



COLORADO
Department of Education

H.B. 11-1254

School Bullying Prevention and Education Grant

2022 Annual Report

Submitted to:

**Colorado State Board of Education and House and Senate Education Committees of the Colorado
General Assembly**

By:

The Colorado Department of Education

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Introduction and Background

In 2011, the Colorado General Assembly passed House Bill 11-1254, Concerning Measures to Reduce the Frequency of Bullying in Schools (C.R.S. 22-93-101). This bill, in part, created a grant program at the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to support the reduction of bullying in Colorado schools. In 2015, voters passed Proposition BB, the Colorado Marijuana TABOR Refund Measure, which made funding available for the grant program. Since 2016, the Marijuana Tax Cash Fund has provided \$2 million each year, dependent on state appropriations, to the School Bullying Prevention and Education Grant (BPEG) program to support bullying prevention in Colorado schools. As of May 2022, over \$11.1 million has been distributed to schools to support bullying prevention and education across the state.

Grantees are authorized to use funding from the program in accordance with Colorado State Board of Education rules for the purpose of reducing bullying. Schools and districts may use funds to:

- Implement evidence-based best practices for preventing bullying;
- Ensure sustainability of the bullying prevention efforts over time;
- Include families and the community in bullying prevention efforts;
- Include student leadership and voice in bullying prevention efforts;
- Review and revise policies concerning bullying education and prevention;
- Survey students on their experiences with bullying; and
- Determine the degree to which evidence-based best practices are implemented with fidelity.

At the end of the 2021-22 fiscal year, the BPEG program will have completed two cohorts of grantees. Grantees include districts, individual schools, charter schools, the Charter School Institute, and Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). In the first grant cycle, grant recipients included 71 schools, 14 school districts, the Charter School Institute, and the South Central BOCES. These grantees were active between 2016 and 2019 representing five of the eight educational regions across the state and supporting approximately 34,000 students. By the end of the first grant cycle, students in grantee schools reported an overall 33 percent reduction in bullying and 17 percent reduction in witnessing bullying.

The second cohort of grantees implemented the BPEG program between the 2019-20 and 2021-22 school years. This cohort was larger in size than the first cohort, representing 109 schools and 20 local education agencies (LEAs). In the middle of this grant cycle, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic programmatically and fiscally impacted the BPEG program resulting in one school withdrawing from the grant program and significant reductions in funding. See Table 1 for a comparison of the descriptors for each cohort. For the 2020-21 school year, the state legislature reduced funding for the BPEG program by 50 percent which resulted in an across-the-board funding reduction for grantees. These changes led to reduced technical assistance support from CDE, significantly lower turnout for student surveys, and an overall rethinking of how to implement effective bullying prevention practices in a virtual environment. For the 2021-22 school year, the Colorado legislature reinstated full funding to the BPEG program.



Table 1: Demographics of Program Cohorts

Descriptor	Cohort 1 (2016-19)	Cohort 2 (2019-22)
LEAs	16	20
School Districts	14	17
BOCES	1	1
Charter School Institute	1	1
Schools	71	109
Regions	5	5
Students Supported per Year	34,000	41,000

Grant Implementation

Grant Activities

In alignment with the stated goal of the BPEG program and State Board of Education rules, grantees engage in many activities throughout the life of the grant that reduce bullying such as the implementation of an evidence-based bullying prevention curriculum and including student voice in bullying prevention efforts. These activities are organized by the core components of evidence-based bullying prevention best practices. Each year, schools in the BPEG program must complete the BPEG self-assessment to measure their implementation of these core components. The core components are:

- (1) bullying prevention committee;
- (2) climate and culture;
- (3) evidence-based curriculum;
- (4) surveys and data;
- (5) family, school, and community partnering (FSCP);
- (6) student voice; and
- (7) policy.

Schools choose to engage in the core components in different ways. For example, some schools engage families through a program called Watch D.O.G.S., which provides a structured way for fathers to volunteer at the school. Other schools participate in district-wide “peace summits” where teachers and students connect with the community to share how they spread kindness and bullying prevention at their sites. The BPEG program allows flexibility for schools to engage in bullying prevention best practices that fit their unique contexts.

In addition to the completing activities related to the core components of effective bullying prevention, the CDE Statewide Bullying Prevention Manager provides asynchronous training, timely technical assistance, and quarterly live webinars for BPEG program grantees. These resources allow grantees the opportunity to receive the most up-to-date research on bullying prevention, learn from their peers, and obtain training and coaching support on specific bullying topics. All webinars and trainings are recorded and available through the CDE website.



