



## Colorado Youth For A Change Annual Report 2023–2024



# Dear Friends

We're so excited to celebrate another school year! We remain grateful for our incredible partnerships that have made this work possible. Programs that connect students with caring adults and provide consistent support dramatically increase school engagement and completion. These one-on-one relationships with trained, supportive adults help to remove barriers for students and provide resources they need to navigate school and beyond.



The needs of our students are complex, so our approach is individualized. We had the pleasure of visiting one of our Reading Corps partner schools this fall with the Lieutenant Governor and were inspired by what we heard from students, AmeriCorps members, and school leaders. We are proud that our evidence-based tutoring programs meet students where they're at and boost both skills and confidence.

In addition to supporting students in finishing school and setting goals for the future, we trained and mobilized 200 AmeriCorps members last year. These members served in schools as tutors and

advocates, and many went on to become teachers, counselors, and nonprofit professionals. To further support transitions into meaningful careers, CYC piloted an alternative teacher residency program this past school year and will be launching a micro-credential opportunity where a year of service is combined with stackable credentials in behavioral health. We are proud of CYC's efforts to create a more robust and diverse Colorado workforce in our efforts to advance educational equity.

Thank you for all the ways you support Colorado students and the work of Colorado Youth for a Change. We hope you feel as proud as we do about the impact we are having together!

With Appreciation,

James Blanchard, Board Chair

Mary Zanotti, Executive Director

# Program Outputs & Outcomes

**EARLY LEARNING CORPS:** Early childhood education and kindergarten readiness positively impact students throughout their school years and beyond, leading to increased school success and likelihood of graduation. Early Learning Corps ensures that more students start kindergarten strong by placing full-time tutors in preschool classrooms to provide evidence-based early literacy and math tutoring during the school day.

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**312 STUDENTS**

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**66% MET OR EXCEEDED TARGET GROWTH**



**READING CORPS:** Research shows that not reading at grade level by 3rd grade makes children four times more likely to not complete high school, and six times more likely if they are from low-income families. Reading Corps places full-time tutors in schools to provide kindergarten through 3rd grade students with 20 minutes per day of individualized, high dosage tutoring (1:1 and in pairs) during the school day. Interventions are READ Act approved and proven to accelerate reading proficiency.

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**2,093 STUDENTS**

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**68% MET OR EXCEEDED TARGET GROWTH**



**MATH CORPS:** Large bodies of research show that math proficiency by 8th grade is highly predictive of high school graduation and college enrollment. Yet only one in three Colorado 8th graders are at grade level in math. Math Corps places full-time tutors in schools to provide 4th-8th grade students with high dosage, small group (2-3 students) math tutoring during the school day. Interventions are evidence-based and aligned with core curriculum.

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**1,525 STUDENTS**

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**86% IMPROVED ON BENCHMARK GROWTH**



# Program Outputs & Outcomes

**CORPS FOR A CHANGE:** Research shows that high levels of school engagement and attendance are key indicators of graduating from high school. The Corps for a Change program places caring adults in high schools to build ongoing, trusting relationships with students who are off track to graduate. Specialists provide academic and attendance support, engage with families, connect students to resources (e.g., housing, transportation), and provide social-emotional skills and college and career guidance.

