



COLORADO

Department of Education

Dropout Prevention Student Re-Engagement Expelled and At-Risk Student Services

EARSS Systems Development Grant 2024 RFA



1

- Welcome to the Expelled and At-Risk Student Services Systems Development Grant webinar. This webinar will go over key aspects of the application for the current EARSS RFA. This webinar is being recorded and will be posted on the CDE EARSS RFA website.
- Please feel free to post any questions in the chat and we will answer them throughout the webinar.
- Just a reminder to please mute your microphone.

EARSS Grant Focus

2



- Before we explore the EARSS Systems Development grant opportunity, we will first discuss the Expelled and At-Risk Student Services, or EARSS program through the Colorado Department of Education.

C.R.S. 22-33-205 - Expelled and At-Risk Student Services (EARSS)
Grant Program

Assist in providing educational and supportive services to students who have been expelled, are at-risk of expulsion, are truant, are at-risk of becoming habitually truant, and/or are considered chronically absent.

The Expelled and At-Risk Student Services (EARSS) grant program at the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) is authorized by Colorado Revised Statute (C.R.S.) 22-33-205 to assist in providing educational and supportive services to students who have been expelled, are at-risk of expulsion, are truant, are at-risk of becoming habitually truant, or who are considered chronically absent.

C.R.S. 22-33-205 - Eligibility

EARSS Program provides grants to:

- School districts
- Charter schools
- Alternative schools
- Nonpublic schools*
- Boards of Cooperative Services (BOCES)
- Facility Schools



*Nonpublic schools are required to acquire State Board of Education approval to apply prior to submitting an online application.

Per statute, eligible applicants include school districts, charter schools, alternative schools, boards of cooperative services or BOCES, facility schools, and nonpublic schools. If a nonpublic school is interested in applying, they will need to seek approval from the State Board of Education prior to applying for the grant.

Current EARSS grantees are not eligible to apply for the current round of grant funding. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have questions regarding eligibility.

Systems Development Grant

18-month capacity building grant that is targeted to support capacity building to:

- Minimize exclusionary discipline by focusing on either
 - Systems Update
 - Alternative to Exclusionary Discipline Program Development
- Improve Attendance by focusing on one of the following
 - Systems Update
 - Attendance Collaborative Program Development
 - Attendance Campaign Program Development



The EARSS Systems Development Grant is meant to look at the larger picture in a school or a district and is focused on decreasing exclusionary discipline and improve attendance. The purpose of this 18-month System Development Grant opportunity, is to provide targeted support regarding capacity building to

- minimize exclusionary discipline through a systems update or the development of an alternative to exclusionary discipline program and
- to improve attendance by updating the system regarding attendance, the development of an attendance collaborative program, or to develop and conduct an attendance campaign to increase student attendance rates.
- Applicants will be asked to select one from the five options.

Priority Funding

- Priority Funding Points will be given to schools and districts identified to have a higher-than-average rate of out of school suspensions or chronic absenteeism for the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school year
- Five bonus points, per application, will be awarded to applications if identified and the application is focused on the identified reason
- Priority Funding Lists found in Appendix E and F



- Schools and districts that have been identified as having higher than average out of school suspension rates or chronic absenteeism rates for either of the last two school years will receive priority funding bonus points. Each application is eligible for a maximum of five bonus points if the application is focused their identified reason. Lists of schools and districts who qualify for priority funding points are found in Appendix E and F and will be updated with 23-24 school years data as soon as it is released.

Discipline Focus

7



- The discipline system development grant is focused on decreasing exclusionary discipline and providing support for students to successfully return to the classroom after being removed for disciplinary reasons.

Data Points to be used:

- Self-reported Progress Reports
- State reported Student Discipline Snapshot Collection
 - Total In-School Suspensions
 - Total Out-of-School Suspensions
 - Total Expulsions
- Three years of State Reported Data will be utilized
 - 2023-2024
 - 2024-2025
 - 2025-2026

The data points that we will be utilizing each year to determine the effectiveness of the program include self-reported progress report, and district-level data that is collected each year by the state.

