75%

Source: Impact Health Policy Partners

Colorado Children's Campaign

Federal Impacts

One Big Beautiful Bill (H.R. 1) Timeline: 2027-2032

Oct. 2027

Nutrition:

SNAP state matching funds requirement begins (previously SNAP was 100% federally funded)

Oct. 1, 2028

Medicaid:

Cost-sharing for Medicaid expansion adults begins

Jan. 1, 2029

Medicaid:

Provider taxes reach final rate of 3.5% in states that started at 6% in Medicaid expansion states

Jan. 1, 2028

Medicaid:

Provider taxes in Medicaid expansion states begin to be reduced by 0.5% per year until they reach 3.5%

Oct. 1, 2029

Medicaid:

FFP penalty for erroneous Medicaid payments begins

Source: Impact Health Policy Partners

Colorado Children's Campaign

Special Session Highlights

- Addressed a ~\$750 million budget shortfall triggered by HR 1
- Raised new revenue by ending tax breaks and tapping reserves
- Stabilized health insurance & school lunches
 - Flexibility for SNAP
- Revisited AI regulations

“Our state budget is more than numbers – it reflects our values. State funding makes it possible for children to go to school, see a doctor when they need to, and grow up healthy and supported. Colorado urgently needs to find smart, targeted ways to raise revenue so our children and communities have what they need to thrive.”

~Heather Tritten, President & CEO

State Budget Pressures

- Over \$1B cut in the 2025 regular session
- Additional \$750M cut in the August special session responding to HR 1
- Children's programs largely protected through prioritization of education, health, and early childhood.
 - Further protection will be crucial in 2026

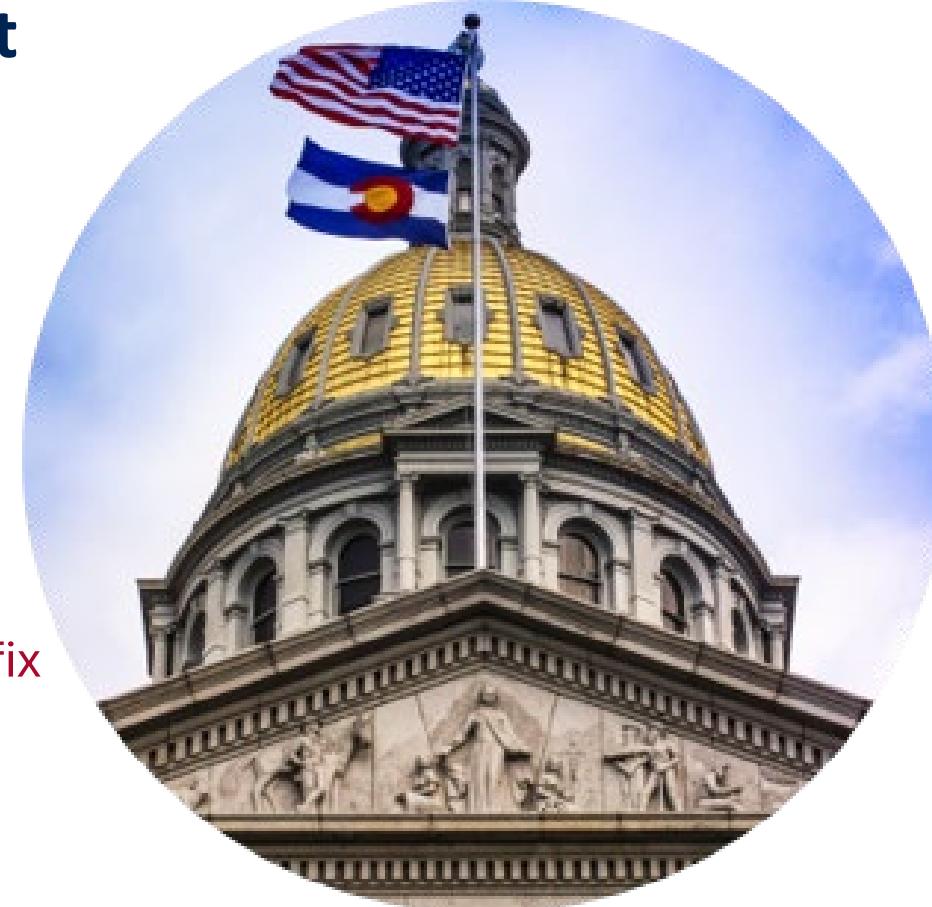


Governor's Budget

- **FY 2026-27 proposed budget released Oct. 31st**
- **Tough year facing another \$1B in cuts**
- **Children's programs remain a priority**

“With another round of painful cuts looming and federal changes threatening essential supports, we can’t wait for someone else to fix this. Colorado must lead. We must protect what works, find bold solutions, and build a stronger, more equitable future for every child.”

~Heather Tritten, President & CEO



Challenges Ahead



- **Deeper cuts coming as HR 1's impacts grow, especially to SNAP and Medicaid**
- **TABOR, constitutional limits, and outdated administration restrict flexibility**
- **Risks to other programs like TANF, CCCAP, and K-12 funding**

What We Will Do About It

- **Modernize the safety net to secure children's financial stability.**
- **Guarantee affordable, high-quality health care for every child and family.**
- **Make early childhood care affordable, accessible, and effective.**
- **Fund schools and protect students with disabilities.**



What We Will Do About It

- Modernize the safety net to secure children's financial stability.
- Guarantee affordable, high-quality health care for every child and family.
- Make early childhood care affordable, accessible, and effective.
- Fund schools and protect students with disabilities.



