



COLORADO
Department of Education

Educator Recruitment and Retention Financial Assistance Program 2023-24

Submitted to:

**Colorado State Board of Education
Colorado Governor Jared Polis
Colorado House Education Committee
Colorado Senate Education Committee**

By:

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Executive Summary

This report details the activities of the Educator Recruitment and Retention Financial Assistance Program (ERR Program) created pursuant to [Senate Bill 21-185](#) (C.R.S. 22-60.3-201 et seq.). Developed in response to persistent educator shortages across the state, the ERR Program removes or reduces a potential barrier to entry into education: the tuition cost of an educator preparation program (EPP). Applicants for the financial assistance must commit to working in an educator shortage area for three years in Colorado and be enrolled in a Colorado-approved traditional or alternative EPP or institute of higher education. They must meet one of the following criteria as well: (1) hold at least a bachelor's degree and be employed as an alternative teacher or temporary educator eligibility (TEE) educator; (2) be currently employed as a paraprofessional in a school district/charter school/BOCES and working toward a baccalaureate degree as required to pursue a professional teaching license; or (3) have secured a position as a Career and Technical Education (CTE) instructor in a rural district.

Annually, the legislature appropriates \$5 million to the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) for tuition assistance of up to \$10,000 per qualified applicant, which is paid to the EPP in which the applicant is enrolled. The legislation only allows educators to apply for financial assistance once, although their preparation program may take multiple years. As a result, educators may be awarded financial assistance in one year and have the unspent portion encumbered into one or more future years. In the fiscal year 2023-24, \$6.7 million was requested by 868 applicants, and \$5.2 million was awarded for 699 educators' financial assistance for one or more years.¹ In 2023-24, \$4.99 million was paid to 37 EPPs to support educators, and more than \$750,000 of the 2024-25 funds will be used to pay for the encumbered awards given in prior school years.

After CDE closed the application and distributed all funds for the 2023-24 school year, an interest form was made available on the website on December 1, 2024, to allow candidates to express an interest in future funding. These candidates missed the application windows, and/or funds were exhausted before they applied. The form was completed by 544 individuals, requesting \$2.7 million in financial aid. When combined with the amount of money requested by applicants, there was a demand for almost twice as much money, \$9.4 million, as was provided.

To gauge the impact of the ERR Program, CDE administered a perception survey to ERR Program recipients and local education agencies (LEAs) with at least one ERR Program participant. The response rate was 37%. Almost 70% of the respondents considered dropping out or delaying their educator preparation program before receiving financial assistance, and over 94% reported that the financial assistance positively impacted their careers.

Two cohorts of educators have completed at least one year of teaching: 2021-22 and 2022-23. The percentage of recipients that continue to work in a shortage area or are current paraprofessionals is 85.9%. This percentage increases to 88% when including any recipient who is still working in a Colorado public or charter school in any role or subject area (shortage and non-shortage).

Per C.R.S. 22-60.3-205(1)(h), this report must include any recommendations for legislative or regulatory changes to facilitate the effective implementation of the program. Below are CDE recommendations for the ERR Program:

- Continue to support new and future teachers through the ERR Program to address the teacher shortage areas in the state and increase the diversity of Colorado's teachers. As a note, as of the time of this report, 100% of the funds available for 2024-25 have already been awarded to new educators.
- Consider how program eligibility requirements can be expanded to support other shortage mechanisms being used by districts and schools, such as apprenticeships and long-term subs.

Introduction

Recruiting, developing and maintaining a stable, high-quality educator workforce is critical to the success of Colorado's students. Research consistently shows that teachers are the most important contributors to student academic success (Rivkin et al., 2005 & Chetty, Friedman, Rockoff, 2014).ⁱⁱ Recent research illustrates that teachers are essential to helping students develop other non-academic skills necessary for achieving academic success (Jackson, 2018 and Bashant, 2014).ⁱⁱⁱ

Each year, Colorado school districts face the perennial challenge of recruiting and retaining teachers for classrooms, especially in rural areas and hard-to-fill subject areas, such as special education. The ongoing shortages combined with the steady decline of enrollment in colleges of education for the past decade and the disruption created by the COVID-19 pandemic heighten the challenges (Goldberg, 2021 & Knox, 2022).^{iv}

In response to these persistent challenges, Colorado's legislature passed Senate Bill 21-185 (C.R.S. 22-60.3-201 et seq.). This bill created the Educator Recruitment and Retention Program to address Colorado's educator shortage issues by providing support for recruiting, selecting, training and retaining qualified educators. The Educator Recruitment and Retention Program is designed to accomplish the following goals:

- Support the transition of members of the armed forces into a second career as Colorado educators;
- Support non-military-affiliated candidates preparing to enter careers as Colorado educators;
- Match former military and non-military-affiliated preparation candidates with eligible high-needs schools; and
- Fill teaching positions in subject areas affected by the educator workforce shortage.

One part of the legislation, and the focus of this report, is the financial assistance program (ERR Program) that provides up to \$10,000 for educators to pay for tuition at their Educator Preparation Program (EPP). Since 2020, Colorado's legislature has allotted \$5M for the ERR Program; CDE awards funds to the individual educators but pays the funds directly to the EPPs.

The ERR Program is intended to attract, retain and support educators and ultimately decrease the number of unfilled shortage area positions in Colorado's school districts. To be eligible for the financial assistance, applicants must commit to working in an educator shortage area for three years in a Colorado public school and be enrolled in a Colorado-approved traditional or alternative EPP or institute of higher education (this includes Career and Technology Education authorizations).^v They must also meet one of the following criteria:

- Have earned a bachelor's or higher degree from a regionally accredited college or university and have secured employment as an alternative teacher or temporary educator eligibility (TEE) educator; or
- Be currently employed as a paraprofessional in a school district, charter school or BOCES and working toward a baccalaureate degree as required to pursue a professional teaching license; or
- Have secured a position as a CTE instructor in a rural or small rural district.

Educator Recruitment and Retention Program

- S.B. 21-185 provides \$5M annually for tuition assistance, up to \$10,000 per awardee, to qualified applicants enrolled in Educator Preparation Programs.
- S.B. 21-185 stipulated that recipients of tuition assistance must commit to teaching in a rural school district for at least three years.
- H.B. 22-1390 expanded the pool of tuition assistance applicants to include critical educator shortage positions in all school districts. Recipients must remain in a shortage position for a minimum of three years.