Current Grantees

Current BPEG program grantees are completing their third and final year in the grant. The grantees were selected through a competitive grant process in the fall of 2018 and began implementation of the grant in the fall of 2019. Each grantee was eligible to receive a maximum of \$25,000 per school, per year with a cap of \$200,000 per year set for each application. Grantees new to the BPEG program also received up to \$1,000 per school in spring 2019 to conduct a baseline survey on the prevalence of bullying. In total, 22 grantees representing 20 LEAs and 109 schools were accepted into the BPEG program as cohort 2 grantees. This represents an increase of 48 percent in the number of grantees and 54 percent in the number of schools receiving services compared to the first grant cycle. Table 2 shows the cohort 2 funding amounts across all three years of the grant cycle and the 2018-19 school year which required grantees to complete readiness activities. Please note that funding was reduced during the 2020-21 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic before having full funding restored for the 2021-22 school year.

Table 2: Average Funding for Grantees Participating in Cohort 2¹

Grantee/LEA	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Total
Boulder Valley School District	\$0	\$75,000	\$38,250	\$75,000	\$188,250
Center Consolidated Schools	\$1,000	\$75,000	\$38,250	\$75,000	\$189,250
Charter School Institute	\$999	\$75,000	\$38,250	\$75,000	\$189,249
Denver Public Schools	\$2,000	\$150,000	\$76,500	\$150,000	\$378,500
Greely 6 School District	\$1,000	\$125,000	\$63,750	\$125,000	\$314,750
Lamar RE- 2 School District	\$0	\$123,435	\$57,801	\$113,335	\$294,571
Mapleton Public Schools	\$0	\$200,000	\$102,000	\$200,000	\$502,000
McClave Public Schools	\$1,000	\$49,925	\$25,220	\$47,700	\$123,845
Monte Vista C-8	\$888	\$61,481	\$23,553	\$39,310	\$125,232
Montrose County School District	\$10,000	\$200,000	\$102,000	\$200,000	\$512,000
Mountain Valley School District RE-1	\$1,000	\$25,000	\$12,750	\$25,000	\$63,750
Omar D Blair Charter School	\$1,000	\$25,000	\$12,750	\$25,000	\$63,750
Poudre School District	\$1,000	\$200,000	\$102,000	\$200,000	\$503,000
Pueblo School District 60	\$3,396	\$200,000	\$102,000	\$200,000	\$505,396
Ricardo Flores Magon Academy	\$1,000	\$25,000	\$12,750	\$25,000	\$63,750
Sheridan School District	\$0	\$25,000	\$12,750	\$25,000	\$62,750
South Central BOCES	\$6,000	\$75,000	\$38,250	\$75,000	\$194,250
South Conejos School District	\$1,000	\$74,992	\$38,250	\$25,000	\$139,242
Thompson School District	\$0	\$75,000	\$38,250	\$75,000	\$188,250
Weld Re-4 School District	\$1,000	\$25,000	\$12,750	\$25,000	\$63,750
Total	\$32,283	\$1,884,833	\$948,074	\$1,800,345	\$4,665,535
Average Per LEA	\$1,614	\$94,242	\$47,404	\$90,017	\$233,277

¹ Ricardo Flores Magon Academy is authorized by the Charter School Institute but applied as an individual charter school.

