



COLORADO

Governor Jared Polis

FY 2021-22 Budget Fact Sheet Early Childhood Care and Education

The Governor's FY 2021-22 Budget recognizes that one of the most important investments we can make for our State's future is in our children – now more than ever. The economic downturn and global health pandemic have elevated the importance of providing a safe space where all children have access to high-quality early care and education, regardless of their zip code or family's income. Although forecasted revenues have improved, the economic forecast continues to project an operating deficit. That's why this budget proposes stimulus and strategic investments to help Colorado climb out faster and better.

Colorado is strategically investing State stimulus resources to minimize the loss of child care capacity and rebuild a more resilient child care sector. The Governor's State stimulus package for FY 2020-21 includes a one-time investment of \$50M to help child care providers remain open across Colorado to enable families to return to work. This request includes:

- **\$35M for sustainability grants** for existing providers to remain open despite higher costs of child care as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- **\$5M for grants to employers to retrofit** facility space to support on-site child care for their workforce; and,
- **\$10M** to provide one-time start-up funding and mentorship for new child care providers to open child care centers or family child care homes across the State, especially in child care deserts, through a new Governor's Child Care Fellows program.

Investments in the Governor's FY 2021-22 Budget include:

- **\$1.2M increase** to establish an early care and education Recruitment and Retention Grant and Scholarship Program to support the early childhood workforce.
- **\$3M increase** to support increased, liveable salaries for early childhood educators at high-quality Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) settings.
- **\$0.4M increase** to improve kindergarten readiness through funding the Colorado Imagination Library Program, which provides one free book per month to children from birth through age five.
- **\$2.5M increase and statutory change** to enable an Early Intervention Evaluation transfer of authority to improve program efficiency and family experience.
- **\$0.5M increase** to maintain the number of families served through the evidence-based Nurse Family Partnership programs.

The Governor's FY 2021-22 Budget also protects funding for high priority programs and services, including:

- Free Full-Day Kindergarten and the Colorado Preschool Program (CPP)
- **\$133M** for the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP)
- **\$42M** for Early Literacy and the READ Act
- **\$27M** for Evidence-Based Home Visiting Programs
- **\$3M** for Early Childhood Mental Health