In addition to providing financial assistance to educators, Senate Bill 21-185 supports educator recruitment and retention efforts at CDE in the Educator Talent division. During the 2023-24 school year, Educator Talent's staff provided recruitment and retention resources and support to:

- 151 school districts, 9 EPPs, 18 Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), 2 Colorado education organizations (Colorado Association of School Executives and Colorado BOCES Association) and 11 charter schools;
- 300+ educators, teacher candidates and potential educators through one-on-one counseling;
- 185+ Troops to Teachers candidates;
- 25 career and teacher job fairs across the state; and
- More than 2,400 future substitute teachers and the employing LEA through the Substitute Boot Camp.

The team also began a J-1 Visa working group to assist LEAs in utilizing this recruitment tool and organized and held a meeting in the 2023-24 school year for paraprofessionals to learn about the different pathways to becoming a teacher, the financial assistance available and professional development opportunities. Twenty-five individuals registered and 11 attended the first meeting. Multiple other events are scheduled for the 2024-25 school year.

An important partner in recruiting applicants for the ERR Program is TEACH Colorado. Launched in August of 2019, TEACH Colorado has elevated the image of the teaching profession and increased the quantity, quality, and diversity of candidates entering the teacher pipeline in Colorado.

Comprising a statewide coalition of education institutions, government, philanthropy, and nonprofit stakeholders, the initiative is being led by the Colorado Department of Education, Colorado Department of Higher Education, the Public Education & Business Coalition (PEBC), Colorado Education Initiative (CEI) and TEACH.org.

TEACH Colorado is currently partnering with 100% of the educator preparation programs in the state and numerous school districts to address how best to support current and future educators in the state. During the 2023-24 school year¹, TEACH Colorado had 202,957 unique visitors who engaged in 281,579 website sessions, hosted 1069 one-on-one advising sessions, engaged 998 group advising registrants, and received 771 scholarship applications.

Reflecting the most current available data and as reported in the department's ERR evaluation report from November 2023, TEACH-supported candidates were more racially/ethnically diverse than Colorado's current teaching workforce, with approximately 59 percent of TEACH-supported candidates identifying as a minority compared to 13 percent of current teachers.

TEACH Colorado also published unique resource pages for Black, Latinx, Indigenous and Asian American Pacific Islanders and held a series of group "Licensure 101" advising sessions for Future Black Educators and Future Latino/a Educators. TEACH Colorado's dedication to increasing the diversity of educators potentially increased the diversity of the ERR Program applicant pool. Additionally, TEACH Colorado provided the following specific support for the ERR Program:



- TEACH Colorado coaches informing all the advising session participants of the financial assistance available.
- Including banner images on the TEACH Colorado website promoting the stipend, and on all EPP profiles in rural areas, our rural education page, and our alternative licensure page.
- Publishing social media posts promoting the stipend.
- Sending emails to all website subscribers, more than 17,000, promoting the stipend.
- Promoting the stipend during co-hosted information sessions with educator preparation programs, and webinars TEACH hosts for job seekers through Connecting Colorado.

ERR Program Information for the 2023-24 School Year

Per statute, the following reporting requirements will be addressed:

- The number of individuals reached through program communications
- The total number of applicants
- The total number of qualified program participants
- The total amount of financial assistance distributed
- The number of educator licensure certificates earned through the ERR program
- The completion rate for participating EPPs

Communications

CDE circulated information about the ERR Program and about the financial assistance opportunity of up to \$10K in financial assistance for qualified education preparation participants in the following ways:

- Partnered with TEACH Colorado
- Posted information on the Educator Talent’s website^{vi}
- Shared in the Educator Talent Newsletter, a monthly newsletter to support districts, BOCES and EPPs in their educator preparation and development efforts (June and August 2023)
- Shared in CDE’s Scoop Newsletter (August 2023)
- Shared information during Designated Agency Office Hours and with the Colorado Council of Deans of Education on numerous occasions

CDE estimates that, at minimum, 40,000 individuals received information about the ERR Program in the 2023-24 school year.

ERR Applicants for the 2023-24 School Year

CDE received 868 applications for the ERR Program for the 2023-24 school year. Of those 868 applications, only 26 did not meet the qualifications for the assistance, one applicant declined the funds, and the other 142 were not funded because all the funding was allocated before their application was evaluated.^{vii} Twenty-nine percent of applicants identified as male or non-binary, and 26% identified as a person of color. Tables 1 and 2 illustrate the demographic composition of the applicants and recipients.

Table 1. Race and Ethnicity of ERR Program Applicants and Recipients for the 2023-24 School Year

	Applicants	Recipients
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American Indian, Alaskan Native	5 (0.6%)	4 (0.6%)
Asian	19 (2.2%)	14 (2.0%)
Black	36 (4.1%)	24 (3.4%)
Hispanic	143 (16.5%)	117 (16.7%)
White, non-Hispanic	639 (73.6%)	522 (74.7%)
Two or more races	26 (3.0%)	18 (2.6%)
Total Number	868	699

Table 2. Gender of ERR Program Applicants and Recipients for the 2023-24 School Year

	Applicants	Recipients
Female	622 (71.7%)	505 (72.2%)
Male	242 (27.9%)	190 (27.2%)
Non-binary	4 (0.5%)	4 (0.6%)
Total Number	868	699

At the time of the ERR application, education levels varied from some college to doctoral degree, with more than two-thirds of applicants, 72% of recipients, holding a bachelor’s degree. Almost 97% of ERR Program recipients utilize the alternative teacher pathway or have a TEE authorization. The remaining 3% are currently paraprofessionals. In the 2023-24 school year, CDE did not receive an application from a CTE teacher.

Tables 3 and 4 below summarize education levels and pathways for both applicants and recipients of the award.

Table 3. Education Levels for the 2023-24 ERR Program Cohort

	Applicants	Recipients
Some Colleges	15 (1.7%)	11 (1.6%)
Associate degree	14 (1.6%)	8 (1.1%)
Master’s Degree	204 (23.5%)	161 (23.0%)
Bachelor’s Degree	615 (70.9%)	503 (72.0%)
Master’s Degree	204 (23.5%)	161 (23.0%)
Doctoral Degree	20 (2.3%)	16 (2.3%)
Total Number	868	699

Table 4. Pathways Utilized by 2023-24 ERR Program Cohort

	Applicants	Recipients
Alternative Teacher Pathway and CTE	779 (89.7%)	635 (90.8%)
Temporary Educator Eligibility (TEE)	59 (6.8%)	41 (5.9%)
Current Paraprofessional	30 (3.5%)	23 (3.3%)



Total Number	868	699
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ERR Recipient Information and Outcomes

During the 2023-24 school year, 699 individuals received assistance. As shown in Table 1 (above), 28% of recipients identified as male or non-binary, and 25% identified as a person of color. This is more diverse than the makeup of Colorado’s teachers in the 2023-24 school year, among which 15% identify as educators of color and 22% as male or non-binary. Thirty-two individuals who are currently serving or who served in the military applied for assistance (3.7% of all applicants), and 26 of them were approved.