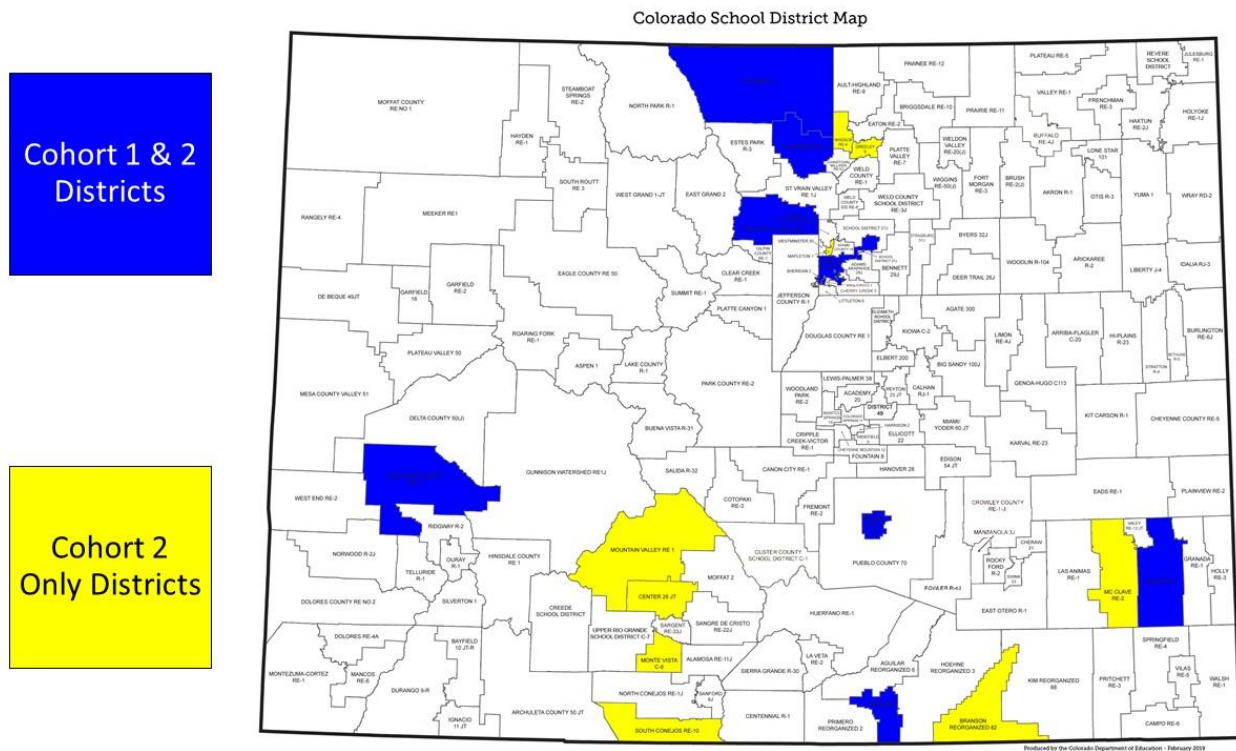


Figure 1 Location of BPEG Program Cohort 2 Grantees in 2021-2022

As can be seen in Figure 1, school districts represented in cohort 2 of the BPEG program span five of the eight education regions in the state. Those districts highlighted in blue continued in the BPEG program from cohort 1 into cohort 2 (continuing grantees). Those highlighted in yellow were accepted into the BPEG program for the first time in cohort 2 (new grantees).

In Table 3, BPEG program LEAs, schools, and number of students enrolled are presented for the 2021-22 school year. Please note that in the fall of 2020, Custer School District had three schools and Poudre School District had one school withdraw from the BPEG program. Additionally, Eckhart Elementary in the Trinidad School District was closed during the 2020-21 school year and has not reopened. Finally, Carlile Elementary School in Pueblo School District 60 was closed during the 2021-22 school year. This results in a total of 103 schools receiving funding from the BPEG program during the 2021-22 school year.



Table 3: Number of Students in BPEG Program Cohort 2 Schools in the 2021-22 School Year.²

District/School	Students	District/School	Students
Adams 12 Five Star Schools		Cottonwood Elementary	433
New America School - Thornton	244	Johnson Elementary	510
Boulder Valley School District		Northside Elementary	337
Alicia Sanchez Elementary	335	Oak Grove Elementary	390
Columbine Elementary	412	Olathe Elementary	466
Pioneer Bilingual Elementary	481	Olathe Middle	239
Center Consolidated Schools		Peak Virtual Academy	254
Center High School	148	Pomona Elementary	334
Haskin Elementary	290	Mountain Valley School District	
Skoglund Middle	141	Mountain Valley School (K-12)	185
Charter School Institute		Poudre School District	
New America School-Lowry	169	Bacon Elementary	443
Ricardo Flores Magon Academy	251	Cache La Poudre Middle	330
Denver Public Schools		Leshar Middle	778
Bear Valley	498	Preston Middle	982
Eagleton Elementary	258	Timnath Elementary	417
Hamilton Middle	701	Wellington Middle	517
Highline Academy Northeast	528	Pueblo School District 60	
Highline Academy Southeast	547	Belmont Elementary	451
Merrill Middle	601	Bessemer Academy	258
Omar D. Blair Charter School	679	Beulah Heights Elementary	308
Greeley 6		Bradford Elementary	313
Jackson Elementary	390	Carlile Elementary	-
Martinez Elementary	438	Centennial High School	870
Meeker Elementary	479	Central High School	892
Monfort Elementary	456	Columbian Elementary	309
Shawsheen Elementary	362	Corwin International Magnet School	512
Jefferson County School District		East High School	934
New America School-Lakewood	113	Eva R. Baca Elementary	232
Lamar Re-2 School District		Fountain International Magnet	293
Alta Vista Charter School	130	Franklin School of Innovation	323
Lamar High School	466	Goodnight School	571
Lamar Middle	343	Haaff Elementary	293
Parkview Elementary	259	Heaton Middle School	755
Washington Elementary	262	Heritage Elementary	303
Mapleton Public School		Highland Park Elementary	390
Academy High	470	Irving Elementary	332
Achieve Academy	397	Minnequa Elementary	299
Adventure Elementary	376	Morton Elementary	366

