



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

201 East Colfax Avenue  
Denver, CO 80203-1799

May 7, 2019

Dear Superintendents and BOCES Directors,

We hope this message finds you well as you enter one of the busier months of the school year! May is such a gratifying month as we see seniors graduating and anticipating their next steps toward further education and careers. It is a month to wrap up the school year with an eye toward planning the next one. May is also when the Colorado General Assembly finishes their session, and we begin planning to implement new laws.

As you know there has been legislative action to support implementation of full-day kindergarten in Colorado. House Bill 19-1262 provides funding for full-day kindergarten should districts choose to offer it. This funding begins with the 2019-20 school year. Also, House Bill 19-1055 provides \$25 million in formula-based grants for the purpose of acquiring furniture, fixtures, or equipment needed to conduct full-day kindergarten or preschool educational programs. Anticipating Governor Polis's signature on these measures, we wanted to communicate a few important time sensitive items to you.

First, you will be receiving a survey from CDE within the next week that will serve a few purposes (as applicable): completing required reporting to CDE on district plans for implementing full-day kindergarten, applying for the formula-based grant through HB 19-1005, and enabling CDE to assess the implementation needs across the state. We designed the survey to be as simple as possible as we know this is a very busy time of year. We are asking that the district superintendent or your designee complete and submit the survey by Wednesday, June 12th.

Second, it is important to note that HB 19-1262 does not require districts to offer full-day kindergarten nor does it prohibit districts from offering half-day program. Furthermore, children are not required to attend full-day kindergarten if offered. It also prohibits districts from charging tuition for full-day kindergarten.

Finally, HB 19-1262 makes changes to the Early Childhood At-Risk Enhancement (ECARE) Program which provides funding for 9,200 Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) positions that until now have been able to be used to fund half-day preschool, combined for full-day preschool or to provide full-day kindergarten. Currently over 5,100 ECARE positions have been used for full-day kindergarten; these positions will now be used to provide preschool for additional at-risk preschoolers. In April, your CPP district contact received information about this change. Districts that are currently using ECARE positions for kindergarten will need to submit a plan as a part of their CPP Annual Report for the use of these positions in preschool and/or notify CDE if they will turn back any ECARE positions to be reallocated to other districts with capacity to expand their preschool offerings. Districts that have not utilized ECARE positions in kindergarten are able to make a request for the positions turned back by other districts through the addendum to the CPP Annual Report due May 17th. The review and reallocation of any returned ECARE positions will occur based on the plans submitted through the annual CPP reporting process and will allow



CDE to ensure that all ECARE positions can be fully utilized to serve as many at-risk preschoolers as possible in programs this coming fall.

We recognize that May is an exceptionally busy time of year and appreciate that the kindergarten survey and ECARE planning process adds to your workload. We have worked hard to make the required reporting and planning processes as easy as possible and are very willing to work with you and your staff to help with these added responsibilities. We also recognize that this investment in preschool and kindergarten has the potential to make a positive difference in the lives of young children in your district and across the state!

Please do not hesitate to contact us with questions or suggestions. For questions regarding CPP and ECARE, please contact Heidi McCaslin at 303.866.6720 or [McCaslin\\_H@cde.state.co.us](mailto:McCaslin_H@cde.state.co.us). For questions regarding funding, please contact Tim Kahle at 303.866.6818 or [Kahle\\_T@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Kahle_T@cde.state.co.us).

Sincerely,



Jennifer Okes  
Chief Operating Officer



Melissa Colsman  
Associate Commissioner, Student Learning Division