October was 'Kids in Focus' Month

- ***RELEASED Oct. 7 - Child Care Affordability***
- ***RELEASED Oct. 14 – Child Homelessness***
- ***RELEASED Oct. 21 – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)***



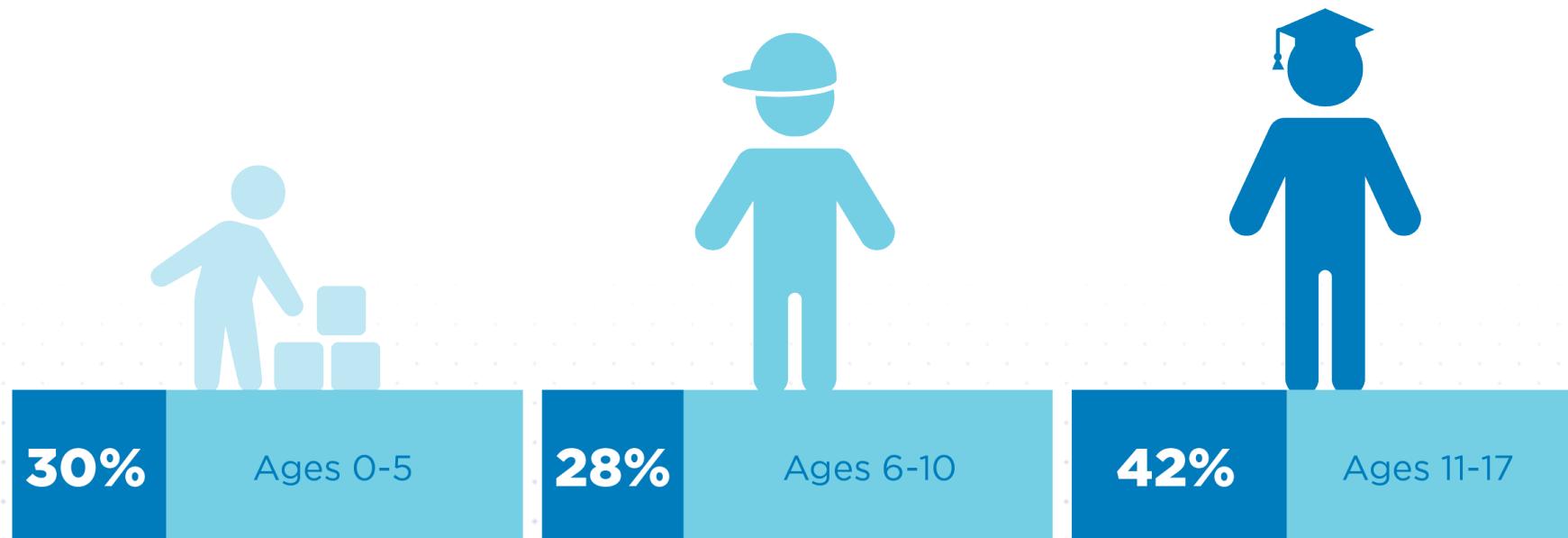
Demographics



Who Are Colorado's Kids?

In 2023...

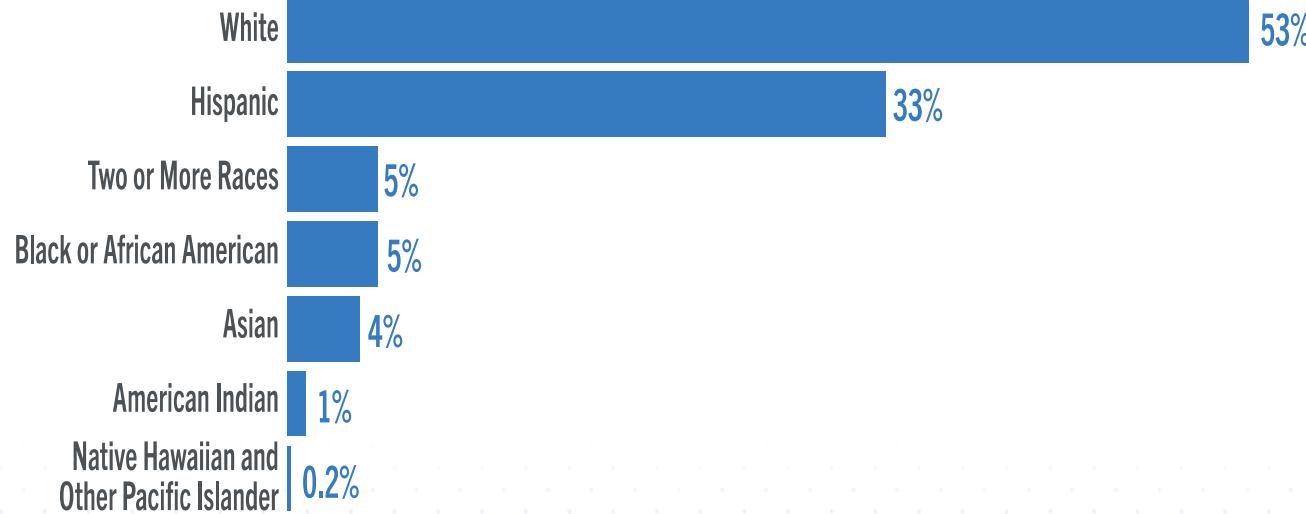
There were about **1.2 million** children living in Colorado.
Roughly one in five Coloradans (21%) were under age 18.