² The Charter School Institute application included all New America Schools even though two of the New America Schools are authorized by other districts (Adams 12 and Jefferson County). Monterey Community School and Eckhart Elementary were not open in 2020-21.



District/School		District/School	
Big Picture College and Career Academy	116	Paragon Learning Center	364
Clayton Partnership	407	Park View Elementary	292
Explore Elementary	578	Pueblo Charter School for Arts & Sciences	539
Global Intermediate Academy	337	Risley International Academy of Innovation	403
Global Leadership Academy	311	Roncalli STEM Academy	470
Global Primary Academy	289	South High School	947
Mapleton Early College	279	South Park Elementary	336
Mapleton Expeditionary School of the Arts	541	Sunset Park Elementary	401
Meadow Community	411	Sheridan School District	
Monterey Community	366	Fort Logan Northgate	457
Trailside Academy	514	South Central BOCES	
Welby Community School	323	Eckhart Elementary	-
York International	851	Trinidad Middle	200
McClave Public Schools		South Conejos	
McClave Elementary	124	Antonito High	38
McClave Undivided High School	113	Antonito Middle	26
Monte Vista C-8		Guadalupe Elementary	85
Bill Metz Elementary	270	Thompson School District	
Marsh School	150	Berthoud High	685
Monte Vista High School	265	Cottonwood Plains	394
Monte Vista Middle	239	High Plains	450
Montrose County School District		Weld RE-4	
Centennial Middle	578	Windsor High	1,172
Columbine Middle	504	Total	41,668

Table 4 provides a breakdown of student demographics for those attending BPEG program schools. More males than females were enrolled in the BPEG program during the 2021-22 school year. The race/ethnicity percentages of students attending BPEG program schools remained the same compared to the previous school year. Students reporting as Hispanic or Latino (58%) represent the most common racial group, followed by students identifying as White (34%), Black or African American (3%), and two or more races (3%). In contrast, the percentage of students qualifying for free-and-reduced lunch dipped from 67 percent the previous year to 62 percent in 2021-22.

**Table 4: Demographics of Students across BPEG Program Schools for the 2021-22 School Year**

Descriptor	Number	Percentage
Gender		
Female	20,287	49%
Male	21,381	51%
Race/Ethnicity		
American Indian or Alaskan Native	196	<1%
Asian	693	2%
Black or African American	1,410	3%
Hispanic or Latino	23,983	58%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	73	<1%
White	14,168	34%
Two or More Races	1,145	3%
Free-and-Reduced Lunch		
Average Percent per School		62%

Grant Outcomes

Evidence-Based Bullying Prevention Best Practices

Outcomes for the BPEG program are measured through the reduction of bullying and the increase in school-level implementation of bullying prevention best practices. Grantees submit data each year on their progress in implementing bullying prevention best practices across the seven components identified in the BPEG self-assessment. This assessment was created at the beginning of the BPEG program and provides grantees with a broad understanding of the practices that they can implement as part of a comprehensive approach to bullying prevention. Schools self-report their scores for each item on the BPEG self-assessment. Score options include 0 (Not in Place), 1 (Partially in Place), and 2 (Fully in Place). If a school earns a score of 1 or 2 on the self-assessment, they must also include notes and evidence for each item.

For the following analyses, results from continuing grantee are separated from new grantee schools. This allows for a more meaningful comparison of implementation progress that is based on the amount of time schools have been receiving support from the grant. Figure 2 shows the percentage of possible points earned on the BPEG self-assessment overall for those grantees that have participated in the BPEG program since the beginning of the first grant cycle.