The End of Year report will be completed by the grantee at the end of the 2024-2025 school year and at the end of the 2025-2026 school year. An example of this report is found in Appendix B of the application.

In addition, data on Student Discipline that is collected each year by the state will be reviewed. Specifically, the total in-school and out-of-school suspension rates will be used, along with the expulsion rate for the schools that are part of the grant. Three years of data will be utilized including last years data, which will be considered baseline, data from this academic year, and data from the 2025-2026 school year.

The goal is to see a decrease in discipline for schools that are participating in this system development grant. There are two options available.

System Update: Goal

The goal of the Systems Update program is to conduct a systemic review of discipline systems, updating or adapting current systems and ensuring a broad understanding and consistency across the school or district in disciplinary response.

Funds may be utilized to fund –

- a systemic review,
- update and train on district and school policies,
- update and train on the discipline matrix,
- analyze discipline trends, and
- update or training on discipline coding systems to ensure consistency in reporting.

Systemic updates will clearly outline the process for reviewing student discipline and include a list of potential interventions to maintain consistency and transparency.



- The first option is a Disciplinary Systems Update.
- The goal of the Systems Update is to conduct a systemic review of the current system, updating and adapting the current systems to ensure a broad understanding and a consistency in applying and reporting across the school, and district in all disciplinary responses.
- The systemic update focus will clearly outline the process for reviewing student discipline and will need to include a list of potential interventions to maintain consistency and transparency at the site.
- An example of costs that might be associated with the systems update grant could include:
 - Money to pay for a systemic review
 - Expenses associated with updating district and school policies;
 - Expenses associated with analyzing data trends, and
 - Updating and training staff on discipline coding systems to ensure consistency in reporting

System Update – Performance Updates

Performance Measures and data points linked to this program include:

- **Systems:** By the end of the 2026 school year, a full systemic review of the current discipline system will be completed and an implementation plan regarding changes will be created.
- **Student:** Throughout the grant process, students representing the school's demographics, will participate in the planning process, ensuring the students' voice is heard.
- **Staff:** By the end of the 2026 school year, the findings from the systemic review will be shared with 100% of staff and staff will collaborate to create an action plan regarding changes to be made.



The three performance measures that are linked to the systems update include a systems based, student based, and staff-based performance measure. You might notice that these performance measures have already been written for the applicant.

- **Systems based performance measure:** By the end of the 2026 school year, a full systemic review of the current discipline systems will be completed and an implementation plan regarding changes will be created.
- **At the student level, we wanted to ensure the students are included in the process, so the student performance measures is:** Throughout the grant process, students representing the school's demographics, will participate in the planning process, ensuring the students' voice is heard.
- **Staff Performance Measure:** By the end of the 2026 school year, the findings from the systemic review will be shared with 100% of staff and staff will collaborate to create an action plan regarding changes to be made.

Alternative to Exclusionary Discipline Practices - Goal

Design and implement a disciplinary model focused on utilizing non-exclusionary discipline practices in response to disciplinary infractions. This could be an alternative to suspension and/or expulsion intervention, or a reintegration process for the student upon return to school from an exclusionary discipline leave.

Models may include:

- building an in-school behavioral intervention/restorative program,
- training of staff in de-escalation techniques,
- create toolkit including, but not limited to, list of alternatives to exclusionary discipline, and
- data analysis regarding behaviors to target support based on identified need.

Another option is the Alternative to Exclusionary Discipline Practices focus. The focus of this application is to design and implement a disciplinary model that is focused on utilizing non-exclusionary discipline practices in response to disciplinary infractions. This could be an alternative to suspension or expulsion intervention program, and a reintegration process for a student upon returning to school from an absence due to disciplinary reasons.