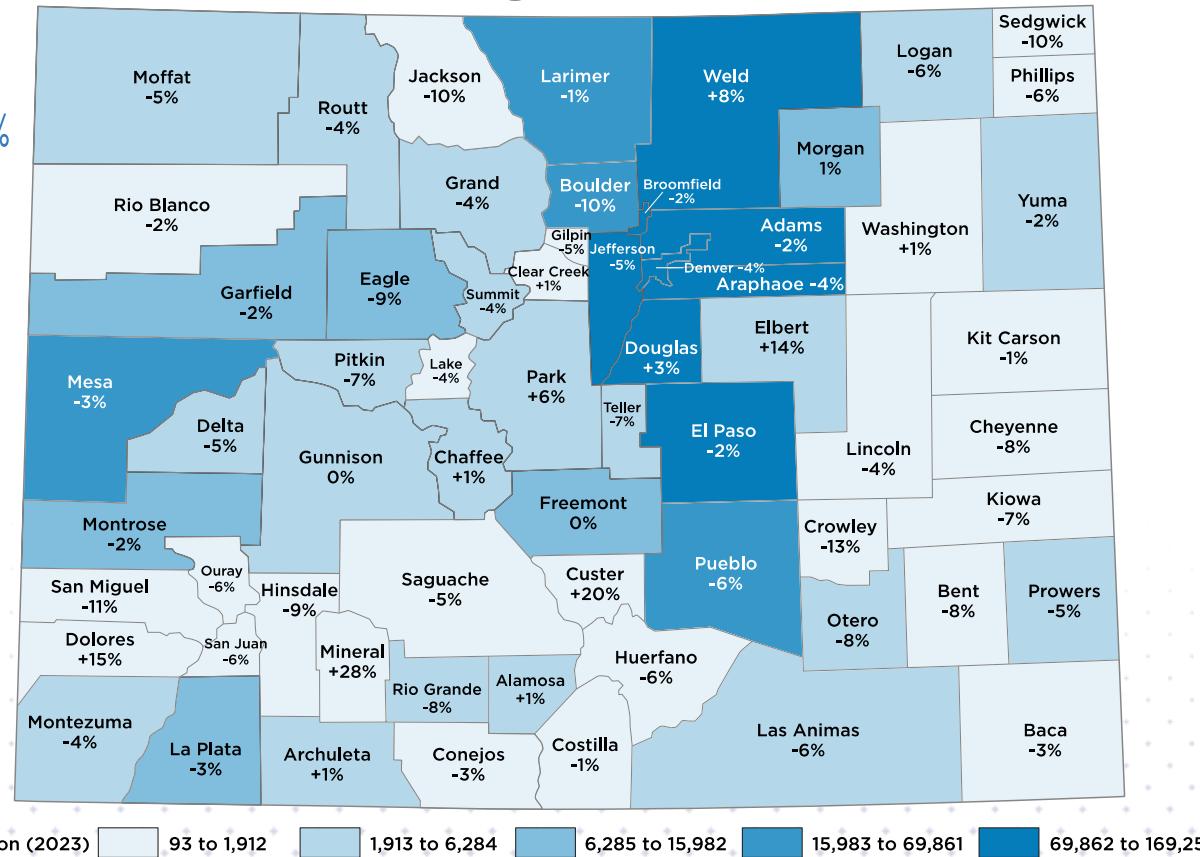
Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Demographics

Children by Race and Ethnicity, 2023



Child Population in 2023 Change Since 2019



Early Childhood



Early Childhood



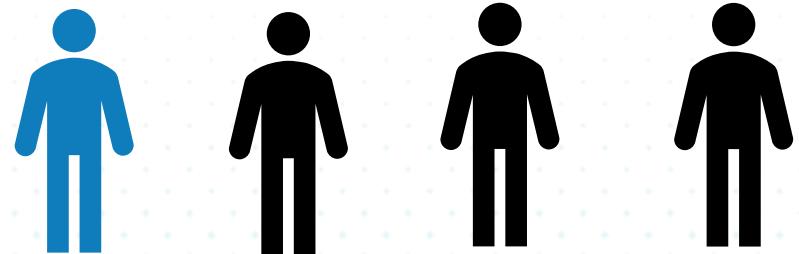
**Child care capacity is growing,
but there is still not enough
affordable, available care.**

More than half of Colorado parents had no regular or routine care arrangement.

PARENTS WITHOUT REGULAR, ROUTINE CHILD CARE FOR THEIR 12-MONTH-OLD



Nearly 1 in 4 parents were not using their preferred child care.



Source: Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment

Colorado is one of the most expensive states for child care.

Licensed Child Care Home

\$12,750

Infant

\$12,750

Toddler

\$11,970

4 year old

Licensed Child Care Center

\$19,573

Infant

\$16,307

Toddler

\$13,809

4 year old



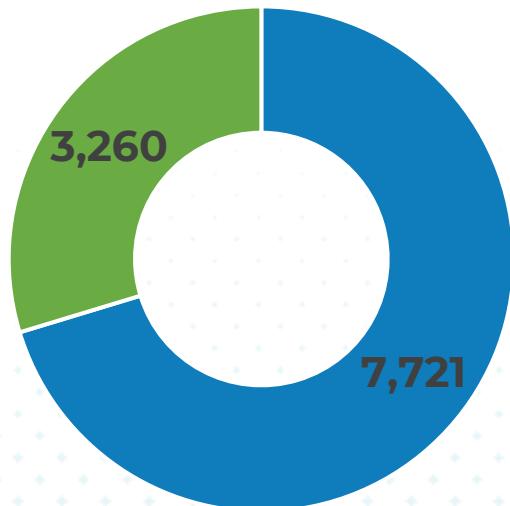
Source: Child Care Aware of America

Early Childhood

Nearly 11,000 children are on a CCCAP waitlist or freeze across 20 counties.