For each year in the grant, continuing grantees improved their implementation of bullying prevention best practices except for the 2019-20 school year. Comments from grantees during the 2019-20 school year indicate that the drop in implementation was due to challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic and remote learning. As in-person learning began to become more common during the 2020-21 school year, the average percentage of possible points earned on the BPEG self-assessment again increased.

BPEG Self-Assessment Average Overall Scores for Cohort 2 Continuing Grantees

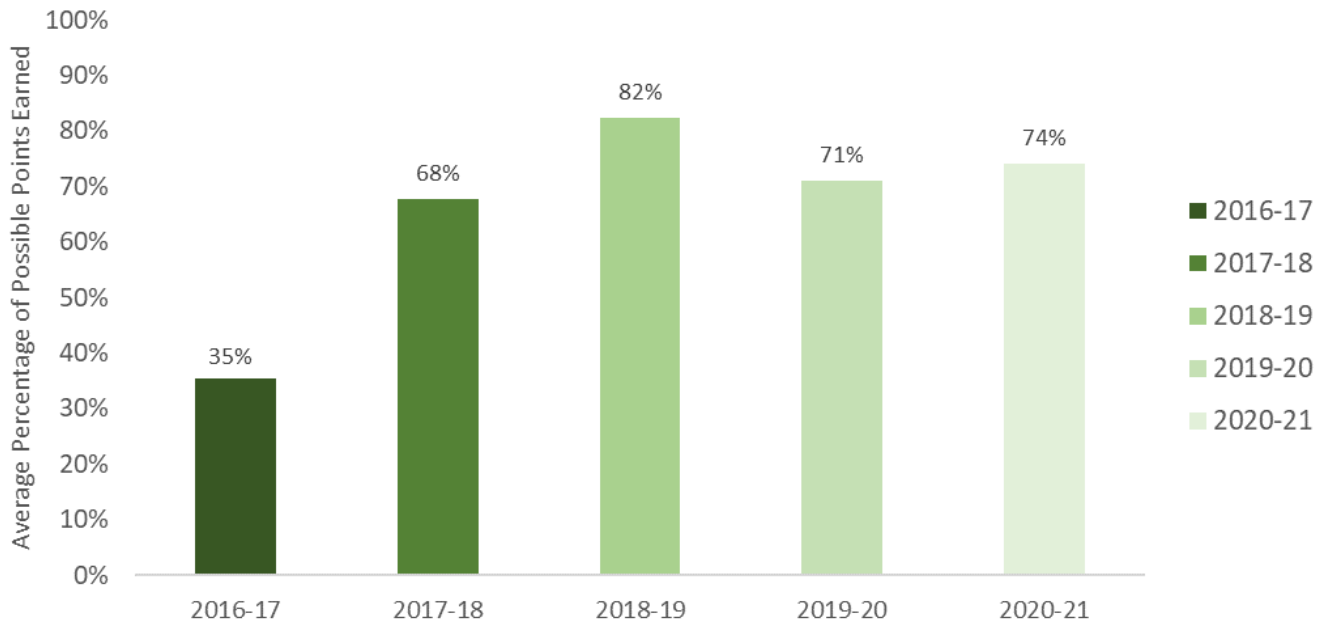


Figure 2 Average BPEG Self-Assessment Scores for Cohort 2 Continuing Grantees

Figure 3 demonstrates the BPEG self-assessment data for new grantees to the program beginning in the second grant cycle. Across all seven components of the BPEG self-assessment, new grantees improved their scores from the 2019-20 school year to the 2020-21 school year. New grantees improved their overall percentage of possible points earned by 24 percentage points.

