

Colorado School Finance Project

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COLORADO K-12 EDUCATION FUNDING: An overview

Over 43% of all Colorado students have “special needs”

- **At-risk:** 27% of students are eligible for free lunch (197,000)
- **Special Ed:** 11.4% of students have disabilities requiring special services (83,000)
- **ELPA:** 5% of students are learning English as a second language (36,700)

School spending is outpacing inflation rate & state funding increases

- Operating and maintenance spending rose 6.5% from 2004 to 2005
- Colorado’s inflation rate from 2003-4 and 2004-5 increased by just .1%
- State per pupil allocation from 2003-4 and 2004-5 increased by just 4%

Colorado per pupil spending falls 10.2% short of the national average

- Colorado’s per pupil spending is \$7,819
- The national average for per pupil spending is \$8,618

Colorado invests less income in education than national average

- Revenue directed to Colorado K-12 education is equal to 3.25% of personal income
- Revenue directed to K-12 education nationally is equal to 4.47% of personal income

Colorado teachers’ earnings lag behind the national average by 8%

- The average Colorado teacher salary is \$43,987
- The average national teacher salary is \$47,750

Colorado teachers’ years of experience is decreasing

- In 1993, Colorado teachers’ average was 13 years of experience
- In 2005, Colorado teachers’ average was 9.5 years of experience

Profile data compiled by Augenblick Palich & Company, Fall 2006.
Source: Colorado Department of Education and Colorado Education Association