Ninety-one percent of the ERR Program recipients were enrolled in an alternative licensure program, and the other nine percent were in traditional EPPs. Current paraprofessionals comprise 3.3% of traditional program enrollees, and the remaining 5.9% are TEE holders.^{viii} Figure 1 shows the 123 school districts, including the Charter School Institute, where ERR recipients taught. Additionally, four BOCES have six teaching recipients, and two facility schools have two teaching recipients as well. The 699 ERR Program recipients attended 37 different EPPs. Higher education institutions support ERR recipients through alternative and traditional educator preparation programs. The list below in Table 5 shows the programs that ERR recipients attended.^{ix}



Figure 1. Colorado School District Map of ERR Financial Assistance Employment for the 2023-24 School Year

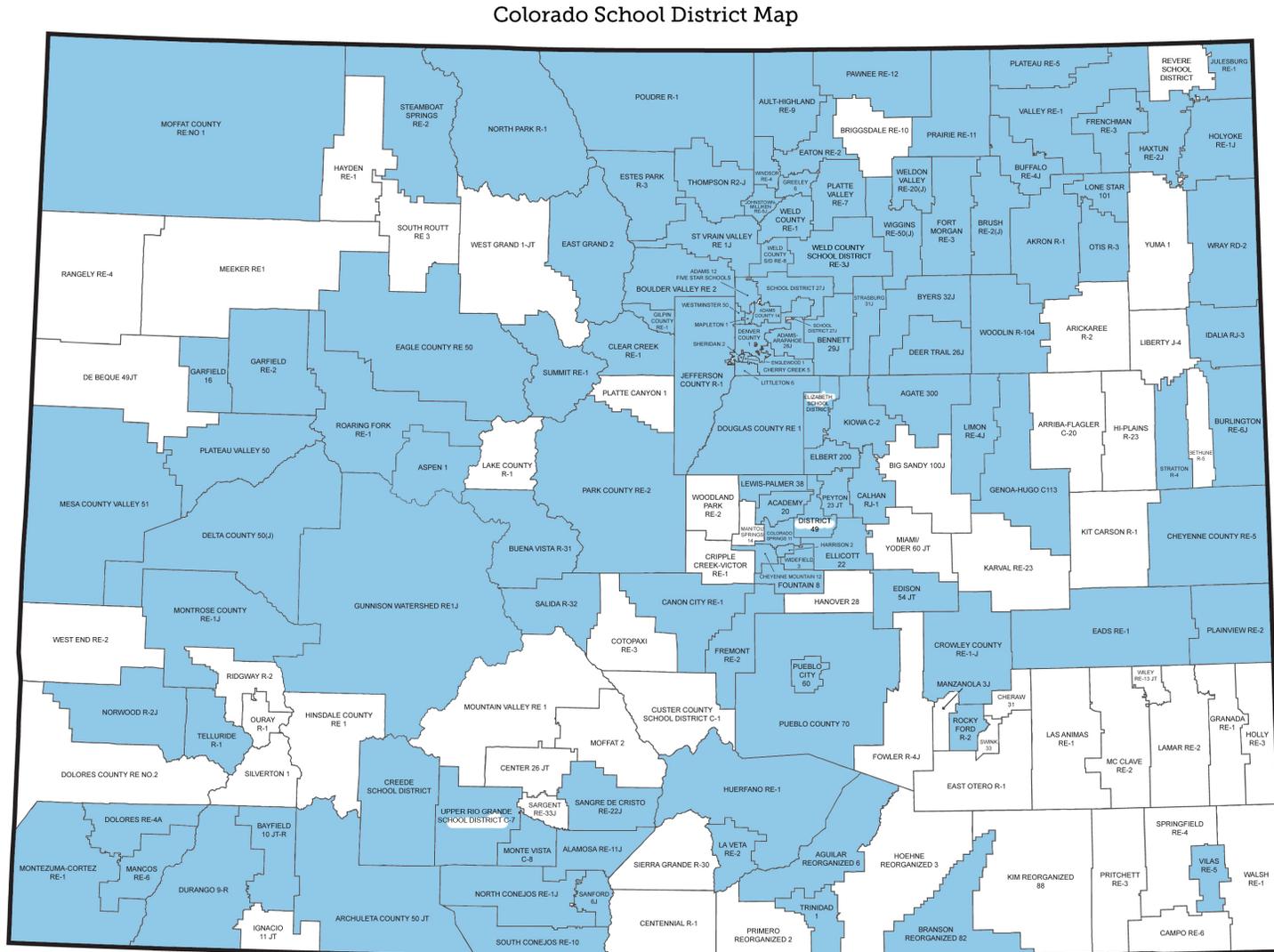




Table 5. Educator Preparation Programs Attended by ERR Recipients in 2023-24

Adams State University (A&T)	East Central BOCES (A)	Relay Graduate School of Education (A)
ASPIRE to Teach - University of Colorado Denver (A)	Fort Lewis College (A&T)	San Luis Valley BOCES (A)
Boulder Journey School (A)	Friends School Teacher Preparation Program (A)	South Central BOCES (A)
Centennial BOCES (A)	Metropolitan State (A)	Southeastern BOCES (A)
Colorado Christian University (A&T)	Morgan County School District RE-3 (A)	University of Colorado - Colorado Springs (A&T)
Colorado Mountain College (A&T)	Mountain BOCES (A)	University of Colorado- Denver (T)
Colorado River BOCES (A)	Northeast BOCES (A)	University of Denver (T)
Colorado State University (T)	Northwest BOCES (A)	University of Northern Colorado (T)
Colorado State University-Pueblo (A&T)	PEBC Teacher Residency (A)	West Central (Uncompahgre BOCES) (A)
Denver Seminary (T)	Pikes Peak BOCES (A)	Western Colorado University (A&T)

A- Alternative Educator Preparation Program, T- Traditional Educator Preparation Program, **A&T**- Separate Alternative & Traditional Educator Preparation Programs housed within the same institution of higher education

In the 2023-24 school year, 32% of ERR Program recipients filled positions in rural school districts, specifically 20% in rural districts and 12% in small rural districts.^x For context, during the 2023-24 school year, rural teachers comprised 17% of Colorado’s educator workforce.^{xi} ERR Program recipients filled 21 educator shortage areas, including in rural school districts. Special education positions had the highest percentage (23%) of ERR recipients. Table 6 lists the shortage areas ERR recipients filled in rural and non-rural district settings.

