



K-12 Education

During the 2022 legislative session, the General Assembly considered measures related to kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) education in Colorado. Specifically, the legislature adopted bills pertaining to student support and services; curriculum and postsecondary options; teacher and other staff evaluations and support; public school funding; and administration and governance.

Student Support and Services

During the 2022 legislative session, the General Assembly passed six bills related to student support and services for K-12 students.

Conditional upon voter approval during the November 2022 election, [House Bill 22-1414](#) creates the Healthy School Meals for All program to provide free meals to all public school students. [House Bill 22-1260](#) requires schools to develop a policy addressing how a student with a prescription for a medically necessary treatment can receive the treatment at school.

[House Bill 22-1052](#) requires that student identification cards (IDs) issued to public school students contain the phone number, website address, and text talk number for Colorado Crisis Services. If the school does not issue IDs, the school must display outreach materials from Colorado Crisis Services and provide the information to parents at the beginning of each school year.

[House Bill 22-1120](#) recreates the School Security Disbursement Program to provide funding to local education providers and nonprofit entities to improve security measures in public schools, and [House Bill 22-1243](#) creates the School Security Disbursement Program Cash Fund to fund school safety and behavioral health programs. Finally, [House Bill 22-1376](#) modifies state laws related to school discipline, the use of restraint and seclusion, data reporting and availability, enforcement authority, and school resource officers.

Curriculum and Postsecondary

[House Bill 22-1168](#) allows local education providers (LEPs) to offer hunter education courses as an elective for seventh grade students, as long as the LEP enters into an agreement with an individual or entity to provide the course at no cost to the LEP or to the enrolled students. The hunter education course also must satisfy the same requirements as courses certified by Colorado's Parks and Wildlife.

In an effort to improve postsecondary options and access for students in Colorado, the General Assembly adopted [House Bill 22-1366](#), which establishes a number of new programs and funding options for postsecondary students, including creating an online tool kit to provide free online resources for students seeking postsecondary options.

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Teacher and Other Staff Evaluations and Support

Under current law, posting a protected person's information online is a Class 1 misdemeanor. [Senate Bill 22-171](#) adds educators, including teachers, principals, administrators, special service providers, and education support professionals, to the list of protected persons whose information cannot be posted online. The bill also adds an educator's specific date of absence from work to the definition of "personnel files" under the Colorado Open Records Act (CORA), to prevent this information from being subject to CORA requests.

Under current law, any LEP that receives money from the Early Literacy Grant Program must ensure that all early grade teachers successfully complete evidence-based training in the science of reading instruction. [Senate Bill 22-004](#) adds elementary school administrators and reading specialists to this requirement.

[Senate Bill 22-069](#) specifies that for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years, evaluation ratings for licensed K-12 personnel must not include measures of student academic growth that are derived from the Colorado Growth Model, while [Senate Bill 22-070](#) requires that student academic performance make up 30 percent of a teacher's or principal's performance evaluation.

Finally, [House Bill 22-1101](#) makes the Rural School District Critical Shortage program permanent. The program enables Public Employees' Retirement Association service retirees to work full-time for a rural school district to fill a critical need, without any reduction in their retirement benefits. The bill also expands the program to include school nurses and paraprofessionals.

Public School Funding

[House Bill 22-1202](#) creates a new at-risk measure to be included in the school finance formula and establishes a working group to determine how the new measure will be implemented.

[House Bill 22-1186](#) makes mid-year adjustments to the 2021 School Finance Act, while [House Bill 22-1390](#), the 2022 School Finance Act, sets funding levels for Colorado's 178 school districts for the 2022-23 school year.

[Senate Bill 22-202](#) directs CDE to distribute state funds to eligible school districts and charter schools in an amount equal to local funds raised through mill levy overrides (MLOs), and [House Bill 22-1331](#) directs CDE to distribute supplemental payments to approved facility schools.

Administration and Governance

[Senate Bill 22-127](#) increases special education funding and requires the Special Education Fiscal Advisory Committee to complete a report on special education funding in the state and recommend changes to the special education funding model. [House Bill 22-1294](#) permits charter schools to form alternative administrative units to provide special education services and develop and administer an enrollment preference plan for children with disabilities.

[House Bill 22-1110](#) modifies open meeting laws to permit a school district board of education to enter into an executive session to discuss the terms of an employment contract for a district superintendent.

Under current law, the School Leadership Pilot Program in the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) is set to repeal July 1, 2022. [House Bill 22-1248](#) extends the School

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Leadership Pilot Program within CDE indefinitely.

Senate Bill 22-197 permits a group of schools to submit an innovation school zone plan that would authorize the schools to adopt an alternative governance model allowing management by an organization that forms a partnership with the local school board. The bill also establishes a dispute resolution process for when innovation schools with an alternative governance have disagreements with school boards.

Senate Bill 22-207 requires CDE, in collaboration with the Department of Higher Education Sexual Advisory Misconduct Committee, a K-12 advocacy organization, and a Colorado student government organization, to contract with a third party to conduct a study on the amendments to the Title IX regulations issued by the US Department of Education.

Under current law, when a public school is in turnaround status and fails to make substantial improvement, or has been on performance watch for five years, the Commissioner of Education is required to assign the State Review Panel (SRP) to evaluate the performance and recommend one or more specified actions, such as converting the school into an innovation school or closing the school. *Senate Bill 22-054* gives the SRP an additional option to recommend converting a school into a community school and *Senate Bill 22-137* makes adjustments to the school accountability system.

House Bill 22-1215 creates the Secondary, Postsecondary, and Work-based Learning Integration Task Force to develop and recommend policies for the development of integration programs including: early college programs; p-tech schools; the Accelerating Students through Concurrent Enrollment (ASCENT) program; the TREP program; high school innovative learning pilot; career development success programs; and fourth-year innovation pilot programs.