



# Impact of Mentor Grant Funds for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 School Years

## Background and Purpose

This memo summarizes the evaluation data from the Colorado Department of Education's Mentor Teacher Grant Program (Mentor Grant). Although no formal legislative report requirements exist, the Research & Impact team felt it important to document the program's impact on a high-quality, stable workforce.

A total of \$12.2 million of the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III funds supported 52 grantees from across the state to provide targeted mentor training, increase the number of mentor teachers and compensate mentor teachers. Over two years, the Mentor Grant allowed LEAs to build, enhance and strengthen mentoring programs to ensure beginning teachers had the support necessary to develop instructional capacity and effectiveness in the classroom.

In the 2022-23 school year, 26 two-year grants were awarded to 22 school districts, two charter school entities and two Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES). The two charter school entities include the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI), which supported 12 of their approved charter schools, and an individual charter school also authorized by the CSI. Awards ranged from \$34,000 to \$1.19 million. The total amount of two-year grants was \$9.5 million.

In the following school year, 2023-24, CDE utilized an additional \$2.7 million of ESSER III funds for a second round of grant funding. The second round of funding differed from the 2022-23 funding in that they were a single year, and the amount available per grant was limited to \$150,000. Thirty-three grantees from across the state received funding in the second round. The grantees included 20 school districts, six district-authorized charter school entities, two schools authorized by the Colorado Charter School Institute and five Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES).<sup>1</sup> The grants range from \$23,940 to \$150,000. Table 1 shows the Mentor Grantees by type of grantee and year the grantee received funding.<sup>2</sup>

## Key Highlights and Findings

- During the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years, 52 grantees worked with over 4,900 individuals, mentors and new teachers
- Grantees included school districts, Boards of Cooperative Education (BOCES), the Charter School Institute and individual charter schools
- On average 96% of mentors and new teachers indicated that they intended to remain in the field of education
- 90% of mentors and new teachers felt confident in their teaching ability
- The teacher turnover rate for mentors and new teachers served by the Mentor Grant was 22% lower than the statewide average teacher turnover rate in 2023-24.

Deepen Mentoring,  
Retain Teachers

<sup>1</sup> Seven grantees received grant dollars from both rounds. This means that they had a two-year grant and an additional one-year grant. Since the grants were funded by ESSER funds, all award monies expired on September 30, 2024.

<sup>2</sup> Of the seven grantees that received money in 2022-23 (round 1) and 2023-24 (round 2), six were school districts and one a BOCES.



Table 1. Mentor Grantees by Type of Grantee and Year Receiving Funding

	2022-23	2023-24*
<b>BOCES</b>	2	4
<b>Charter School Institute (CSI) and CSI authorized schools</b>	2	6
<b>District authorized charter schools</b>	-	6
<b>School Districts</b>	22	36
<b>Total Grantees</b>	26	52

\* These numbers include 2022-23 grantees (two-year awards) and 2023-24 grantees (one-year awards)

During the two years of the grant, grantees reported working with 4,962 individuals, 1,940 in the 2022-23 school year and 3,022 mentors and new teachers in 2023-24. Tables 2 and 3 below show the racial, ethnic and gender composition of the mentors and new teachers by year of grant participation. The 2023-24 participants were slightly more racially and ethnically diverse. And in 2022-23, more male educators participated.

Table 2. Racial and Ethnic Makeup of Mentor Grant Participants

	Percent in 2022-23	Percent in 2023-24
<b>American Indian or Alaska Native</b>	0.4%	0.6%
<b>Asian</b>	1.1%	1.9%
<b>Black</b>	1.4%	1.7%
<b>Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</b>	0.2%	0.2%
<b>Hispanic</b>	11.5%	11.4%
<b>White, non-Hispanic</b>	84.2%	82.7%
<b>Two or More Races</b>	1.1%	1.6%

Table 3. Gender composition of Mentor Grant participants

	Percent in 2022-23	Percent in 2023-24
<b>Female</b>	78.0%	79.5%
<b>Male</b>	22.0%	20.4%
<b>Non-binary</b>	-	0.1%

## Evaluation Methodology

To measure the impact of the Mentor Grant, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) gathered information from mentors, new teachers (mentees), and grantees. Twice a year, at the beginning and end of the school year, CDE administered surveys to both mentors and new teachers. Educators responded to questions regarding school connectedness, support from school leadership, their intentions to remain in the education field and their teaching efficacy.