These models could include building an in-school behavioral intervention or a restorative program, training staff on de-escalation techniques, creating a toolkit regarding alternatives to exclusionary discipline, and data analysis regarding behaviors to target support based on an identified need.

Alternative to Exclusionary Discipline Practices – Performance Measures

Performance Measures and data points linked to this program include:

- **Systems:** By the end of the 2026 school year, a protocol will be established regarding alternative discipline practices and the reintegration process in each school.
- **Student:** By the end of the 2026 school year, suspensions and/or expulsions reported to state will decrease by ***[percent change to be determined by applicant]***.
- **Staff:** By the end of the 2026 school year, 75% of staff will be trained in the alternative to exclusionary discipline practices.



The performance measures that are linked to the alternative to exclusionary discipline practices application include:

- **Systems:** By the end of the 2026 school year, a protocol will be established regarding alternative discipline practices and the reintegration process in each school.
- **Student:** By the end of the 2026 school year, suspensions and/or expulsions reported to state will decrease by ***[percent change to be determined by applicant]***. Please note that this performance measure requires you to enter how much the applicant expects exclusionary discipline rate to decrease by the end of the grant cycle.
- **Staff:** By the end of the 2026 school year, 75% of staff will be trained in the alternative to exclusionary discipline practices.

Attendance Focus

13



- Next we will discuss the attendance focus grant application .

Data Points to be used:

- Self-reported Progress Reports
- State reported Attendance Snapshot Collection
 - Chronically Absent Rate
 - Habitually Truant Rate
- Three years of State Reported Data will be utilized
 - 2023-2024
 - 2024-2025
 - 2025-2026



- As with the discipline focused application, there is a specific set of data points that will be reviewed each year to determine the effectiveness of the program. The first will be a self-reported progress report. This will be completed at the end of the 2024-2025 school year and at the end of the 2025-2026 school year. An example of this report may be found in Appendix B of the application.
- In addition, each grantee program evaluation will include a review of data that is reported as part of the Attendance Snapshot Collection collected each year. Specifically, attendance rate, chronically absent rate and the habitually truant rate will be reviewed. Data will include 23-24 data, which will be considered baseline, data from this academic year, and data from the 2025-2026 school year.

The goal is to see a decrease in the chronically absent and habitually truant rate, and an increase in the overall attendance rate for schools that are participating in this system development grant. There are three options under the attendance-focused grant applications.

Systems Update: Goal

The goal of the Systems Update focus is to look at and improve current attendance policy and trends, identifying process and procedures regarding attendance interventions, ensuring understanding and consistency in reporting and responding to attendance concerns.

Funds may be utilized to fund

- a systemic review,
- update district and school policies,
- analyze attendance trends,
- update attendance coding systems, and
- update procedures regarding attendance interventions.

Systemic updates will clearly outline the process for reviewing student attendance and include a list of potential interventions to maintain consistency and transparency.



- The goal of the attendance systems update is similar to the discipline systems update – to improve current attendance policy and trends, identifying process and procedures regarding attendance interventions, ensuring understanding and consistency in reporting and responding to attendance concerns. This grant focus will result in clearly outlining the process for reviewing student attendance and identifying potential interventions to maintain consistency and transparency.
- Possible use of funds could include:
 - Money to pay for a systemic review
 - Expenses associated with updating district and school policies;
 - Expenses associated with analyzing trends, updating coding systems, and updating procedures regarding interventions.

System Update: Performance Measures

Performance Measures and data points linked to this program include:

- **Systems:** By the end of the 2026 school year, a full systemic review of the current attendance system will be completed and an implementation plan to make changes will be created.
- **Student:** By the end of the 2026 school year, students representing the school's demographic breakdown, will participate in the planning process, ensuring the students voice is heard.
- **Staff:** By the end of the 2026 school year the findings from the systemic review will be shared with 100% of staff and staff will collaborate to create an action plan regarding changes to be made.

