



**COLORADO**  
Department of  
Higher Education

# Postsecondary Access and Success for Colorado's High School Graduates

2026 Key Findings



**2026**

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The Colorado Department of Higher Education  
Report to the education committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate of the Colorado  
General Assembly and the State Board of Education

Statute: §23-1-113

The Colorado Department of Higher Education (DHE), under its own authority and through the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE), oversees and coordinates policy for 31 public institutions of higher education (including community colleges, independent local district colleges and local area technical colleges) and authorizes and regulates private colleges, universities and occupational schools.

**Mission** – We support students, advocate and develop policies to maximize higher education opportunities for all.

**Vision** – All Coloradans will have an education beyond high school to pursue their dreams and improve our communities.



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Prepared and submitted by the Colorado Department of Higher Education  
under the Executive Leadership of JB Holston  
Pursuant to the statutory authority of 23-1-113

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# Key Findings:

## 2022 High School Graduating Class

### At a Glance

- A total of 61,657 students graduated from a Colorado public high school in 2022.
- 51% of the 2022 Colorado public high school graduates enrolled in postsecondary education the fall after graduation. This is a slight increase from the 2021 class (49.9%) and 2020 class (50.5%). Prior to COVID (2010-2019) the rate ranged between 55.8% to 57.8%.
- 75.7% of the 2022 Colorado public high school graduates who continued in postsecondary education enrolled at 4-year institutions (a slight increase); 24.3% enrolled at a 2-year institution (a slight decrease).
- 29.3% of the 2022 Colorado public high school graduates enrolled at an out-of-state institution (a slight increase) with 70.7% enrolled in-state (a slight decrease). Since 2010 (20.7%) the percentage of Colorado public high school graduates enrolling out-of-state has steadily increased.

### Dual and Concurrent Enrollment

- 39.9% of the Colorado public high school graduating cohort attempted Concurrent Enrollment courses and 44.7% attempted dual enrollment courses. Both are continued increases from the previous (in the 2021 high school graduating class, 36.2% attempted concurrent enrollment courses while 42.0% attempted dual enrollment). Over time, there has been a steady growth in both dual and Concurrent Enrollment - in 2012 14.7% attempted Concurrent Enrollment courses and 21.2% attempted dual enrollment courses. Concurrent Enrollment courses meet the conditions provided in the [Concurrent Enrollment Programs Act](#), while dual enrollment courses are all college courses offered to high school students.
- 3.7% of the 2022 Colorado high school graduating cohort earned a degree prior to enrolling in college. This has been steadily increasing (yearly) since 2012 (0.9%).

### Financial Aid Overview for Colorado Institution Enrollees

- 81.2% of the 2022 Colorado public high school graduates who enrolled at a Colorado public higher education institution completed the Free Application for Federal Student Assistance (FAFSA). Since 2011, more than 80% have filled out the application.
- 30.4% of the 2022 Colorado public high school graduates who enrolled at a Colorado public higher education institution received a Pell Grant, a slight increase from the year previous year's high school class (29.7%) and the 2020 high school class (28.5%). Prior to COVID (2010-2019), between 32.5% to 36.8% received a Pell grant.
- 35.2% of the 2022 Colorado public high school graduates who enrolled at a Colorado public higher education institution received state aid, a slight increase from previous year's high school class (34.1%). Since 2010, the percentage of Colorado public high school graduates receiving state aid ranged from 28.5% (2013) to 37.2% (2017).
- 44.9% of the 2022 Colorado public high school graduates who enrolled at a Colorado public higher education institution received institutional aid, an increase over 2.5% from the previous year's high school class (42.2%). Since 2010, this rate has steadily increased from 32.9%.

### Outcomes and College-Going Pathways for Colorado high school graduates

- 79.9% of the 2021 Colorado public high school class who enrolled in higher education persisted to their second year (Fall 2022). This is over a 2.5% increase from the previous year's high school class (77.1%). Since 2010, the persistence rate of Colorado high school graduates in higher education has remained relatively steady from 77.1% to 80.7%.
- The 6-year graduation rate from a postsecondary institution for the 2017 Colorado public high school graduates is 58.9%. This is a slight decrease from the previous year's high school class (60.7%). The 6-year graduation rate has been above 55% for the last five high school graduate cohorts (since 2013).
- 22,215 of the 2022 high school graduates enrolled at an in-state college or university.