861 STUDENTS

95% CONTINUED IN SCHOOL OR GRADUATED

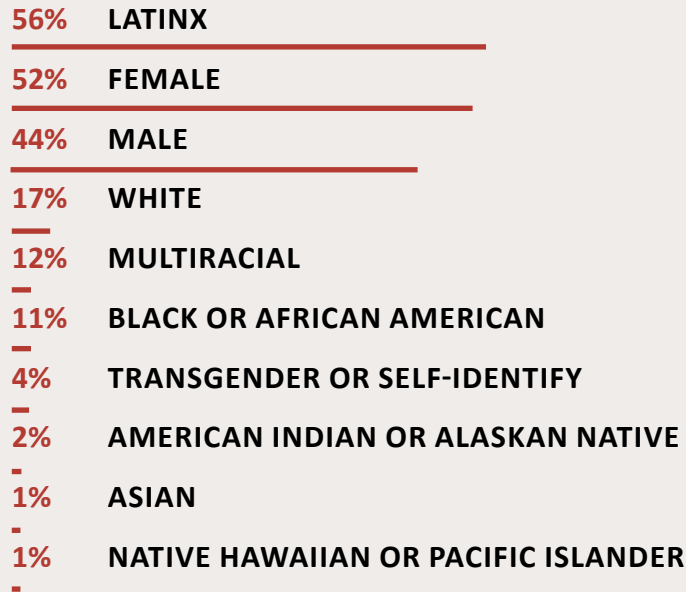
**REENGAGEMENT:** Last year, nearly 10,000 Colorado students were unenrolled from school before completing a diploma. The Reengagement program provides critical reenrollment support to Denver youth, helping them to get back into school and on track to graduate. Specialists engage with families through home visits, take youth on school tours, and help them find school options that fit their unique needs.

603 STUDENTS

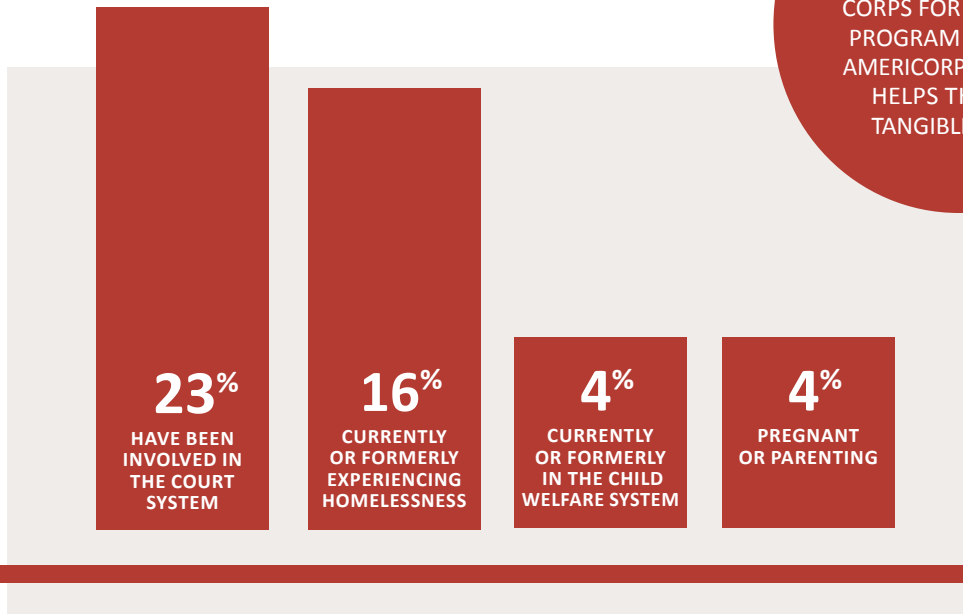
81% CONTINUED IN SCHOOL OR GRADUATED



# The Students We Serve\*



**94%**  
OF STUDENTS IN THE CORPS FOR A CHANGE PROGRAM SAY THEIR AMERICORPS MEMBER HELPS THEM SET TANGIBLE GOALS



\* Reflects older youth programming



# Student Voices



"Matthew was very reluctant to come to tutoring sessions at first because he assumed that it meant he was not as smart as his peers. As time went on, he realized that he enjoyed our time together. One day at the end of our session, Matthew said, 'I used to hate math, but now that I understand it. I think it's kind of fun!' " Math Corps Tutor, Greeley-Evans School District 6