- The three performance measures associated with the Systems review are:
- **Systems:** By the end of the 2026 school year, a full systemic review of the current attendance system will be completed and an implementation plan to make changes will be created.
- At the student level, we wanted to ensure the students are included in the process, so the student performance measures is: By the end of the 2026 school year, students representing the school's demographic breakdown, will participate in the planning process, ensuring the students voice is heard.
- **Staff:** By the end of the 2026 school year the findings from the systemic review will be shared with 100% of staff and staff will collaborate to create an action plan regarding changes to be made.

Attendance Collaborative: Goal

Grantee will establish an interdisciplinary attendance team focused on decreasing the number of excused and unexcused absences by matching students and families with appropriate internal and external support.

Possible expenses include:

- Costs associated with attending these meetings after hours,
- Cost associated with Home Visits (training, extra duty pay, mileage reimbursement)
- Training and materials regarding relationship building
- Costs associated with establishment of Student Attendance Multiagency Collaborative Review Board and Truancy Case Management and Diversion Program



The second option is to establish or improve an interdisciplinary attendance team that is focused on decreasing the number of excused and unexcused absences by matching students and families with appropriate support. The general idea is that by identifying the root cause of the attendance issue, and helping problem solve a solution or connect family to specific resources, the student will be able to attend more frequently

The goal is for this team to include both individuals from in district and from outside resources. The team will review student attendance data and potentially the data of siblings in the district, to identify potential issues, barriers and possible solutions.

Many schools have models of these programs with varying degrees of success, for example a few I have recently heard of include the Student Attendance Review Boards, collaboratives between districts, child advocates, families, and outside agencies, or a community school model with an student engagement team component.

Possible expenses include:

- Costs associated with attending these meetings after hours,
- Cost associated with Home Visits (training, extra duty pay, mileage reimbursement)
- Training and materials regarding relationship building
- Costs associated with establishment of Student Attendance Multiagency Collaborative Review Board, Truancy Case Management and Diversion Program.

Attendance Collaborative Performance Measures

Performance Measures and data points linked to this program include:

- **Systems:** By the end of the 2026 school year, interdisciplinary attendance review teams will be established, and attendance review meetings will be conducted with students, parents, and the students' teachers as needed.
- **Student:** By the end of the 2026 school year, students identified as chronically absent and/or habitually truant will participate in an attendance collaborative meeting and create a plan to increase attendance.
- **Staff:** By the end of the 2026 school year, staff members who have a student participating in the collaborative meetings will have participated in the attendance team meeting regarding their student.



- Performance measures associated with this include
- **Systems:** By the end of the 2026 school year, interdisciplinary attendance review teams will be established, and attendance review meetings will be conducted with students, parents, and the students' teachers as needed.
- **Student:** By the end of the 2026 school year, students identified as chronically absent and/or habitually truant will participate in an attendance collaborative meeting and create a plan to increase attendance.
- **Staff:** By the end of the 2026 school year, staff members who have a student participating in the collaborative meetings will have participated in the attendance team meeting regarding their student.

Attendance Campaign: Goal

Design and implement an attendance campaign to increase awareness of overall school attendance. This may include materials to be used to communicate the importance of attendance within the community.



- The final option is to design and implement an attendance campaign to increase awareness of overall school attendance. This may include materials that are used to communicate the importance of attendance within the community. This could include:
 - Marketing materials
 - Supplies for community meetings that may help identify barriers the community has noticed, open communication between the community and the school, and to build relationships between the school and community,
 - Family nights at the school to help build relationships between parents, students, and school staff and
 - Materials and time to create a toolkit around attendance and interventions.

Attendance Campaign: Performance Measures

Performance Measures and data points linked to this program include:

- **Systems:** By the end of the 2026 school year, an attendance campaign will be implemented at the school and district level with community involvement.
- **Student:** By the end of the 2026 school year, students identified as chronically absent and/or habitually truant will decrease by *[percent change to be determined by applicant]* as reported to the state.
- **Staff:** By the end of the 2026 school year, 100% of staff will have participated in the campaign and/or have discussed the importance of attendance with students and students' families.