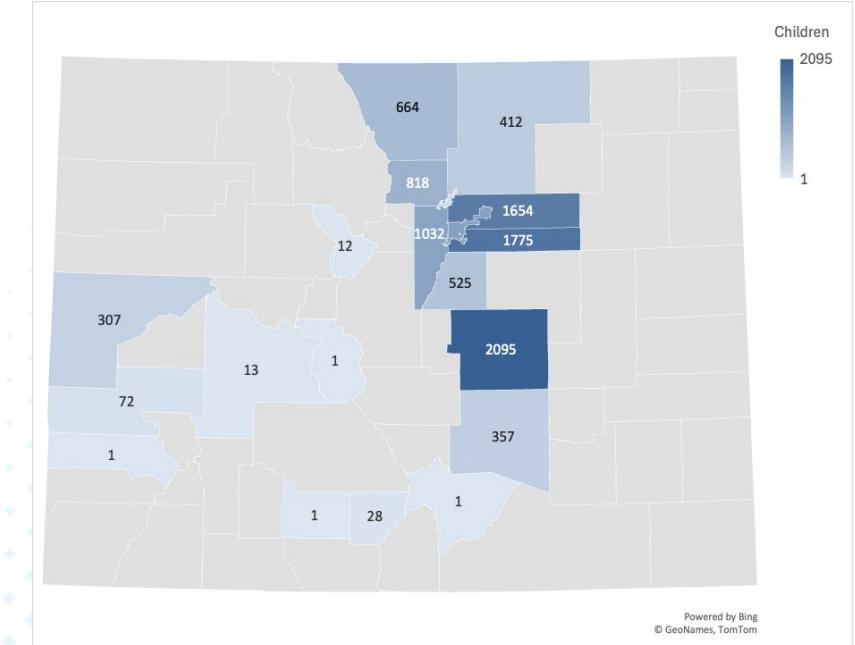
Children on a CCCAP waitlist or freeze by age

As of October 1, 2025



As of October 1, 2025:

- **10,981 children** were on a CCCAP waitlist or freeze
- **7,496 families** had a child on a waitlist or freeze
- **70%** of children on waitlists or freezes were under the age of 6



Note: The following counties may have more children on the waitlist or freeze than what is reported, but data has been suppressed for anonymity: Alamosa, Chaffee, Gunnison, Huerfano, Rio Grande, San Miguel, Summit.

Source: Colorado Department of Early Childhood

■ Under 6 ■ 6 & Older

Early Childhood

Federal Impacts on Early Childhood & Child Care

- Ripple effects from HR 1
- Health & Human Services rules for undocumented Head Start children



Early Childhood

Federal Child Care Modernization Act Co-Sponsored by Sen. Hickenlooper



Governor's Proposed FY26-27 Budget

- **Child Care Assistance (CCCAP)**
 - *Work needed to address waitlists*
- **Licensing Efficiencies**
- **Local Leads Budgeting**

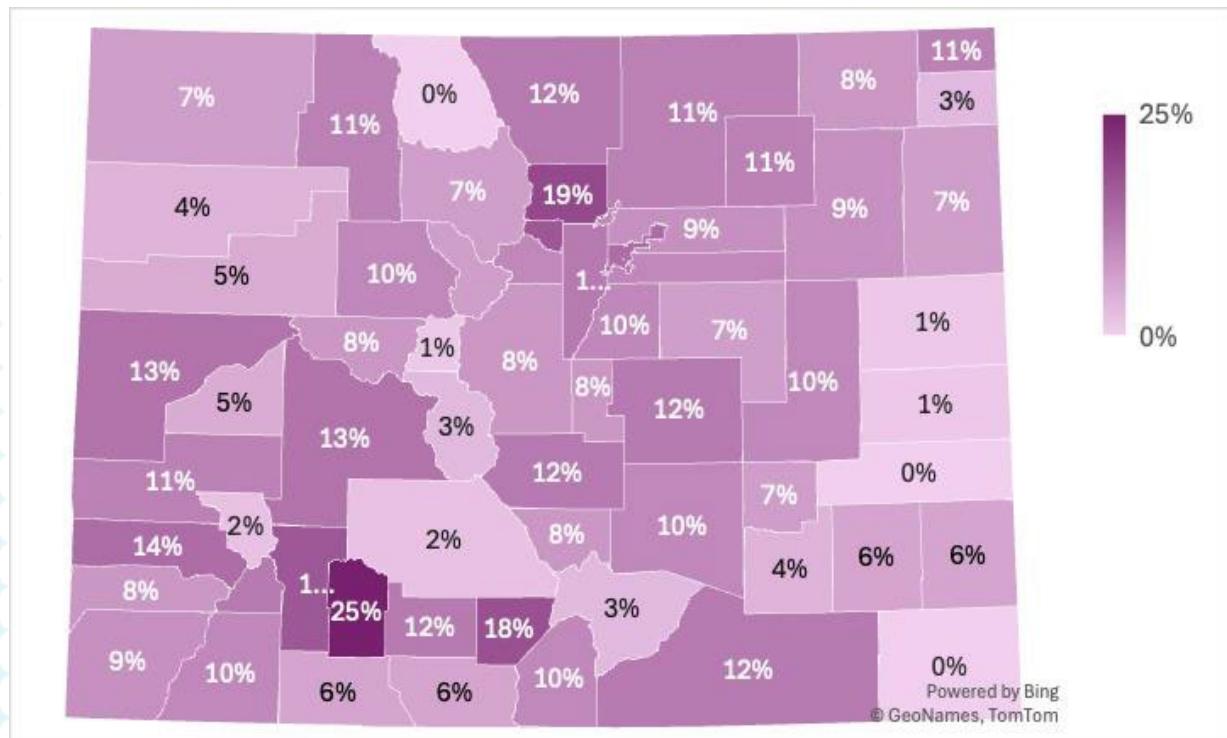


Early Childhood

Ending Childcare Waitlists and Freezes

- CCCAP (Colorado's subsidized child care system) waitlists and freezes currently affect over 11,000 kids.
- CCCAP has always been underfunded.
- Without new revenue, we must be smart about existing resources.