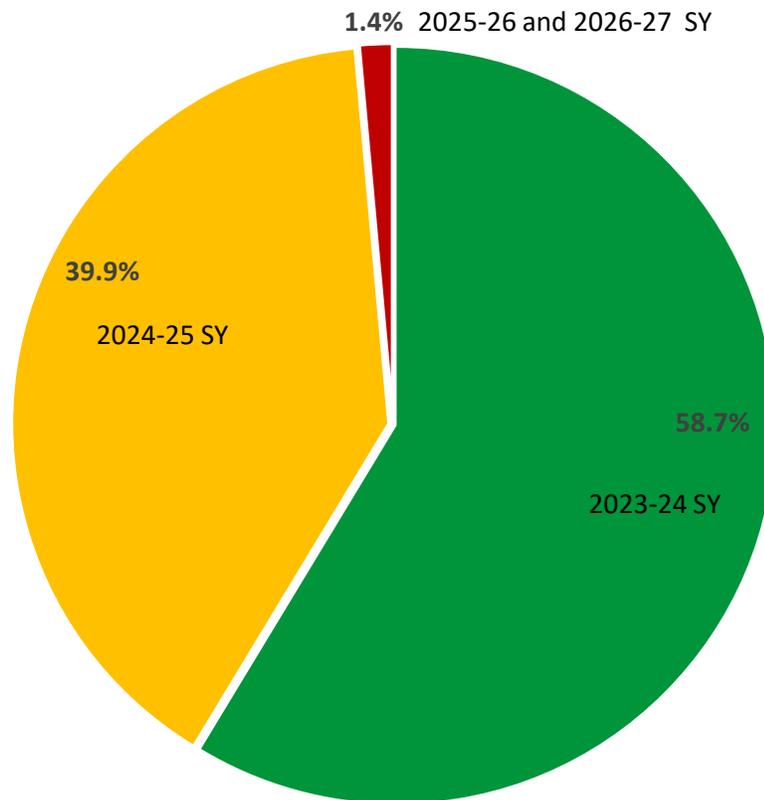
Table 6. ERR Program Recipients by Shortage and Rural School District in 2023-24

	Number of Rural Recipients	Number of Non-Rural Recipients	Total Number of Recipients (Rural and Non-Rural)	% of Total Recipients
Agriculture	3	0	3	0.4%
Business/Marketing	5	2	7	1.0%
Computer Science	2	5	7	1.0%
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education	0	1	1	0.1%
Drama Theater Arts	0	3	3	0.4%
Early Childhood Education	8	25	33	4.7%
Early Childhood Special Education	1	5	6	0.9%
Elementary Education	59	91	150	21.5%
English Language Arts	25	36	61	8.7%
Family and Consumer Sciences	1	3	4	0.6%
Health Education	1	1	2	0.3%
Industrial Arts	0	2	2	0.3%
Mathematics	12	51	63	9.0%
Music	6	9	15	2.1%
Paraprofessional (supports multiple subjects)	1	0	1	0.1%
Physical Education	8	18	26	3.7%
School Counselor	11	12	23	3.3%
Science	12	46	58	8.3%
Social Studies	15	26	41	5.9%
Special Education Generalist	45	117	162	23.2%
Visual Arts	3	12	15	2.1%
World Language Teacher	3	13	16	2.3%
Total	221	478	699	

Annually, the legislature appropriates \$5 million to the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) for tuition assistance of up to \$10,000 per qualified applicant paid to the EPP in which the applicant is enrolled. The legislation only allows educators to apply for financial assistance once, although their preparation program may take multiple years. As a result, educators may be awarded financial assistance in one year and have the unspent portion encumbered into one or more future years. However, according to state fiscal rules, CDE must return unspent funds at the end of every fiscal year, even if these funds are encumbered. In 2023-24, \$6.7 million was requested by the 868 applicants, and \$5.2 million was awarded for 699 educators' financial assistance for one or more years. In 2023-24, \$4.99 million was paid to 37 EPPs to support educators, and more than \$750,000 of the 2024-25 funds will be used to pay for the encumbered awards given in prior school years.

Figure 2 shows that more than 40% of financial assistance recipients were awarded funding that will be paid to EPPs beyond the 2023-24 fiscal year.

Figure 2. Distribution of ERR recipients based on the school year of last financial assistance payment to EPP



The range of awards requested and awarded was \$500 to \$10,000. The average request and award amounts were \$7,539 and \$7,421, respectively.

As of July 31, 2024, 36.9% of 2023-24 ERR recipients had an alternative license, 26.6% had an interim teacher authorization, 15.0% held an initial teacher license, 10.3% held a professional license, and 4.0% did not hold a teaching credential. The remaining 7.2% held a variety of teaching credentials. Table 8 shows the credentials of ERR recipients as of July 31, 2024.



Table 7. Educator Credential of 2023-24 ERR Recipients as of July 2024

Type of Credential	Number of Recipients	% of Total Recipients
Alternative License	258	36.9%
Career and Technical Ed (CTE) Authorization	1	0.1%
Initial Special Services License	6	0.9%
Initial Teacher License	105	15.0%
Interim Teacher Authorization	186	26.6%
Professional Administrator License	1	0.1%
Professional Principal License	2	0.3%
Professional Special Services License	3	0.4%
Professional Teacher License	72	10.3%
School Speech-Language Pathology Assistant Authorization	1	0.1%
Special Services Intern Authorization	1	0.1%
Substitute Teaching Authorization	22	3.1%
TEE Authorization	13	1.9%
No Teaching Credential ^{xii}	28	4.0%
Total	699	100%

Of the 635 recipients enrolled in an alternative licensure program in 2023-24, 313 (45%) completed their alternative EPP during the 2023-24 school year. Of the remaining 64 ERR Program recipients enrolled in a traditional EPP, 23 are current paraprofessionals and will not complete their licensure program for several years. The completion status of the remaining 41 is unavailable at the time this report is being written and may be included in next year’s report.^{xiii}

