

Office of Dropout Prevent and Student Re-engagement

Expelled and At-Risk Student Services (EARSS)

State Grant Program



COLORADO
Department of Education

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM

The Expelled and At-risk Student Services (EARSS) grant program was established in 1997. It is described in Colorado Revised Statute 22-33-205.

The purpose of the EARSS grant is to assist in providing educational and support services to expelled students, students at risk of suspension and expulsion, and students at risk of habitual truancy as defined by unexcused absences.

Funds are awarded annually through a competitive grant process to fund 4-year grants. Eligible applicants include school districts, alternative schools within districts, charter schools, Boards of Cooperative Education Services, facility schools and also non-public non-parochial schools working through agreements to serve public school students.

IMPORTANCE OF MEETING THE NEEDS OF AT-RISK STUDENTS

Without necessary support and intervention, expelled students and students at risk of future disciplinary action and/or habitual truancy frequently lack the skills, capacity and motivation to keep up with their schoolwork. When falling behind their peers, they may isolate themselves and stop coming to school, engage in delinquent behaviors, abuse drugs to self-medicate or become disruptive in class.

Expelled students and those that exhibit behaviors linked to disciplinary action and delinquency are at risk of dropping out of school. The EARSS grant program directs resources to address the unique learning needs and challenges of these students.

MOST COMMON BEHAVIORS PLACING STUDENTS AT-RISK

Students Served in 2018-19

Thirty-seven grantees reported serving **279 expelled students**, or 3.4% of students. The most common reasons for receiving EARSS-funded services were due to marijuana violations (21.1%) and detrimental behavior (19.7%).

Fifty-nine grantees reported serving **4,805 students at risk for expulsion**, or 58.7% of all students. The most common reasons for receiving EARSS-funded services were disobedient/defiant behavior (41.7%), detrimental behavior (24.3%) and marijuana violations (9.8%).

Forty-nine grantees reported serving **3,099 truant students or students at risk of habitual truancy**, or 37.9% of students.

Beneficiaries by the Numbers

Annual appropriation for Fiscal Year 19:

- \$9,493,560

Number of Awards:

2018-19

- 60 EARSS grantees located in 29 counties.

2017-18

- 59 grantees located in 33 counties. This includes 19 Restorative Practices grantees in 17 counties.

2016-17

- 37 grantees located in 27 counties.
- 11 Restorative Practices grantees located in 10 counties.

2015-16

- 44 grantees located in 20 counties.

Students and Parents Served

2018-19

- 8,183 students
- 5,638 parents/guardians

2017-18

- 10,073 students
- 5,472 parents/guardians

2016-17

- 6,796 students
- 5,170 parents/guardians

2015-16

- 9,094 students
- 5,484 parents/guardians

SERVICES PROVIDED

State statutes require schools to work with parents/guardians of expelled and at-risk students regarding the development of plans for serving their child. Therefore, grantees must also engage parents in grant objectives. Examples of common uses of the grant funds include:

- Educational services for core academics such as coursework, tutoring and credit recovery.
- Restorative justice/discipline, wrap-around case management, alternatives to out-of-school suspension and expulsion, and multi-tiered behavioral support interventions.
- Life skills, goal setting, fostering career and vocation-related interest, and character education.
- Support to habitually truant students to increase attendance and avoid truancy court.
- Counseling, mental health and substance abuse treatment services, including through contracted services and inter-governmental agreements with other youth-serving community agencies.

STUDENT AND PARENT OUTCOMES

2018-19 School Year Evaluation Results

EARSS grantees reported the following outcomes:

- Grantees reported that 86% of at-risk students and 70.8% of expelled students experienced positive outcomes such as school completion and continuation of education.
- Of all students served, 96% remained in school. Without program support through EARSS, it is more likely that these students may have been expelled, had unexcused absences or dropped out of school.
- Grantees reported that 1.4% of expelled students and 4.1% of at-risk students dropped out of school in 2018-2019. This is lower than the last reported state dropout rate for alternative schools, which was 16.7% in 2017-18.
- The purpose of the EARSS grant program is to assist in reducing and preventing expulsions, suspensions, and truancy. Of the at-risk students served through an EARSS program, 99.6% were not expelled, 87.3% did not receive an in-school suspension, 85.9% did not receive an out-of-school suspension and 95.1% did not have a truancy petition filed in court.

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

- Visit the [EARSS grant homepage](#).
- View all [CDE fact sheets](#).