"Melvin grew up with a lot of responsibilities: taking care of siblings, working to support his family, and managing a major health scare. He eventually left school without a high school diploma. After getting in touch with CYC, Melvin worked hard to enroll in Colorado High School Charter's online program. CYC supported Melvin as he completed his GED and helped him connect with Denver workforce services to get an internship. He was a great fit for the program and looks forward to what's ahead." Jose, Reengagement Specialist



"I do see the shift that happens when a student realizes it's not 'me' being a bad student or person, but they just needed something different - a different school environment, smaller environment, information, more resources - it can change everything." Sandra, Reengagement Specialist



# What Our Partners Say

## REENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

“The remarkable partnership between CYC and DPS reliably assists students and families in reconnecting not just with any school, but with the right school to meet their needs, including items that are impacting truancy. Reengagement specialists prioritize areas such as credit recovery, GED attainment, trade-school options, traditional high school programs, as well as sports and extracurricular activities.” – Scott Romero, Denver Public Schools



## COLORADO MATH CORPS

“Bailey has provided targeted, research-based math interventions for our 4th and 5th grade students. We would not have math intervention if it were not for Math Corps. We rely heavily on this intervention as we have students with several math holes we need to fill.” Staff at Coyote Ridge Elementary School

## COLORADO READING CORPS

“Students are reading at higher levels and absolutely loved going to (Reading Corps) group.” – Staff at James Madison STEAM Academy

“The program (Reading Corps) has been a value-add for our school, providing us with the ability to meet the needs of more kids and grow our students faster! Thank you!” Staff at Shepardson Elementary School

**90% of AmeriCorps members believe that their service term helped them develop stronger transferrable professional skills.**



# Highlights

## **BOOSTING EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT PATHWAYS FOR YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS**

Colorado Youth for a Change leads The Denver Opportunity Youth Initiative which is working to expand employment and education pathways to Denver Opportunity Youth – nearly 9,000 16-24 year-olds who are not in school and not working. In addition to convening partners across the City and County of Denver, the Colorado Department of Higher Education, Denver Public Schools, and local CBOs, the initiative hosted four youth forums this year. Forums talked with youth about how they define and experience belonging, wellbeing, and purpose in school, work and community. Findings will be shared with local schools and leaders.



“Belonging makes me feel welcome. Before I came here, I was lost in the sauce. This (program) gave me a purpose. It gave me a sense of purpose when someone wanted to hire me. That feels good.”

## **THIRD PARTY EVALUATION OF READING CORPS SHOWS POSITIVE RESULTS**

A 2022-2023 evaluation of Reading Corps in Colorado revealed an average student growth equivalent to several months of additional instruction when receiving interventions. Student growth was even more significant among English-language learners. Reading Corps not only yields positive educational outcomes but is also cost-effective. Cost-benefit analyses show that the program provides a strong return on investment, exceeding \$5 for every \$1 invested, primarily due to improved educational results and higher high school graduation rates.

## **CYC AMERICORPS MEMBER FEATURED IN TEEN VOGUE**

Our own Nelly Grosso was featured in Teen Vogue this year, after serving for two years with Colorado Youth for a Change. Nelly was interviewed by a variety of publications to promote CYC’s new Youth Mental Health Corps in partnership with AmeriCorps, the Schultz Family Foundation, and Pinterest. Here’s a quote when asked about supporting mostly immigrant students:

“The biggest barrier that they have right now is trying to navigate an entire country and an entire education system, culture, way of thinking all while also learning English. And a lot of my students feel the pressure to succeed, which has really impacted their mental health. At the end of the day, it makes sense, because they’re coming from really tough backgrounds.”