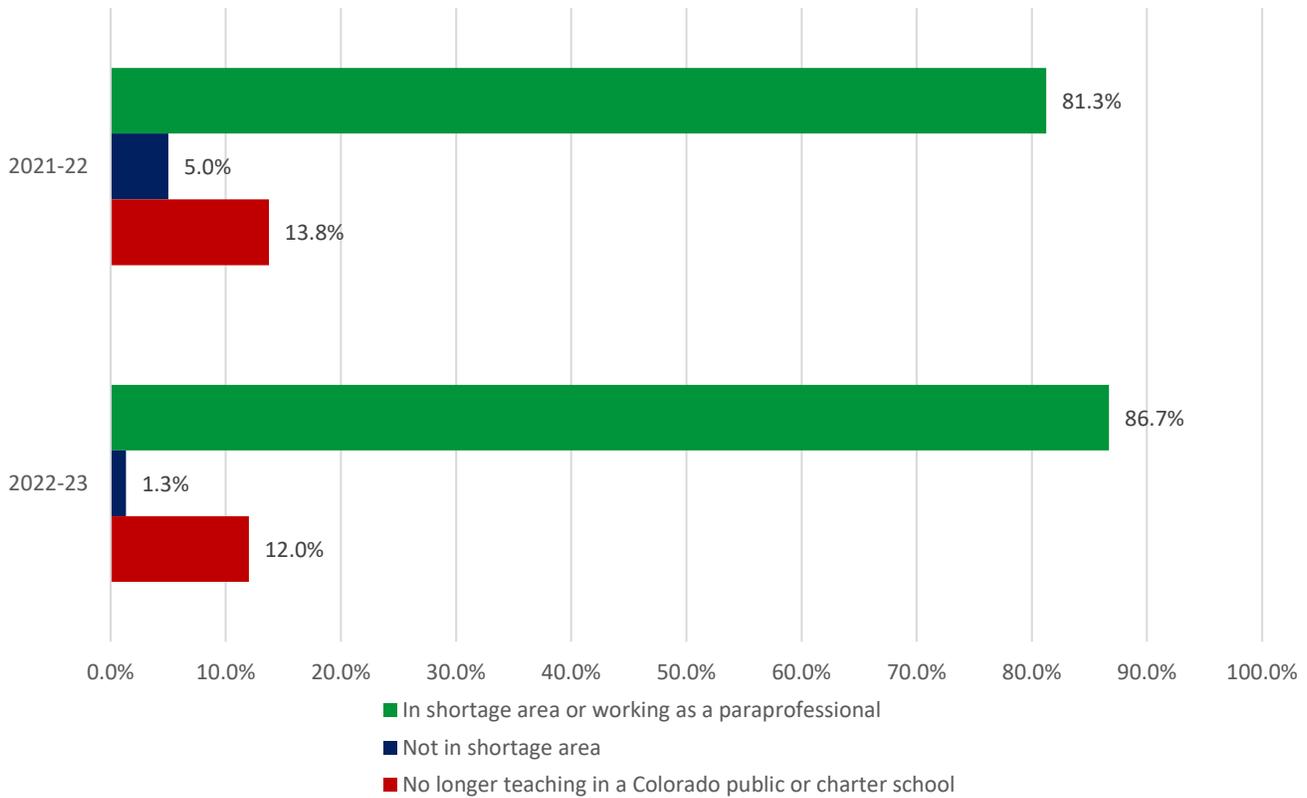
Retention of ERR Recipients

Two cohorts of ERR recipients have completed at least one year of teaching, the cohorts who applied for funding in 2021-22 and 2022-23. See table 9 for details on these cohorts’ progress in their 3-year commitment to teaching in a shortage area in Colorado. In its inaugural year (2021-22), the ERR Financial Assistance Program supported 80 educators in 45 rural or small rural school districts.^{xiv} Of those 80 educators, 65 (81%) were still teaching in a shortage area in 2023-24. In year two (2022-23), 745 individuals received assistance. Of those 745, in 2023-24, 645 (87%) still work in a shortage area or as a paraprofessional, and 10 others teach in Colorado but not in a shortage area. In all, 88% of 2022-23 recipients continue to teach in a Colorado public school.^{xv} Figure 3 shows the retention data for each cohort.

Table 8. ERR Recipients Cohorts 2021-22 and 2022-23

Cohort	Number of educators	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22
2	745	2nd year in the classroom	Obtain tuition assistance, 1st year in the classroom	
1	80	3rd year in the classroom	2nd year in the classroom	Obtain tuition assistance, 1st year in the classroom

Figure 3. ERR Recipient by Shortage Area Status by Cohort^{xvi}



Perceptions of the ERR Program

In April 2024, CDE administered surveys to all ERR Program recipients and LEAs that employed at least one recipient. (See Appendix A for survey questions.) There were 514 responses to the survey, 260 ERR recipients and 244 LEAs. The response rate was almost 43%. Below are the survey highlights and results:

ERR Recipient Survey Results

Almost 70% of the respondents considered dropping out or delaying their educator preparation program before receiving financial assistance. Additionally:

- 48% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that "without the financial assistance, I would not have become an educator."
- 87% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that " financial assistance was essential to me becoming an educator."
- 94% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that "the financial assistance will positively impact my career."
- 77% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, "Without the financial assistance, I would have had difficulty dealing with an unexpected expense of more than \$250."

Figure 4 contains survey highlights. See appendix B for more detailed results.

Figure 4. Perception Survey Results for ERR Recipients in the 2023-24 School Year