- The performance measures associated with this proposal are:
- **Systems:** By the end of the 2026 school year, an attendance campaign will be implemented at the school and district level with community involvement.
- **Student:** By the end of the 2026 school year, students identified as chronically absent and/or habitually truant will decrease by *[percent change to be determined by applicant]* as reported to the state. Once again, this performance measure does require the applicant to predict the percent of decrease in the chronic absenteeism and habitually truant rates.
- **Staff:** By the end of the 2026 school year, 100% of staff will have participated in the campaign and/or have discussed the importance of attendance with students and students' families.

Technical Information



Funding Details

- Funding Period – January 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026
- \$50,000 max per grant application
- One time payment during Spring 2025



- There is an estimated \$350,000 available for approximately 7 grants this year. Grant applications are capped at \$50,000. A one time payment will be sent to awardees this spring to be used for expenses between January 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

Allowable Expenses

- Activities to facilitate planning process
- Consultation services
- Needs Assessment
- Professional Development
- Time and Effort for time spent after contract hours
- Travel expenses associated with grant including mileage reimbursement



Additional examples of allowable expenses include the costs associated with the planning process. These do not include any cost associated with writing the application or that occur prior to January 1, 2025.

Consultation services, needs assessments, cost for professional development including registration, materials needed, and staff time and effort. Travel expenses related to attending grant related conferences and mileage reimbursement of grant related personnel to do grant related work are allowed. An example of travel could be the mileage reimbursement for the travel for home visits.

Unallowable Expenses

- Indirect Costs
- Capital Equipment or Capital Improvements
- Maintenance
- Gift cards, gifts, awards, gas for vehicles, door prizes
- Tuition
- Truancy court-related legal fees
- Expulsion hearing related costs
- T-shirts, fieldtrips, incentives, and prizes for students

- Some unallowable costs include indirect costs, capital equipment, capital improvements to a building, general maintenance of the facility.
- It is unallowable to use grant funds to purchase gift cards, gift certificate, general gifts and prizes, and door prizes.
- While it is allowable to cover mileage reimbursement for grant related activities, it is not allowable to purchase gas for an individuals private vehicle.
- Truancy related legal fees and expulsion hearing related costs
- In some cases, the time and effort spent to earn a certification for a difficult to fill positions is covered, but the cost of tuition and textbooks would not be covered.
- And for this grant, t-shirts, fieldtrips, prizes and incentives for students will also be unallowable expenses.

Reporting Requirements – Program Manager

Self-Reported End of Year (Due July 15th)

- Performance Measure Updates
 - Resources
 - Activities
 - Results
 - Updates/Progress
- Summary of Services
- Summary of Grant Activities

Other Duties:

- Maintain meeting minutes
- Regularly update LEA's governing body on grant progress
- Attend CDE Grant related meetings
- Attend DPSR Spring Convening
- Attend Landscape Fall Conference

- The program manager will be required to submit an End of Year report at the end of each school year. This report includes an update on the program, an update on the performance measures, and a brief summary of grant activities. In addition, the program manager is responsible of maintaining evidence of the work being done, for example agendas and minutes from meetings and trainings throughout the year and may be asked to share these as part of the program updates. It is also requested that the grantee regularly updates the LEA's governing body on the progress being made.
- Program managers also need to attend grant related meetings, the DPSR spring convening, and a fall conference in September.

Data Privacy

CDE takes seriously its obligation to protect the privacy of student and educator Personally Identifiable Information (PII) collected, used, shared, and stored.

Documents submitted as part of the Narrative and Budget in the application must **NOT** contain any personally identifiable student or educator information including names of staff.

Information reported to CDE in relation to grant activities is not confidential and is subject to public request.