Percent of fiscally eligible children served by CCCAP, FY 2023-24



Local Early Childhood Governance Structures

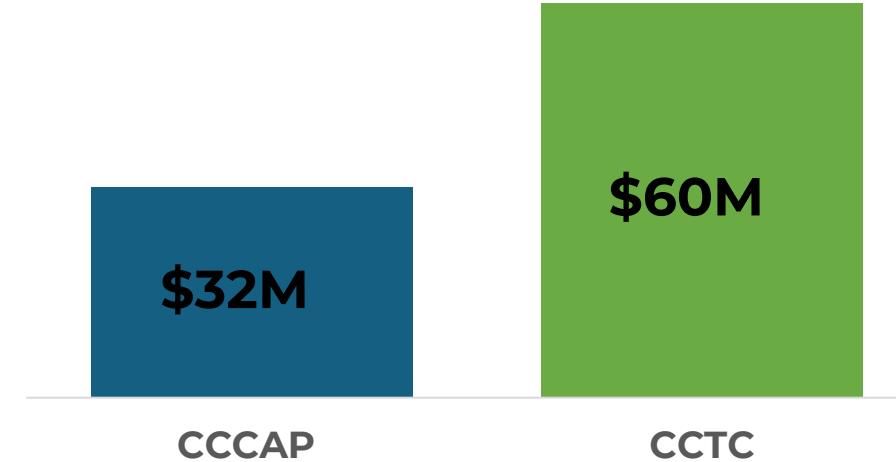
- Colorado's local ECE governance system is fragmented into three entities:
 - Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies - 1965
 - Early Childhood Councils - 2007
 - Local Coordinating Organizations - 2023
- Streamlining these will improve services to families and providers.



Early Childhood

Child Care Contribution Tax Credit (CCTC)

The CCTC generated almost double the amount of funding allocated to CCCAP.



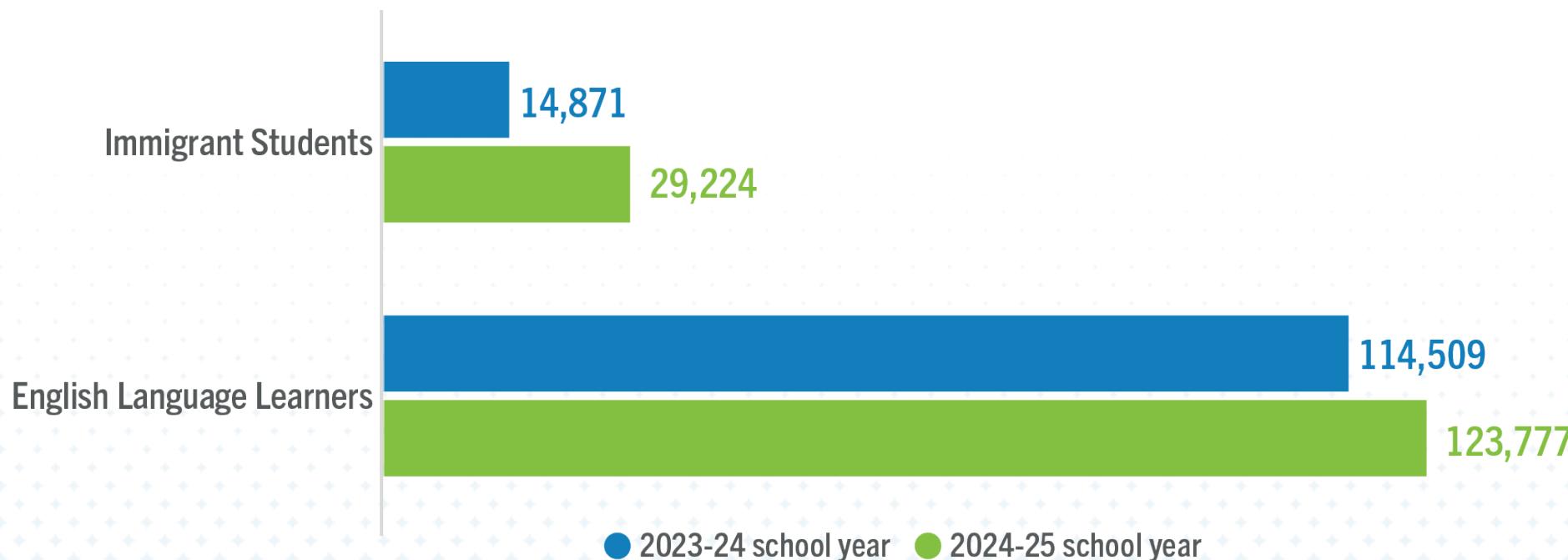
State GF contribution to CCCAP & CCTC, FY 2023-24

Public Education



The number of immigrant students nearly doubled in just one year.