The questions related to teacher efficacy were derived from the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES), developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy in 2001.<sup>3</sup> The TSES views teaching as a complex activity and defines teacher efficacy as a multi-faceted construct encompassing at least three distinct factors: Efficacy for Classroom Management, Efficacy to Promote Student Engagement and Efficacy in Using Instructional Strategies.<sup>4</sup>

Below are key survey results for each cohort and highlights from the outcomes from the end-of-grant reports. Additionally, an analysis of CDE's annual Human Resources data collection provided an initial overview of the retention rates for mentors and new teachers in the first cohort for the 2022-23 school year.

## Survey Results and Findings

CDE surveyed both cohorts of mentors and new teachers (2023-24 and 2022-23) in the fall and spring of each year. Fall survey responses tended to show *slightly* higher levels of efficacy than spring results. This may be due, in part, to the fact that educators are more optimistic and confident in their plans for the year. By spring, the challenges and pressures of teaching may lower their perceived efficacy. Additionally, mentors and new teachers experience the school year differently. Therefore, their survey responses differ. Below are some key findings from the survey.

### *Mentor Survey Results*

- On average, **over 97% of mentors** indicated that they intended to remain in the field of education.
- **9 out of 10 mentors** in 2023-24 and 2022-23 felt positively about:
  - Their abilities to meet the needs of their mentee.
  - Their connection to other teachers and staff at their school.
  - The support of school leadership.
- **4 out of 5** mentors indicated high levels of teacher self-efficacy on six of the 12 efficacy questions, including all questions related to Efficacy in Using Instructional Strategies and two questions related to Efficacy for Classroom Management.
- **74%** of mentors indicated high levels of teacher self-efficacy when asked, “To what extent/how much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?”

### *New Teacher Survey Results*

- On average, **96% of new teachers** indicated that they intended to remain in the field of education.
- **9 out of 10 new teachers** in 2023-24 felt connected to other teachers and staff at their school.
- **More than 80%** of new teachers indicated high levels of teacher self-efficacy on seven of the 12 efficacy questions; these questions include three on Efficacy in Using Instructional Strategies, three Efficacy for Classroom Management and one question on Efficacy of Student Engagement.
- **66%** of new teachers indicated high levels of teacher self-efficacy when asked, “To what extent/how much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?”

Additional survey results can be found in tables 4 and 5 below.

<sup>3</sup> Tschannen-Moran, M., & Woolfolk Hoy, A. (2001). “Teacher Efficacy Capturing an Elusive Construct.” *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 17, 783-805.

<sup>4</sup> In the 2022-23 school year, the long version of the TSES was administered to mentors and new teachers. In 2023-24, the short version of the TSES was administered.



## SURVEY RESULTS TABLES

Table 4. Mentors' Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale Positive Responses for 2023-24 School Year

To what extent/how much can you...?	% Quite a bit or higher fall (n=704)	% Quite a bit or higher spring (n=709)	Change
provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?	97.9%	95.9%	-2.0%
establish a classroom management system with each group of students?	97.7%	94.3%	-3.4%
use a variety of assessment strategies?	92.5%	92.4%	-0.1%
craft good questions for your students?	96.6%	92.4%	-4.2%
implement alternative strategies in your classroom?	94.2%	90.9%	-3.3%
to get children to follow classroom rules?	96.3%	90.5%	-5.8%
to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?	93.8%	90.1%	-3.7%
to get students to believe they can do well in schoolwork?	92.5%	88.2%	-4.2%
to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?	87.0%	86.4%	-0.6%
to help your students value learning?	86.9%	81.7%	-5.2%
to motivate students who show low interest in schoolwork?	81.3%	76.2%	-5.1%
assist families in helping their children do well in school?	75.7%	74.5%	-1.2%

Table 5. New Teachers' Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale Positive Responses for 2023-24 School

To what extent/how much can you...?	% Quite a bit or higher fall (n=915)	% Quite a bit or higher spring (n=771)	Change
provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?	86.6%	88.5%	1.9%
to get students to believe they can do well in schoolwork?	86.7%	83.0%	-3.8%
establish a classroom management system with each group of students?	82.8%	82.8%	0.0%
craft good questions for your students?	84.5%	82.2%	-2.3%
to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?	84.6%	82.2%	-2.4%
to get children to follow classroom rules?	85.1%	81.2%	-3.9%
use a variety of assessment strategies?	78.2%	80.7%	2.5%
implement alternative strategies in your classroom?	77.4%	79.8%	2.5%
to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?	76.5%	76.2%	-0.3%
to help your students value learning?	81.1%	74.4%	-6.7%
to motivate students who show low interest in schoolwork?	70.1%	67.2%	-2.9%
assist families in helping their children do well in school?	67.2%	66.3%	-0.9%

Responses are sorted by highest spring score



## End of Grant Report Highlights

The Mentor Grant program is designed to enhance mentoring initiatives at the local level, specifically targeting pre-service mentoring programs for student teachers/clinical residencies and supporting new educators (probationary) within their initial three years of teaching. This includes educators operating under initial, alternative, and emergency licensure. The program aims to promote the intentional expansion of mentor teachers' skills to optimize mentor/mentee relationships and enhance instructional capacity. The end of grant review form allowed grantees to report on accomplishments, implementation fidelity, strengths of the program and sustainability of activities.

