November 5, 2026

Dear Superintendents and BOCES Directors,

Congratulations to those of you celebrating successes on local ballot initiatives! We are continuing to monitor final counts and will share related updates as we have them. We have the following items for you today:

- Coordinated Support for Southwestern Colorado School Districts and BOCES
- Budget Updates: Governor's Budget Proposal; School Finance
- Legislative Report on Part Time Homeschool Enrichment and Single/Multi-District Online Schools
- New Resource Opportunities: Early Literacy Book Fairs; Outcomes-Based Contracting, AI in Literacy Instruction

Coordinated Support for Southwestern Colorado School Districts and BOCES

We are all thinking of our colleagues in Southwestern Colorado who are impacted by significant flooding. Our Chief District Operations Officer Sheldon Rosenkrance is working within our team and with Crisis Unit Manager Kati Garner at the Colorado Office of School Safety to identify resources.

- For help with crisis response (including mental health resources), contact Kati directly at (303)-909-3672 (cell) or kati.garner@state.co.us.
- We are uploading resources from the Office of School Safety to this folder.
- County-based flood recovery information: La Plata County, Archuleta County, Conejos County, and Rio Grande and Mineral Counties.
- For assistance with students displaced by flooding, please contact our Office of Highly Mobile Students and Families. You can call or text the phone numbers listed.
- If you need help with any reporting flexibilities or deadlines, please contact Sheldon directly at rosenkrance_s@cde.state.co.us or 720-766-1748 (call or text).

Budget Updates: Governor's Budget Proposal; School Finance

Earlier this week, Governor Polis related his proposed FY27-28 budget - you can click here for a summary of education related requests. The Governor's budget request proposes a $212.1 million increase in statewide Total Program funding. This consists of an increase of $154.7 million in state share and an increase of $57.4 million local share.

- **New Formula Implementation:** 45%
- **Student Count:** Smoothing to replace Averaging in FY27-28
- **Inflation:** 4.0%
- **Mill Levy Adjustment:** Approximately $12 million in state share funding shifted to local share for impacted districts through proposed mill levy changes
- **Enrollment:** Projected decline of 11,051 FTE statewide

The updated run is available on our website.

Legislative Report on Part Time Homeschool Enrichment and Single/Multi-District Online Schools

House Bill 26-1428 required the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to submit a report to the Joint Budget Committee (JBC) focused on part-time homeschool enrichment programs and single- and multi-district online education programs. The report was created by Dillinger Research and Applied Data and includes a set of possible recommendations created by Dillinger that will be discussed with the Colorado State Board of Education in its November 12-13 meeting.

New Resource Opportunities: Early Literacy Book Fairs; Outcomes-Based Contracting, AI in Literacy Instruction

We are launching three new (optional) no cost initiatives for school districts and BOCES:

- We are exploring an Annual Book Fair program - which includes an independent research study - that would allow participating students to select 10–14 high-quality books each spring to keep and read over the summer. Please complete this district interest survey by Nov. 30 if you would like to learn more.
- We are partnering with the Center for Outcomes Based Contracting to offer up to five districts an opportunity to participate in a two-year pilot focused on improving student outcomes through high-impact tutoring and educational technology. Contract Brittany Johnson, Director, Programming, Center for Outcomes Based Contract, bjohnson@centerobc.org for more information.
- We are working with InnovateUS's Observatory of Public Sector AI on a two-year initiative to help literacy educators use artificial intelligence (AI) to reduce planning and administrative burdens while strengthening evidence-based literacy instruction and will share more in our Nov. 10 Superintendent Call.

Warm regards,

Susana Córdova