BPEG Self-Assessment Average Scores for Cohort 2 New Grantees

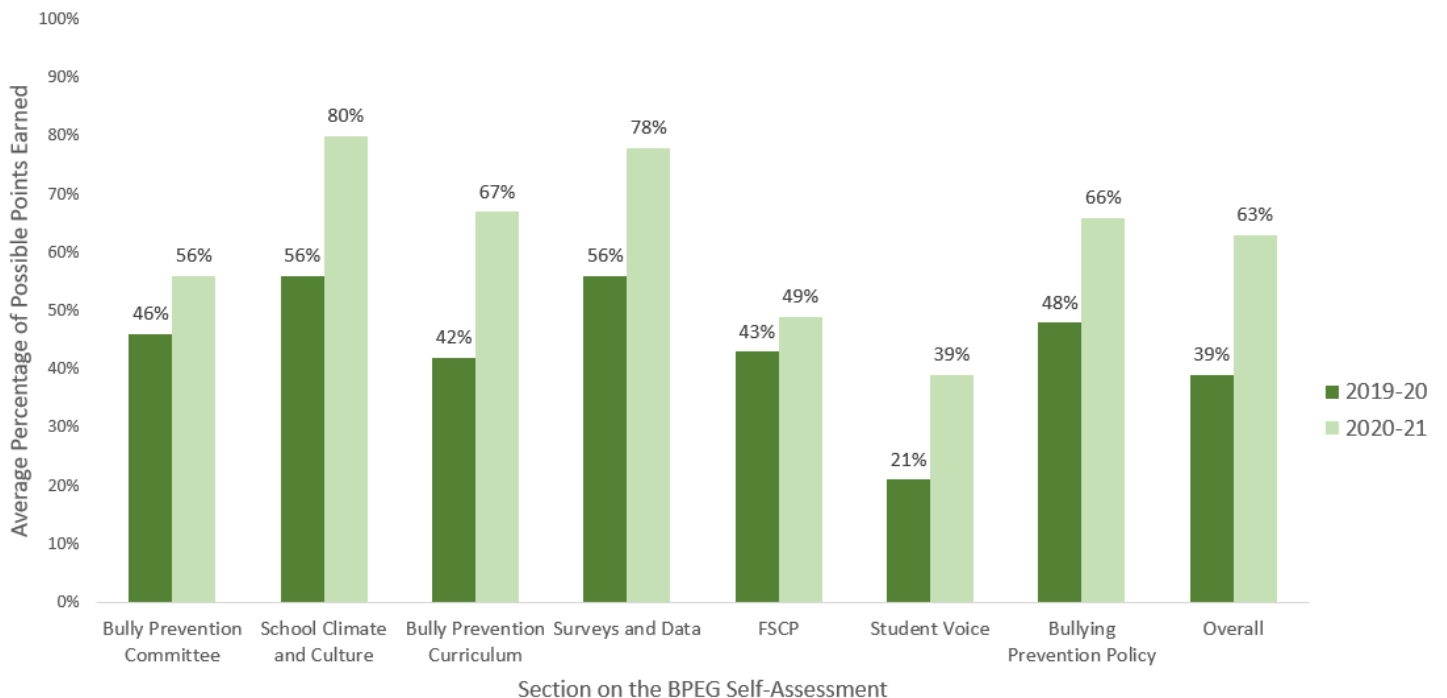


Figure 3 Average BPEG Self-Assessment Scores for Cohort 2 New Grantees

Reduction in Bullying

To measure the impact of the BPEG program on the prevalence of bullying in schools, each year every school is required to survey students on their experiences with bullying. Schools may use any survey instrument, including an instrument already in use, so long as the following two questions are included: (1) has the student been the target of bullying, and (2) has the student witnessed bullying?

For continuing grantees, data since 2016 demonstrate that there has been a steady reduction in student-reported bullying over time. Figure 4 shows that since the baseline student survey, there has been a 14-percentage point drop in students being the target of bullying and a 22-percentage point drop in students witnessing bullying. This represents a 41 percent reduction in bullying and a 45 percent reduction in the witnessing of bullying for continuing grantees.