Immigrant and English Language Learner Enrollments, 2023-25



Source: Colorado Department of Education

Colorado Children's Campaign

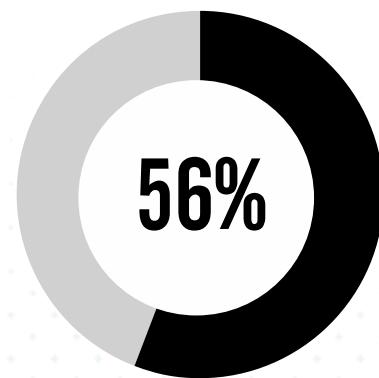
Public Education



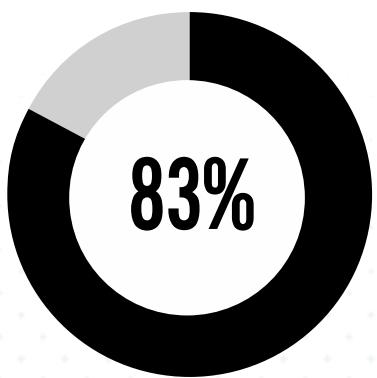
More than half of students did not meet grade-level expectations on the CMAS exam.

More than half of students in grades 3 through 8 did not meet grade-level expectations in language and math.

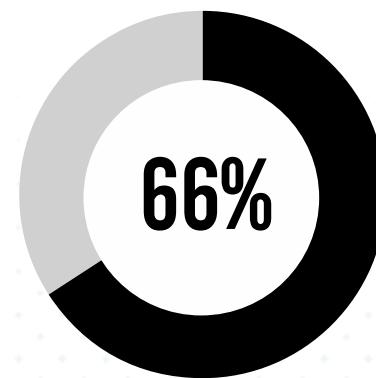
Students Not Meeting Expectations, Grades 3 Through 8



English Language Arts



Spanish Language Arts

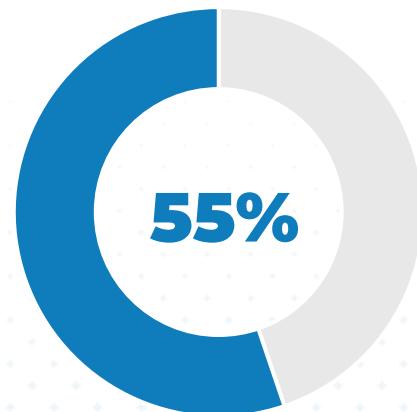


Mathematics

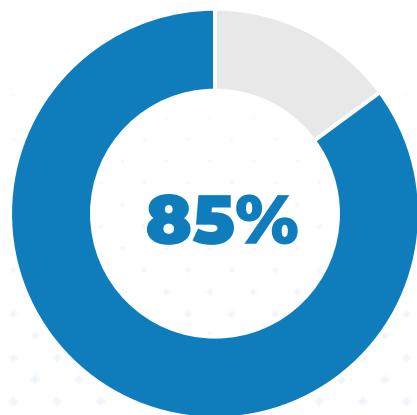
Source: Colorado Department of Education

More than half of students in grades 3 through 8 did not meet grade-level expectations in language and math.

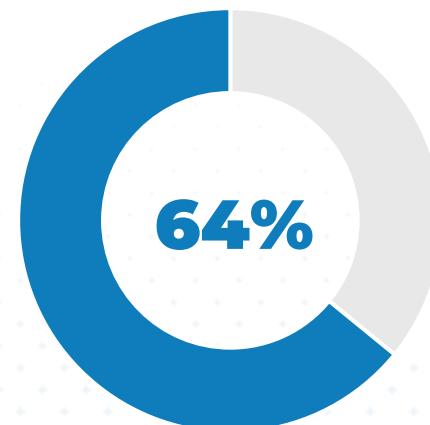
Students Not Meeting Expectations, Grades 3 Through 8, 2025



