

Expelled and At-Risk Student Services (EARSS)

Purpose of the Program

The Expelled and At-risk Student Services (EARSS) grant program was established in 1997 by C.R.S. 22-33-205. The purpose of the grant is to assist in providing educational and support services to expelled students, students at-risk of expulsion, and students at-risk of habitual truancy.

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, facility schools, and non-public non-parochial schools.

Importance of Meeting the Needs of At-Risk Students

Without necessary supports and intervention, expelled and at-risk students frequently lack the skills, capacity and motivation to keep up with their school work. When falling behind their peers, they may isolate themselves and stop coming to school, engage in delinquent behavior, turn to drugs and alcohol to self-medicate or become disruptive in class.

Research shows that expelled students and those that exhibit behaviors linked to disciplinary action and delinquency are at high-risk of school failure and dropping out of school. The EARSS grant program directs resources to address the unique needs and challenges of these students.

Most Common Behaviors Placing Students at Risk 2012-13 School Year

The three most cited reasons for expulsion of the 720 expelled students served by 54 grantees were marijuana (32.6%), detrimental behavior (14.9%), and disobedience (13%).

The three most cited reasons for the at-risk status of 8,729 students served by 54 grantees were truancy (45.9%), disobedience (12.1%), and marijuana (11.1%).

Beneficiaries by the Numbers

Appropriation:

- \$7,493,560

Number of Awards:

2013-14

- 44 grantees located in 23 counties

2012-13

- 54 grantees located in 25 counties

2011-12

- 55 EARSS grantees located in 28 counties

Students and Parents Served

2012-13

- 9,440 students
- 5,802 parents

2011-12

- 9,471 students
- 6,196 parents

Services Provided

Examples of Programs and Strategies Funded

- 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 increase attendance, especially in working with habitual truants and their parents and families
- Counseling, mental health and substance abuse treatment services, including through contracted services and inter-governmental agreements with other youth-serving community agencies

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

Student and Parent Outcomes

2012-13 Evaluation Results Reported by EARSS Grantees

- 85.6 percent of at-risk students (including truants) experienced positive outcomes, which represents school completion and continuation of education within the same school district.
- 82.4 percent of expelled students experienced positive outcomes. These outcomes reflect school completion, continuation of education, completion of term of expulsion, and return to school.
- 72 percent of parents/guardians improved their ability to support their child's learning.
- The dropout rate of at-risk 7-12th grade students in an EARSS program was 3.6 percent, which is lower than the 2011-12 rate of 3.9 percent for EARSS students.
- The dropout rate of expelled 7-12th grade students in an EARSS program was 4.7 percent. This is dramatically lower than the last reported state dropout rate for alternative schools, which was 20.8 percent.

Where can I learn more?

Visit the EARSS grant homepage at:

- http://www.cde.state.co.us/DropoutPrevention/p_EARSS.htm