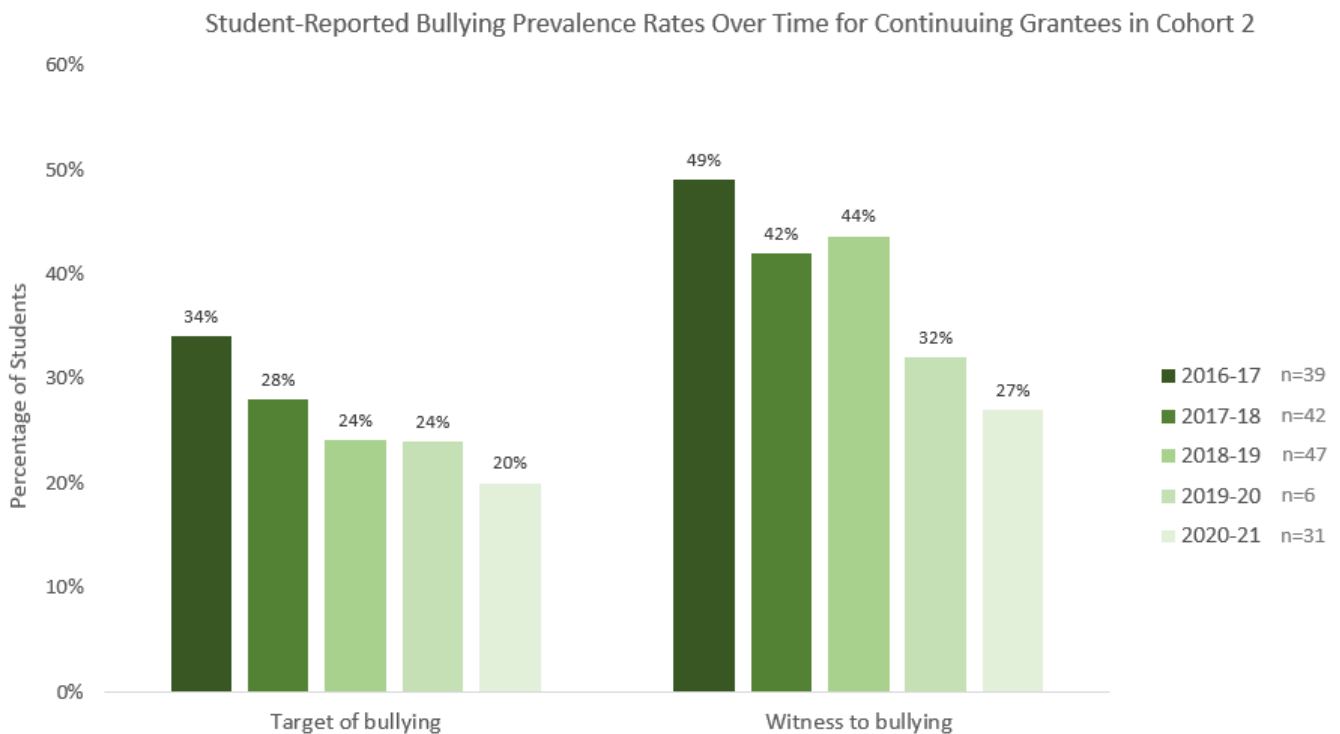


Figure 4 Student-reported Bullying Over Time for Continuing Grantees

New grantees to the BPEG program in cohort 2 have also realized a reduction in bullying since beginning to implement the grant. As seen in Figure 5, the baseline survey of students for new grantees found that 45 percent reported being the target of bullying during the 2018-19 school year. That number dropped to 29 percent during the 2020-21 school year representing a 36 percent reduction in bullying. Additionally, 52 percent of students in new BPEG program grantees schools reported witnessing bullying during the 2018-19 school year compared to just 29 percent during the 2020-21 school year. This represents a 44 percent reduction in the witnessing of bullying.

Student-Reported Bullying Prevalence Rates Over Time for New Grantees in Cohort 2