English Language Arts



Spanish Language Arts

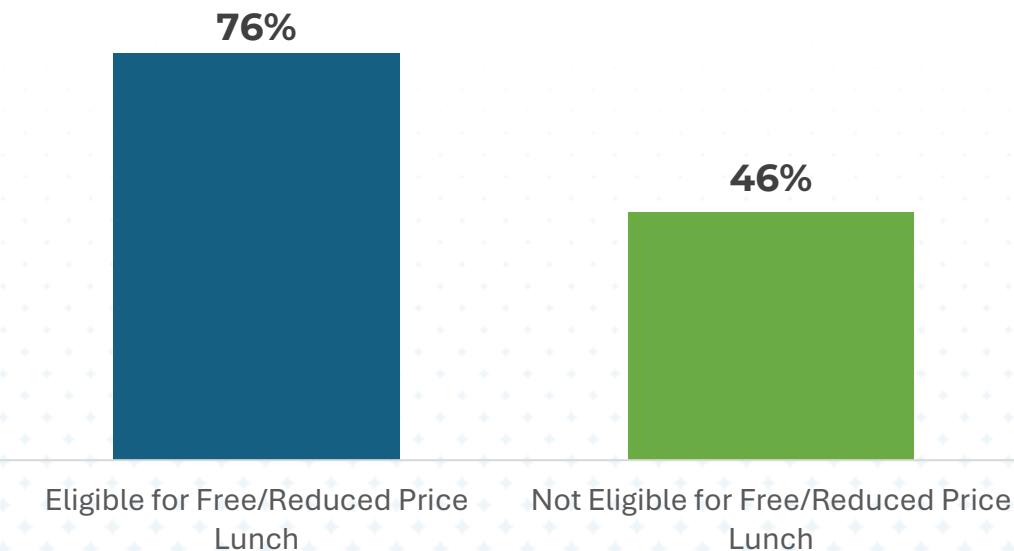


Mathematics

Source: Colorado Department of Education

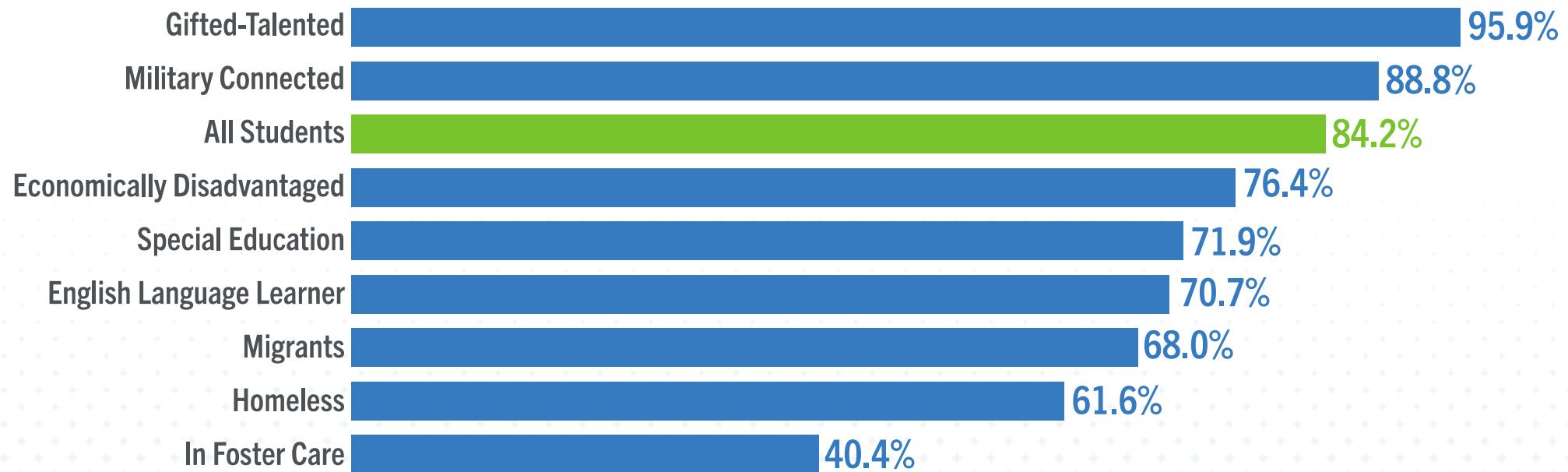
Students from households with lower incomes are far less likely to meet academic standards than their peers.

3rd Graders Not Meeting Academic Standards in English by Household Income, 2025



Source: Colorado Department of Education

On-Time Graduation Rates by Student Experience, 2023-24 School Year

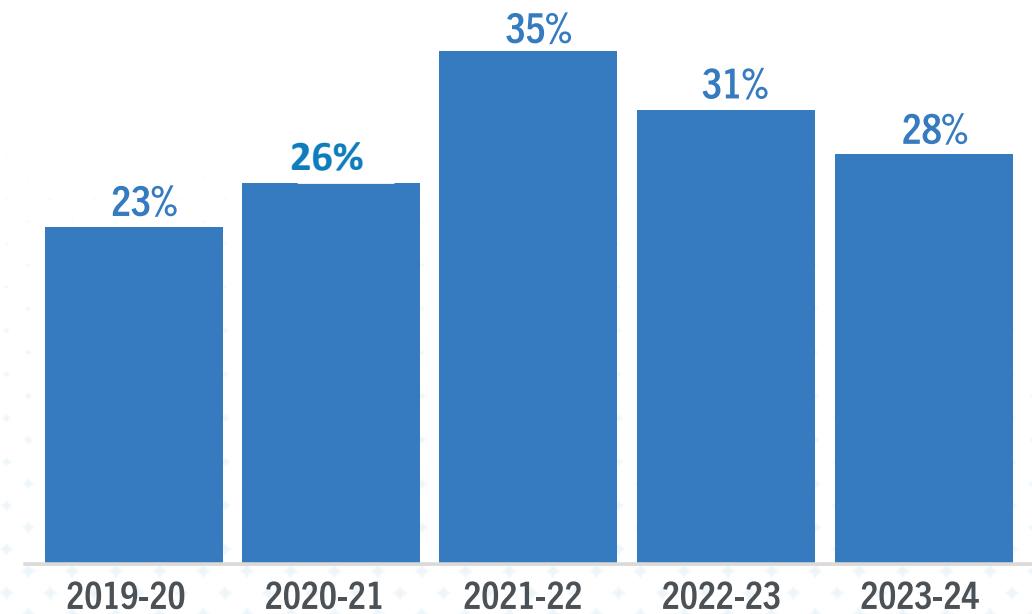


Source: Colorado Department of Education

Colorado Children's Campaign

Attendance is improving.