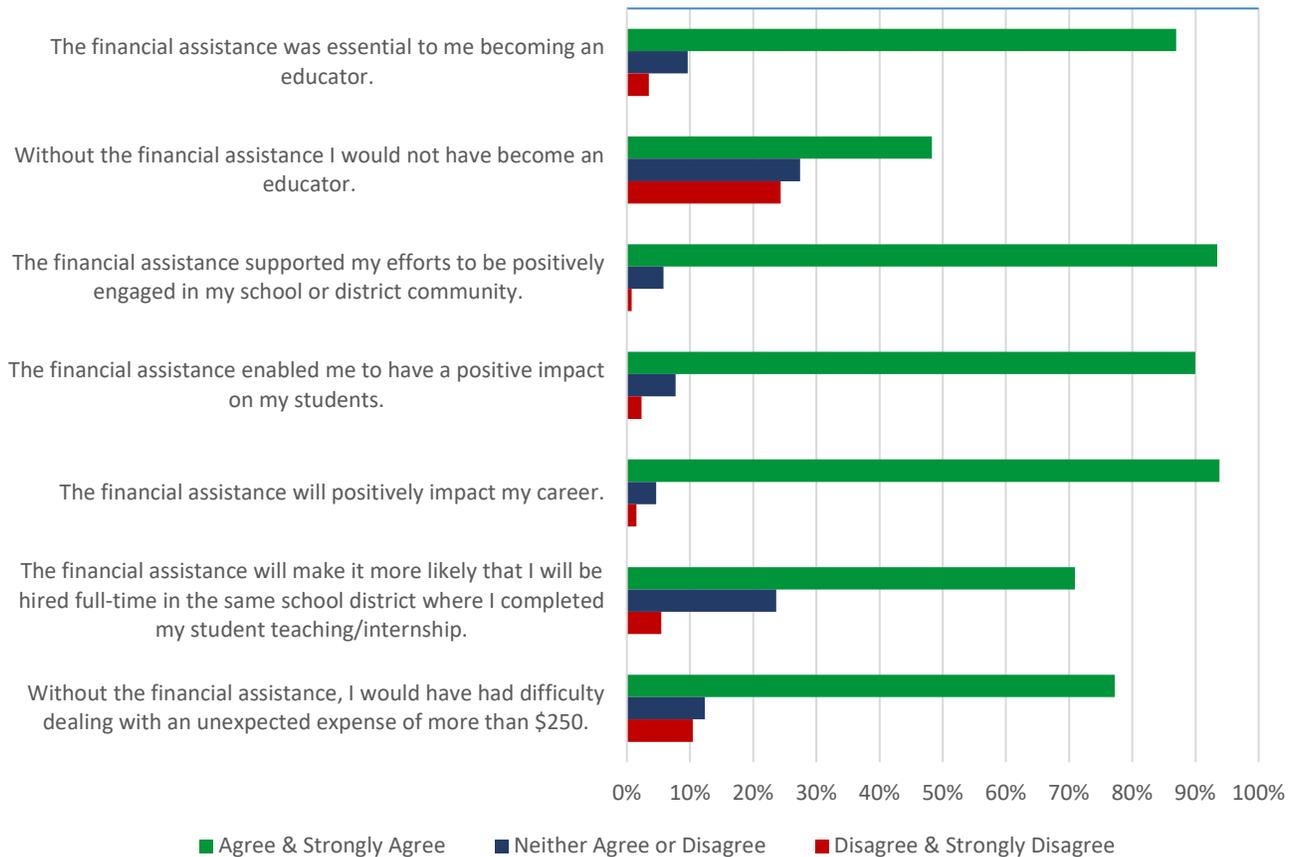


Figure 4 shows the responses from 275 ERR recipients.

More than 25% of respondents shared additional thoughts about the ERR Program. The comments were overwhelmingly positive and included gratitude for the financial assistance. Select responses, edited for clarity and brevity, include:

“I was planning to continue with my educator program regardless of the ERR. However, because of the ERR funding, I could purchase a vehicle while in my program, which I needed for my commute. Without the ERR, I would have delayed this purchase, which would have impacted my opportunities to find a job after the program.”

“The financial assistance was an unexpected blessing for me and my journey to becoming an educator. While I had planned to pay for it, I knew it would be a very difficult financial journey, and I would have to pick up a second job to cover the cost of tuition. This would have made it more difficult to focus on being a teacher and the school. To say that financial assistance is a blessing is an understatement. This opportunity is life changing.”

“The impact the financial assistance has had on my career as an educator and me is going to be life changing. It has opened doors for me to work towards becoming highly qualified. Thank you so much for providing the assistance my family and I needed.”

Local Education Agencies Survey Results

More than 98% of LEAs strongly agreed or agreed that the ERR program participant teachers were needed and were valuable to the schools they were in.

Figure 5. Perception Survey Results from LEAs for the 2023-24 School Year

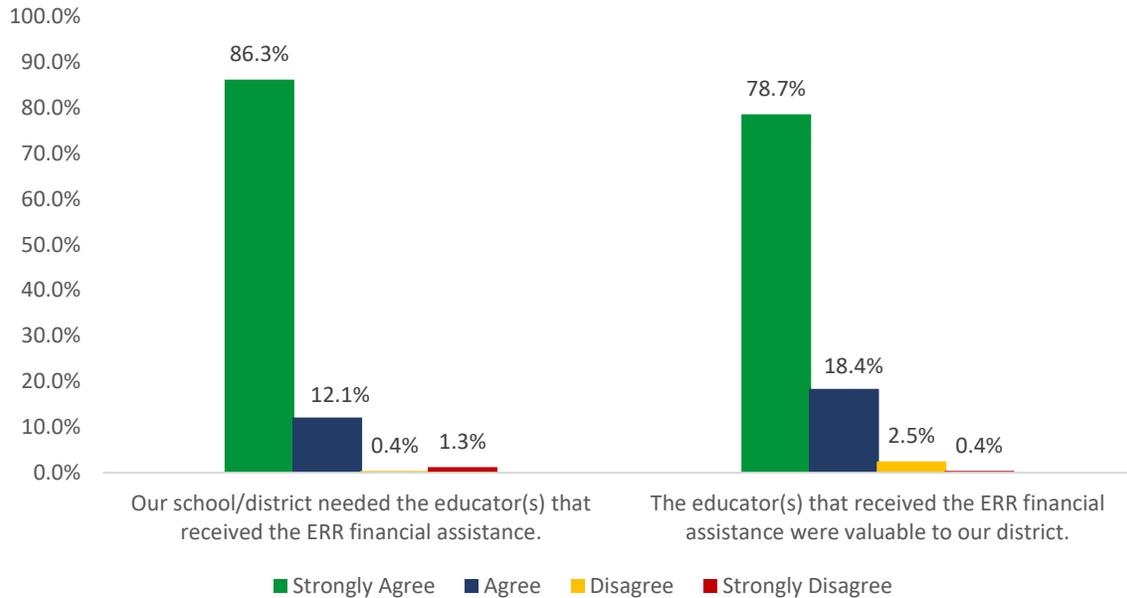


Figure 5 shows the responses from 262 LEAs.

When asked what impact the ERR Program recipients had on class sizes, student access to learning supports (e.g., small group instruction, 1-on-1 support) and student access to before and/or after-school activities, 82% of leaders responded that the recipients allowed class sizes to remain stable or decrease. Additionally, 80% indicated that the recipients increased student access to learning support, and 45% reported that the recipients increased access to before and/or after-school activities.