EARSS Systems Development Grant will not be collecting students SASID numbers.

CDE takes its obligation to protect the privacy of student and educators personally identifiable information, or PII, seriously. Please do not include anyone's specific name in the Narrative or budget file. If needed, a job position might be included.

Unlike previous EARSS grants, this grant will not be collecting personally identifiable information on students served through the collection of a students SASID number, instead we will be utilizing data that is already reported to the state.

Reporting Requirements – Fiscal Manager

Annual Fiscal Report

- September 30, 2025 - Expenses from January 1, 2025 – June 30, 2025
- September 30, 2026 – Expenses from July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

Interim Fiscal Report

- February 15, 2026 – Expenses from July 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025



- The fiscal manager will be responsible of submitting the annual and interim fiscal reports to CDE's Grants Fiscal Management team. Annual reports require a copy of the general ledger and are due in September. The interim report is due in February next year.

GAINS Tips and Resources



28



- Next we will discuss the attendance focus grant application .



EARSS in GAINS



- The EARSS Systems Development Grant will transition to CDE's Grants Management System, GAINS, this year.
- The following slides contain helpful resources, links, and tips to supplement the [EARSS GAINS Walkthrough](#) recording.

GAINS Homepage: <https://colorado.egrantsmanagement.com>





Getting Started: [GAINS Training Page](#)

- Requesting Access To GAINS (CDE IdM – Districts)
 - [Instructions](#) | [Recording](#)
- Requesting Access to GAINS (non-IdM – Charter Schools)
 - [Instructions](#) | [Recording](#)
- Logging into GAINS with CDE IdM (Districts)
 - [Instructions](#) | [Recording](#)
- Logging into GAINS with Native Login (Charter Schools)
 - [Instructions](#) | [Recording](#)





Roles and Permissions



It is recommended that each applicant identify one user within their organization to be assigned the role of **LEA Expelled and At-Risk Student Services Development Director**.

This user will be the main application point of contact and be able to open and edit the application.

For more information on roles and permissions, see our [GAINS Roles and Permissions website resource](#).





Charter School applicants should complete the [Charter School GAINS Application Access Request Form](#).

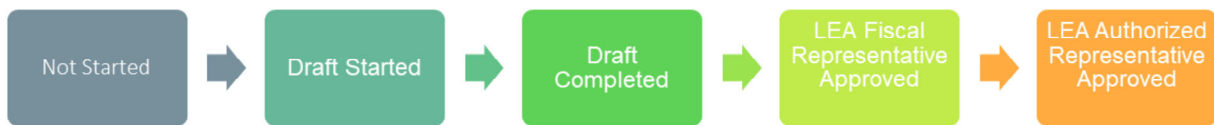
For users new to GAINS, CDE will create an account and the user will receive an email from the GAINS platform prompting them to create a password. CDE will also assign the requested EARSS role(s).

For existing charter school users who submit the above form, CDE will assign the appropriate EARSS role(s).





- To locate your application after logging in, click on your organization's name at the top and find the application in the funding application list.
- To open your application for editing, be sure to click on "**Draft Started**" at the top of the page.
- Applications are considered fully submitted to CDE when they are in status **LEA Authorized Representative Approved**.





Resources



- [GAINS Training Page](#)
- [Help Desk Ticket](#)
- [CDE IdM Password Reset Form](#)
- [GAINS FAQ](#)
- [EARSS GAINS Walkthrough recording](#)
- Email the GAINS team at: GAINS@cde.state.co.us



Deadlines

September 16, 2024 - Intent to Apply (optional)

September 30, 2024 by 4 p.m. - Application Due

October/November - Applications Reviewed

November/December - Recommendations to State Board of Education

January 2025 – Grants Awarded

Thank You!

Contact Information:

Amy Werpy

720.470.7558

Werpy_a@cde.state.co.us

Jess Hollingshead

720.557.2241

Hollingshead_j@cde.state.co.us