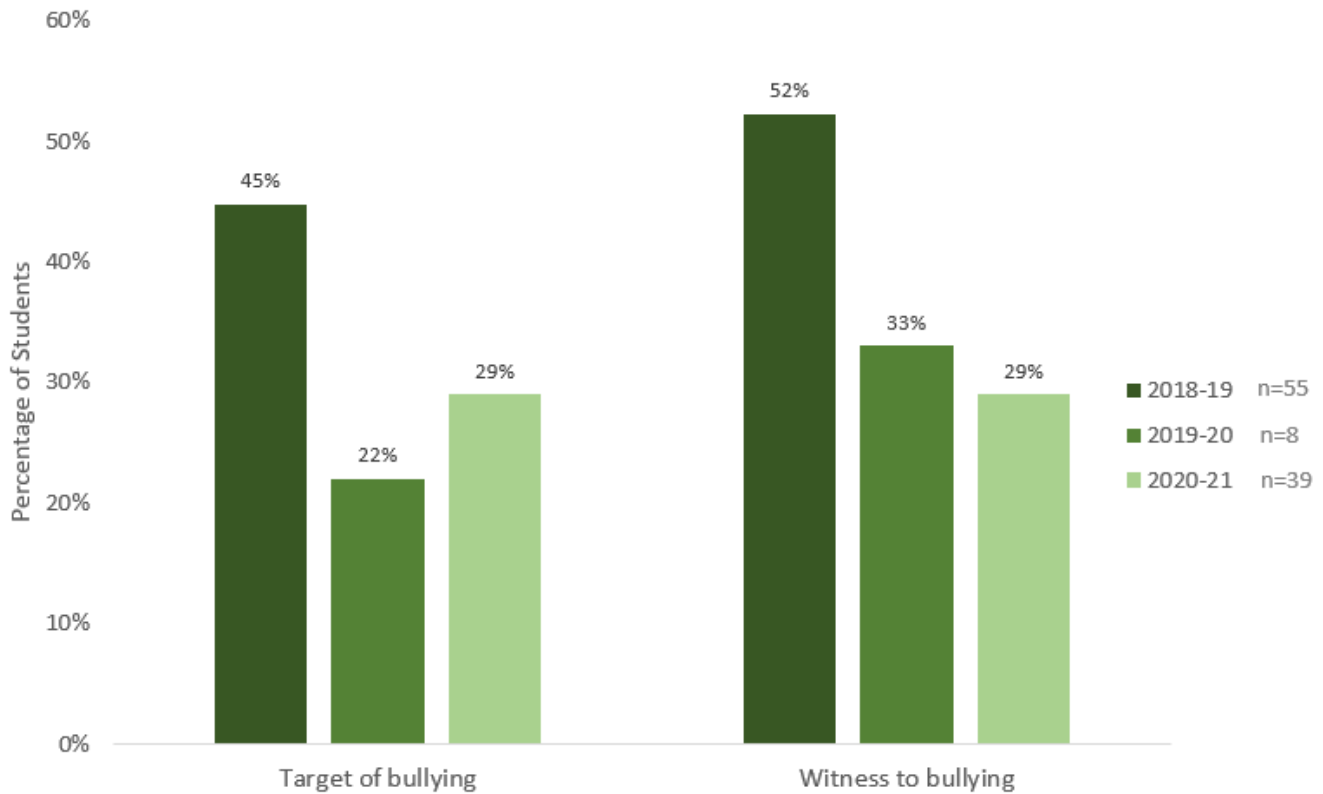


Figure 5 Student-reported Bullying Over Time for New Grantees

COVID-19 Pandemic Impact

During the 2019-20 school year, the number of schools reporting student survey data reduced significantly due to the suspension of in-person learning because of the COVID-19 pandemic. All BPEG program grantees are required to survey students during the spring of each year. This ensures that the survey results capture a significant portion of the events that took place during the year. Due to the discontinuation of in-person learning in Colorado from March 18, 2020 through the end of the school year, students who would typically be surveyed at school were learning remotely. Moreover, recent research on school-level bullying has demonstrated that the prevalence of in-person bullying across the country reduced during this time, likely because of the lack of in-person learning (Vaillancourt et al., 2021). Given the unique circumstances surrounding this survey administration period, the results from the 2019-20 school year should be interpreted with caution.

A separate impact related to the COVID-19 pandemic is that during the 2020-21 school year, funding for the BPEG program was reduced by 50 percent, from \$2 million to \$1 million. This resulted in an across-the-board reduction of about 50 percent for all grantees. Due to the funding cuts, grantees shifted their bullying prevention and education priorities to include only those costs that were required as part of the grant (e.g., surveying students and purchasing an evidence-based curriculum). Funding for the CDE administration of the grant was also reduced from 1.0 to .25 FTE during this time. These changes likely led to reduced implementation of bullying prevention best practices and, subsequently, bullying prevalence rates at grantee schools.



Conclusion

As the BPEG program enters the final year of its second grant cycle, students, families, and educators around the state continue to benefit from its implementation. Despite the fiscal and programmatic barriers arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, schools in the BPEG program demonstrate strong resolve to support the health and well-being of students. Grantees that have participated in the BPEG program since its inception in 2016 continue to reduce bullying year-over-year suggesting that the benefits of the program perpetuate beyond a single grant cycle. Additionally, new grantees to the BPEG program in the second cohort are on track to realize even greater reductions in bullying than those in the first grant cycle. Funding for the BPEG program was restored for the 2021-2022 school year meaning grantees are once again able to have the full fiscal support they anticipated when applying for the grant. Given the continued strength of schools and support from CDE, it is expected that bullying will be reduced even further next year in the final year of the grant cycle.