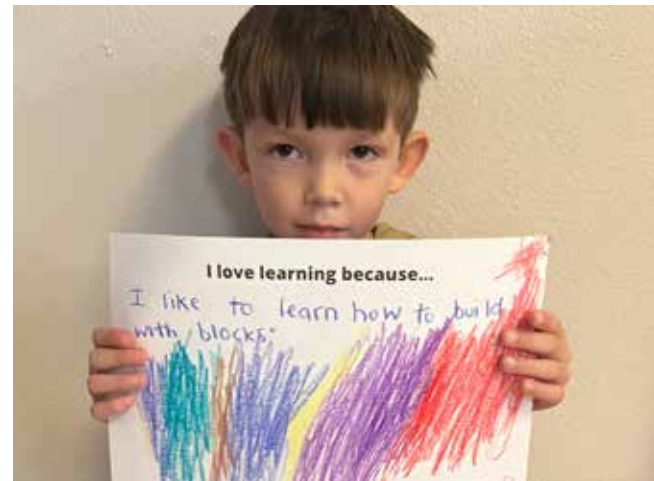
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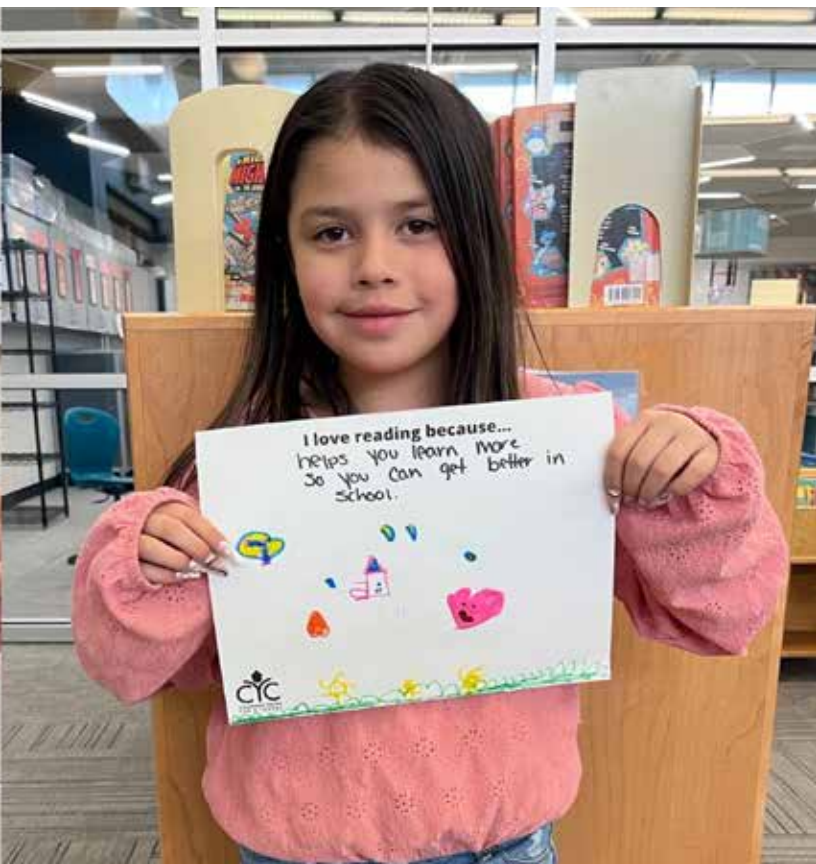
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who wish to remain anonymous



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## Financials

### INCOME

Federal Government	\$5,339,988
School Districts & State Gov.	\$2,548,165
Contributions & Special Events	\$1,854,426
Interest Income	\$2,296
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$9,744,875</b>

### EXPENSES

Programs	\$9,375,611
Fundraising & General	\$563,075
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$9,938,686</b>
6% admin/fundraising 94% direct program	

**94% of Colorado Youth for a Change's revenue directly supported programs**

# Stay In Touch

We would love to hear from you! Get updates on community news, our impact, upcoming events, and more.



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**Our Mission:** Colorado Youth for a Change addresses barriers to learning by providing individualized supports throughout pivotal stages of students' education journeys.

**Our Vision:** Colorado Youth for a Change envisions an equitable education system where each student has access to the resources they need to maximize their own learning and growth.