Recommendations for ERR Program

Per C.R.S. 22-60.3-205(1)(h), this report must include any recommendations for legislative or regulatory changes to facilitate the effective implementation of the program. Below are CDE recommendations for the ERR Program:

- Continue to support new and future teachers through the ERR Program to address the teacher shortage areas in the state and increase the diversity of Colorado's teachers. As a note, as of the time of this report, 100% of the funds available for 2024-25 have already been awarded to new educators.
- Consider how program eligibility requirements can be expanded to support other shortage mechanisms being used by districts and schools, such as apprenticeships and long-term subs.



Conclusion

The Educator Recruitment and Retention Financial Assistance Program (ERR Program) has proven to be effective in addressing Colorado's educator shortages. By providing financial support to educators for their preparation programs, the program reduces the financial barriers to entering the teaching profession, particularly in high-need areas, including rural school districts. The data indicates a positive impact on both recruitment and retention.

In 2023-24, the ERR Financial Assistance Program provided \$5.2 million in tuition assistance for 699 educators in Colorado. Twenty-four percent of recipients identify as educators of color, and 28% identified as male or non-binary, compared to the makeup of Colorado's teachers in the 2023-24 school year, 15% and 22%, respectively. Since its inception in 2021-22, the ERR Program has provided \$10.5 million in tuition assistance to 1,524 educators. At the end of the 2023-24 school year, 88% of ERR Program recipients continue to teach in a Colorado public or charter school.

The ERR Program reflects high demand for financial assistance and has received positive feedback from recipients. However, the program's capacity to meet this demand is limited by the current funding levels. The legislature could consider expanding pathways for support, such as the apprenticeship pathway.

Continued investment in the ERR Program can support building a diverse and stable educator workforce in Colorado. By supporting new and future teachers, the program not only addresses immediate shortages but also contributes to the long-term success of Colorado's students.



Appendix A: Perception Survey Questions

Q1. What is your role?

[Questions for Financial Assistance Recipients]

Q2. What educator preparation program did you attend?

Q3. Regarding the educator stipend, which of the following statements are true: (check all that apply)

- I was planning to continue my program regardless of the educator stipend.
- I was considering delaying my program due to financial issues.
- I was considering delaying my program due to non-financial reasons.
- I was considering dropping out of my program due to financial issues.
- I was considering dropping out of my program due to non-financial reasons.

Q9. Please share any additional thoughts about the educator stipend.

[Questions for LEAs with Financial Assistance Recipients]

Q1. What is your role?

Q2. Please share your thoughts on the following:

- Our school/district needed the teacher(s) that received the ERR financial assistance.
 - The teacher(s) that received the ERR financial assistance were valuable to our district.
- Answer Options: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

Q3. What was the impact, if any, of the teacher(s) that received the ERR financial assistance on class sizes?

- Had no impact
- Allowed class sizes to remain stable
- Allowed class sizes to decrease

Q4. What was the impact, if any, of the teacher(s) that received the ERR financial assistance on student access to learning supports (e.g., small group instruction, 1-on-1 support)?

- Had no impact
- Increased access to learning supports
- Decreased access to learning supports

Q5. What was the impact, if any, of the teacher(s) that received the ERR financial assistance on student access to before and/or after-school activities?

- Had no impact
- Increased access to before and/or after school activities
- Decreased access to before and/or after-school activities

Q6. Please share any additional information on how the teacher and teacher stipend impacted your school district.



Appendix B: Survey Results, Teacher Perceptions

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The financial assistance was essential to me becoming an educator.	58.85%	28.08%	9.62%	1.54%	1.92%
Without the financial assistance, I would not have become an educator.	28.96%	19.31%	27.41%	20.08%	4.25%
The financial assistance supported my efforts to be positively engaged in my school or district community.	66.80%	26.64%	5.79%	0.39%	0.39%
The financial assistance enabled me to have a positive impact on my students.	64.86%	25.10%	7.72%	1.54%	0.77%
The financial assistance will positively impact my career.	80.69%	13.13%	4.63%	0.77%	0.77%
The financial assistance will make it more likely that I will be hired full-time in the same school district where I completed my student teaching/internship.	59.69%	11.24%	23.64%	3.10%	2.33%
Without the financial assistance, I would have had difficulty dealing with an unexpected expense of more than \$250.	53.28%	23.94%	12.36%	7.34%	3.09%



Appendix C: LEAs with ERR Program Recipients

LEA	Rural (if applicable)	Count of Recipients	% of Total Recipients
Academy School District 20		14	2.00%
Adams 12 Five Star Schools		7	1.00%
Adams County School District 14		8	1.14%
Adams-Arapahoe 28J (Aurora)		29	4.14%
Agate 300	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Aguilar Reorganized 6	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Akron R-1	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Alamosa RE-11J	Rural	1	0.14%
Archuleta County 50 JT	Rural	2	0.29%
Aspen 1	Rural	2	0.29%
Ault-Highland RE-9	Small Rural	5	0.71%
Bayfield 10 JT-R	Rural	1	0.14%
Bennett 29J	Rural	2	0.29%
Boulder Valley RE 2		10	1.43%
Branson Reorganized 82	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Brush RE-2(J)	Rural	2	0.29%
Buena Vista R-31	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Buffalo RE-4		1	0.14%
Burlington RE-6J	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Byers 32J	Rural	1	0.14%
Calhan RJ-1	Small Rural	3	0.43%
Canon City RE-1	Rural	5	0.71%
Charter School Institute (CSI)		15	2.14%
Cherry Creek 5		13	1.86%
Cheyenne County RE-5	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Cheyenne Mountain 12		4	0.57%
Clear Creek RE-1	Small Rural	4	0.57%
Colorado River BOCES*	Serves Rural	2	0.29%
Colorado Springs 11		24	3.43%
Creede School District	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Crowley County RE-1-J	Small Rural	2	0.29%
Deer Trail 26J	Small Rural	2	0.29%
Delta County 50(J)	Rural	1	0.14%
Denver County 1		74	10.57%
District 49 (Falcon)		22	3.14%
Dolores RE-4a	Small Rural	2	0.29%
Douglas County RE 1		30	4.2914%
Durango 9-R	Rural	3	0.43%
Eads RE-1	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Eagle County RE 50	Rural	12	1.72%