Below are multiple examples of **self-reported accomplishments** from grantees.

- 98% retention rate for all faculty and staff. (A district-level grantee)
- In year one of funding, 83% of all new teachers who received mentoring reported that they felt their instruction improved as a direct result of coaching. This increased to 91% with round 2 funding. (A district-level grantee)
- Teacher retention was over 90%. (A school-level grantee)
- We grew our induction program from 75 new teachers in year one to 120 in year two. (A district-level grantee)
- Successfully implemented a new mentor support program with the Lead Content Mentor role. Additionally, we developed an in-house, purposefully aligned alternative licensure program that better caters to the needs of our special education and secondary general education teachers. Also formed an Induction Learning Community with actively participating members throughout the state. (A district-level grantee)
- 92.2% of Mentors agreed or strongly agreed that they felt confident in their ability to grow themselves, and 93.5% agreed or strongly agreed that they felt confident in their ability to grow others. (A district-level grantee)

Below are multiple examples of **self-reported strengths** from grantees.

- Improved TLCC data specifically on mentorship questions (A district-level grantee)
- Reducing the frustration and lack of efficacy felt by early career teachers demonstrated clearly by the reduction of people frustrated enough to leave the district, which dropped from 6% to 2%. [Thereby, increasing new teacher retention.] (A district-level grantee, with bracketed text added for clarity)

Overall, grantees reported the importance of strong relationships between mentors and mentees, the need to include administration in planning and communications and the importance of dedicating time for mentor and mentee observations and meetings.

## Retention Analysis of Mentors and New Teachers from the 2022-23 grant

Empirical data from research shows that mentoring programs have a positive impact on retaining new teachers and mentors (see Ingersoll and Strong, 2011).<sup>5</sup> CDE's Mentor Grant Program supported program

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<sup>5</sup> Ingersoll, Richard M., and Michael Strong. "The Impact of Induction and Mentoring Programs for Beginning Teachers: A Critical Review of the Research." Review of Educational Research, vol. 81, no. 2, 2011, pp. 201-23



development and educator supports with the expectation that investing in mentorship would lead to higher retention for both mentors and new teachers.

Table 6 below indicates that only eight percent of mentors were no longer teaching in a Colorado public school after one year of grant funding. However, some of these mentors left due to retirement. 17% of new teachers were no longer teaching in a Colorado public school after one year of grant funding. After one year of grant funding, 14% of Mentor Grant participants were no longer teachers in a Colorado public school. The turnover rate for Mentor Grant participants is 22% lower than the statewide teacher turnover rate reported by CDE.<sup>6</sup>

Table 6. Retention of Mentors and New Teachers after 1 year of grant funding

	<b>2022-23 grant participants</b>
<b>Total # of Mentors</b>	778
<b>Total # of New Teachers</b>	1162
<b># of Mentors not in 2023-24 HR collection</b>	62
<b># of New Teachers not in 2023-24 HR collection</b>	200
<b>Percent Mentors no longer in CO public school after 1 year of grant funding</b>	8%
<b>Percent Mentees no longer in CO public school after 1 year of grant funding</b>	17%
<b>Percent of Total Mentor Grant Participants no longer in CO public school after 1 year of grant funding</b>	14%

## Conclusion

The Mentor Grant program helped teachers grow professionally and supported mentors and new educators. Survey results showed that 96% of teachers plan to continue their careers in education next year, and 90% feel confident in their teaching skills. This demonstrates that the grant is having a positive impact.

Teachers have also shown strong classroom management and instructional strategies, further highlighting the program's success. However, the survey revealed an important area for improvement: involving families in supporting student learning. Addressing this need will strengthen the program's impact and help ensure that teachers continue to succeed and feel satisfied in their roles.

Furthermore, an analysis of Mentor Grant participants reveals a lower turnover rate compared to the overall percentage of teachers in Colorado.

<sup>6</sup> For additional information on the CDE's teacher turnover reporting visit CDE's [School/District Staff Statistics webpage](#).