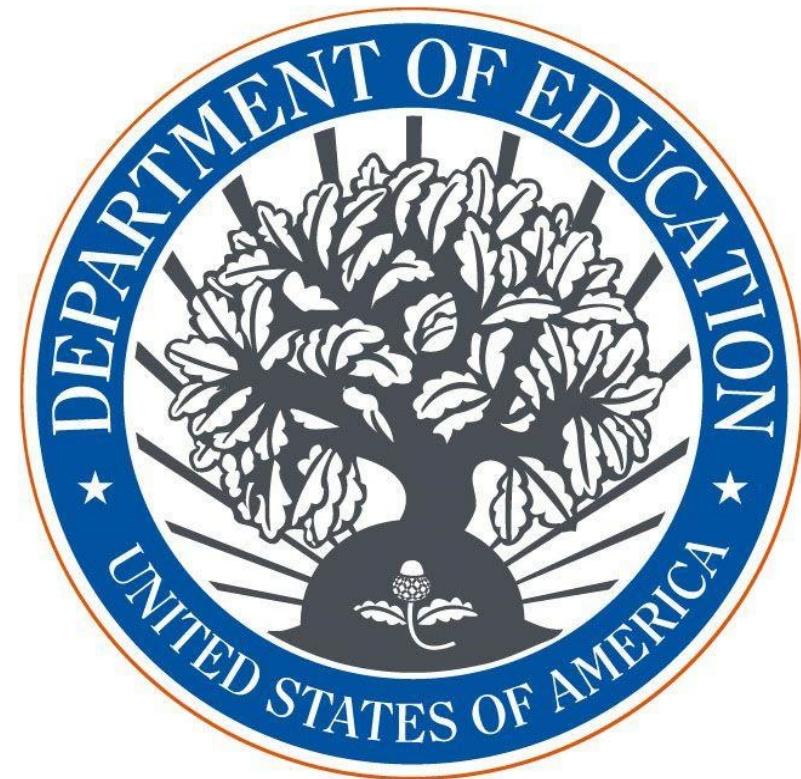
K-12 Students Who Were Chronically Absent From School, 2019-24



Source: Colorado Department of Education

Federal Impacts in K-12 Education

- **Impoundment of Title funding**
 - *\$80 million missing from Title I-IV through June 2025*
- **H.R. 1**
 - *SNAP and Medicaid Cuts will eventually affect K-12*
- **Reductions in Force at DOE**



Governor's Proposed FY26-27 Budget



- **\$167 million net funding increase for K-12**
 - *Keeps funding formula promises made in 2024 and 2025*
- **\$15 million for categorical inflationary increase**
- **Other minor reductions**

Public Education

Focusing on Students in the New School Funding Formula



**\$250
MILLION**

in additional
funds will
go toward
rural schools
each year



**\$380
MILLION**

in additional
funds will
support
multilingual
learners and
learners who
are at-risk
each year



**\$280
MILLION**

in additional
funds will
support learners
receiving
special education
services
each year

Public Education

Maximize Healthy School Meals for All



\$115 million in new revenue for HSMA from LL and MM

—
\$56 million program shortfall

\$60-75 million in left over funds

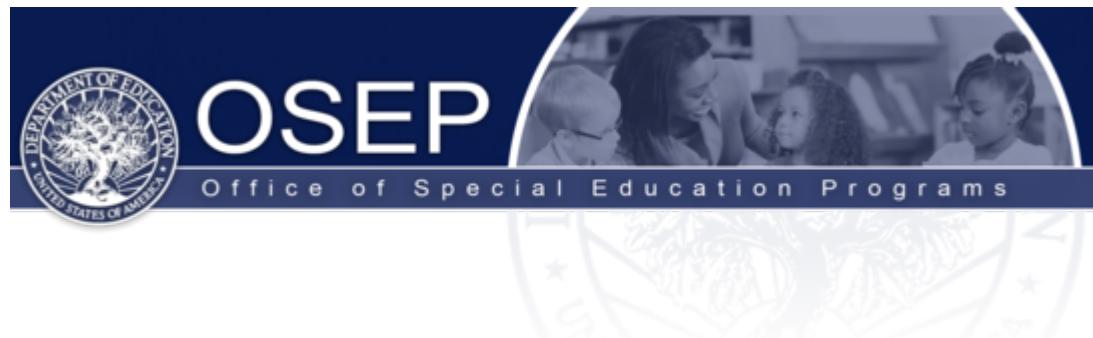


SNAP

Public Education

Protect Special Education

Protect students with disabilities as federal structures fall away.



**Extra state level
protections**

Questions?

Get Involved!

Join our KIDSFLASH Newsletter



Follow the Campaign on Social!



Submit an Action Alert - Example



Tell Congress to End the Shutdown and Fund Head Start and SNAP

Programs that support Colorado kids and families are on the verge of running out of funds due to the government shutdown. Hundreds of thousands of Colorado kids will be impacted by this federal inaction.

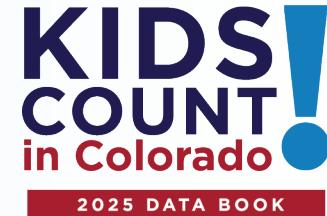
In past shutdowns, the federal government utilized emergency funds to maintain SNAP benefits. The current administration has not done so, and Colorado doesn't have the funds to fill in the gap.

Critical programs that feed Colorado kids and families and care for Colorado's youngest kids will run dry starting Saturday:

- 600,000 Coloradans will not receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits for November. This will affect more than 300,000 kids and families who rely on SNAP benefits to buy groceries.
- Four Colorado Head Start programs won't receive their next round of funds if the shutdown continues beyond Saturday. This not only threatens safe, nurturing child care spaces for over 1,000 Colorado kids, but also their access to meals, medical and dental services, and schooling.
- Many Head Start families also qualify for SNAP. This means that many families will be feeling the impact of both of these cuts at the same time, making it impossible for them to work and to keep their children healthy and fed.

Tell Colorado's members of Congress that Colorado kids are relying on them to end the shutdown and fund SNAP and Head Start.

Please Reach Out!



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