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Individuals completing educator preparation programs declines for sixth straight year

DENVER, Dec. 1, 2016 – The latest numbers from the 2016 Legislative Educator Preparation Report, to be presented at today’s [Colorado Commission on Higher Education meeting](#), shows the number of individuals completing traditional educator preparation programs at Colorado colleges and universities during the 2015-16 academic year declined by 2.2 percent to 2,472. This is the sixth straight year the number of people joining the workforce as teachers and administrators has dropped—a 24.4 percent decrease since 2010.

According to the report, 3,268 educators completed programs through either a traditional or alternative educator preparation program licensure route, such as an online program. Completers through alternative licensure routes remains consistent over the last reporting cycles and represents approximately one-quarter (25 percent) of the total completers in the state (796).

The [report](#), submitted annually to the Joint Education Committee of the General Assembly and required by law, is drafted by the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) and the Colorado Department of Education (CDE).

“This report highlights the growing concern about teacher and educator shortages,” said Interim Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Higher Education Diane Duffy. “Worse, the shortage directly impacts instruction in high-need areas such as math, science and world languages. This issue impacts all of Colorado’s schools, particularly those in our rural and remote regions.”

In addition to a decline in completers, enrollment in educator preparation programs at Colorado institutions of higher education remains at low levels and largely unchanged from the previous academic year with 9,896 students. This is a reduction of 24.4 percent from the 2010-11 academic year.

“Having a great teacher in every classroom is the foundation of our efforts to ensure that every child has the opportunity to succeed in school,” said Katy Anthes, interim commissioner of education at the Colorado Department of Education. “The continued decline in the number of new teachers in Colorado has become an urgent issue, especially for our rural areas. It will be our collective challenge as education leaders, policymakers and communities to find new ways to attract, retain and support amazing and effective teachers for all classrooms throughout Colorado.”

While overall enrollment numbers are lower, 2015-16 saw an increase in the number of diverse students enrolled in educator preparation programs. The number of black or African American, Hispanic, Asian and multi-racial candidates all increased as compared to the previous academic year.

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