LEA	Rural (if applicable)	Count of Recipients	% of Total Recipients
East Central BOCES	Serves Rural	1	0.14%
East Grand 2	Rural	3	0.43%
Eaton RE-2	Rural	2	0.29%
Elbert 200	Small Rural	2	0.29%
Elizabeth School District	Rural	10	1.43%
Ellicott 22	Small Rural	4	0.57%
Englewood 1		2	0.29%
Estes Park R-3	Small Rural	2	0.29%
Facility Schools		2	0.29%
Fort Morgan RE-3	Rural	17	2.43%
Fountain-Ft. Carson 8		6	0.86%
Fremont RE-2	Rural	2	0.29%
Frenchman RE-3	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Garfield 16	Rural	1	0.14%
Garfield RE-2	Rural	6	0.86%
Genoa-Hugo C113	Small Rural	2	0.29%
Gilpin County RE-1	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Greeley 6		15	2.14%
Gunnison Watershed RE1J	Rural	2	0.29%
Harrison 2		28	4.00%
Haxtun RE-2J	Small Rural	4	0.57%
Holyoke RE-1J	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Huerfano RE-1	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Idalia RJ-3	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Jefferson County R-1		22	3.15%
Johnstown-Milliken RE-5J (Weld 5)		3	0.43%
Julesburg RE-1	Small Rural	2	0.29%
Kiowa C-2	Small Rural	1	0.14%
La Veta RE-2	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Lewis-Palmer 38		7	1.00%
Limon RE-4J	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Littleton 6		1	0.14%
Lone Star 101	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Mancos RE-6	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Mapleton 1		2	0.29%
Mesa County Valley 51		18	2.57%
Moffat County RE: No 1		10	1.43%
Monte Vista C-8	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Montezuma-Cortez RE-1	Rural	6	0.86%
Montrose County RE-1J	Rural	8	1.14%
North Conejos RE-1J	Small Rural	2	0.29%
North Park R-1	Small Rural	2	0.29%



LEA	Rural (if applicable)	Count of Recipients	% of Total Recipients
Norwood R-2J	Small Rural	2	0.29%
Otis R-3	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Park County RE-2	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Pawnee RE-12	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Peyton 23 JT	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Pikes Peak BOCES		1	0.14%
Plainview RE-2	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Plateau RE-5	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Plateau Valley 50	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Platte Valley RE-7	Rural	5	0.71%
Poudre R-1		7	1.00%
Prairie RE-11	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Pueblo City 60		13	1.86%
Pueblo County 70		4	0.57%
Roaring Fork RE-1	Rural	11	1.57%
Rocky Ford R-2	Small Rural	2	0.29%
Salida R-32	Rural	4	0.57%
San Luis Valley BOCES		2	0.29%
Sanford 6J	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Sangre De Cristo RE-22J	Small Rural	1	0.14%
School District 27J (Brighton)		13	1.86%
Sheridan 2		1	0.14%
South Conejos RE-10	Small Rural	1	0.14%
St Vrain Valley RE 1J		19	2.71%
Steamboat Springs RE-2	Rural	9	1.29%
Strasburg 31J	Rural	2	0.29%
Stratton R-4	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Summit RE-1	Rural	3	0.43%
Telluride R-1	Small Rural	2	0.29%
Thompson R-2J		16	2.29%
Trinidad 1	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Upper Rio Grande C-7 (Del Norte)		1	0.14%
Valley RE-1	Rural	6	0.86%
Vilas RE-5	Small Rural	2	0.29%
Weld County RE-1	Rural	1	0.14%
Weld County School District RE-3J (Keenesburg)		5	0.71%
Weld RE-4 School District		2	0.29%
Weld RE-8 Schools	Rural	7	1.00%
Weld RE-9 School District		1	0.14%
Weldon Valley RE-20(J)	Small Rural	2	0.29%
Westminster Public Schools		3	0.43%
Widefield 3		10	1.43%



LEA	Rural (if applicable)	Count of Recipients	% of Total Recipients
Wiggins RE-50(J)	Small Rural	2	0.29%
Windsor RE-4		9	1.29%
Woodlin R-104	Small Rural	1	0.14%
Wray RD-2	Small Rural	1	0.14%

Endnotes

ⁱ Because recipients can only apply for funding once, CDE can award more money than the annual allotment because many recipients receive money over multiple years.

ⁱⁱ Steven G. Rivkin & Eric A. Hanushek & John F. Kain, "Teachers, Schools, and Academic Achievement," *Econometrica*, 73 no.2 (2005): 417–458.

Chetty, Raj, John N. Friedman, and Jonah E. Rockoff, "Measuring the Impacts of Teachers I: Evaluating Bias in Teacher Value-Added Estimates." *American Economic Review*, 104 no. 9 (2014): 2593

ⁱⁱⁱ C. Kirabo Jackson. "What Do Test Scores Miss? The Importance of Teacher Effects on Non–Test Score Outcomes." *Journal of Political Economy* 126, no. 5 (2018): 2072-2107

Bashant, J. (2014). Developing grit in our students: Why grit is such a desirable trait, and practical strategies for teachers and schools. *Journal for Leadership and Instruction*, 13(2), 14-17.

^{iv} Emma Goldberg, "As Pandemic Upends Teaching, Fewer Students Want to Pursue It." *The New York Times*, March 27, 2021.

Liam Knox, "Teacher Education Programs Desperately Seek Students." *Inside Higher Education*, August 28, 2022.

^v See endnote i

^{vi} <https://www.cde.state.co.us/educatortalent/educatorrecruitmentandretention>

^{vii} Some reasons why applicants did not meet qualifications include: received assistance in the previous year, no shortage area selected on the application, incorrect school district information and out of date cost forms.

^{viii} TEE educators and current paraprofessionals are enrolled in traditional educator preparation programs.

^{ix} For a complete list of EPP programs, visit https://www.cde.state.co.us/educatortalent/educator_preparation_search_engine

^x A Colorado school district is determined to be rural, giving consideration to the size of the district, the distance from the nearest large urban/urbanized area and having a student enrollment of 6,500 students or less. Small rural districts are those districts meeting these same criteria and having a student population of less than 1,000 students.

^{xi} For more information on how CDE defines rural and small rural school district, visit

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeedserv/cderuraldesignationlist>

^{xii} The no teaching credential group includes five current paraprofessionals, 2 TEE educators and 21 recipients in an alternative teaching program.

^{xiii} Due to a data breach at the Colorado Department of Higher Education, completion data for traditional recipients is not available for the 2022-23 or 2023-24.

^{xiv} The inaugural year of the ERR program (2021-22) required recipients to be working, and commit to working for three years, in a rural school district.

^{xv} Per Colorado Revised Statutes, 1 CCR 301-113, if a qualified program participant does not fulfill the program requirement of teaching in a shortage area for three years without good cause (such as illness, death, spouse military transfer, etc.), then the participant shall repay the awarded financial assistance to the Colorado Department of Education within 90 days of leaving their employment.

^{xvi} See endnote xiii.