COLORADO YOUTH FOR A CHANGE



ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

DEAR FRIENDS,

Every new school year carries a sense of possibility: new teachers, new routines, and a chance to begin again. Yet for too many young people across Colorado, that fresh start is not automatic. Barriers can appear early—a child struggling to read, a student losing confidence in math, a teenager facing anxiety or disconnection, or a young person who has stepped away from school and is unsure how to return.

At Colorado Youth for a Change, we meet students at those pivotal moments. We believe every student can succeed when the right support shows up at the right time. That may mean paired reading intervention, small-group math support, help rebuilding belonging and wellbeing, or persistent guidance back to a path toward graduation and opportunity.



During the past year, we supported more than 4,000 students, partnered with 21 school districts, and mobilized 100 AmeriCorps members. Each number represents a young person who was seen, encouraged, and given a stronger opportunity to continue learning.

Our commitment extends beyond individualized support. As the backbone of the Denver Opportunity Youth Initiative, we bring together partners across K–12 education, postsecondary education, employment, and government. By listening to young people and advocating alongside them, we are helping create transitions into adulthood that are supportive, accessible, and rooted in belonging and purpose.

None of this happens alone. Your partnership enables us to show up early, remain present, and refuse to give up on students whose potential is greater than the barriers before them. You help us partner with schools and families, recruit and train AmeriCorps members, and turn concern into measurable change.

As you read this annual report, we hope you see more than programs and statistics. We hope you see students discovering their strengths, reconnecting with school, and taking the next step toward the futures they deserve.

Thank you for believing in Colorado's students and investing in their learning, wellbeing, and possibilities. Together, we are ensuring that more young people are seen, supported, and able to begin again.

With gratitude,

Becca Stevens
Chair, Board of Directors

Mary Zanotti
Executive Director

PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE



READING CORPS

Students Served	Made Literacy Gains	Exceeded Target Growth
1,607	97%	66%

- Students who are strong readers by 4th grade are prepared to be strong learners throughout their lives. They are far more likely to stay in school, graduate, and have thriving careers, and they are far less likely to experience poverty, unemployment, and poor health as adults.
- The Reading Corps program **placed 63 AmeriCorps tutors at 48 school sites. Targeted tutoring during the school day supported kindergarten - 3rd grade students to reach grade level in reading** and get back track for long-term school success.

"Our Reading Corps tutor has been a tremendous asset to our school community. Her work has helped many of our early readers develop key foundational skills, and her data-driven approach ensures that no student falls through the cracks."

-Reading Corps School Partner



MATH CORPS

Students Served

532

Exceeded Target Growth

88%

- Math proficiency before high school is highly predictive of high school graduation, college readiness, and economic opportunity in adulthood.
- As one of the **most effective math tutoring programs in the country, Math Corps placed 20 AmeriCorps tutors at 17 school sites to support kindergarten - 8th grade students in catching up to grade level.**

"I recommend Math Corps because tutors are able to get students excited about math, something that can be very difficult to do."

-Math Corps School Partner



CORPS FOR A CHANGE

Students Served
755

Increased School Engagement
91%

- In our **2nd year as part of the national Youth Mental Health Corps initiative, this program placed 31 AmeriCorps members in 22 schools** to support youth mental health, boost school engagement, and improve belonging and connectedness.
- These caring adults **supported 6-12 grade students in more than 9,000 one-on-one support sessions, and provided nearly 1,000 connections to mental health and basic needs resources.**
- This innovative program is also training the next generation of behavioral health leaders. While supporting students, **21 AmeriCorps members earned Qualified Behavioral Health Assistant credentials**, giving them on ramps to behavioral health careers.

"My AmeriCorps member gave me a space where I was able to talk about how I feel without feeling judged or misheard, and made sure I met my goals."

-Student receiving CYC services in Aurora Public Schools



“Our AmeriCorps member helps students secure stable housing and complete educational milestones such as their GED, graduation, and maintaining stable attendance. Through these efforts, she empowers students to overcome barriers, gain stability, and succeed academically.”

-School Partner in Denver Public Schools



REENGAGEMENT

Youth Reenrolled in School
206

Graduated or Continued Enrollment
75%

- Last year, more than **7,500 Colorado students left school before completing a diploma or GED.**
- **Our 6 Reengagement Specialists fill this gap in 3 school districts** by providing individualized reenrollment support, coming alongside young people to build education plans, match them with school options that meet their individual needs, and connect them to a network of community resources to reduce barriers and **ensure that they stay in school and graduate**.
- **Young people in CYC's Reengagement Program are far more likely to stay in school after reenrollment (75%), compared to all Colorado students who reenroll (48%).**

"Reengagement specialists lend a hand when someone is struggling. They know what we need and how to talk to us in a way so we don't feel ashamed or embarrassed. They make us feel a part of the community that we all need and want."

-Student receiving Reengagement Services



DENVER OPPORTUNITY YOUTH INITIATIVE

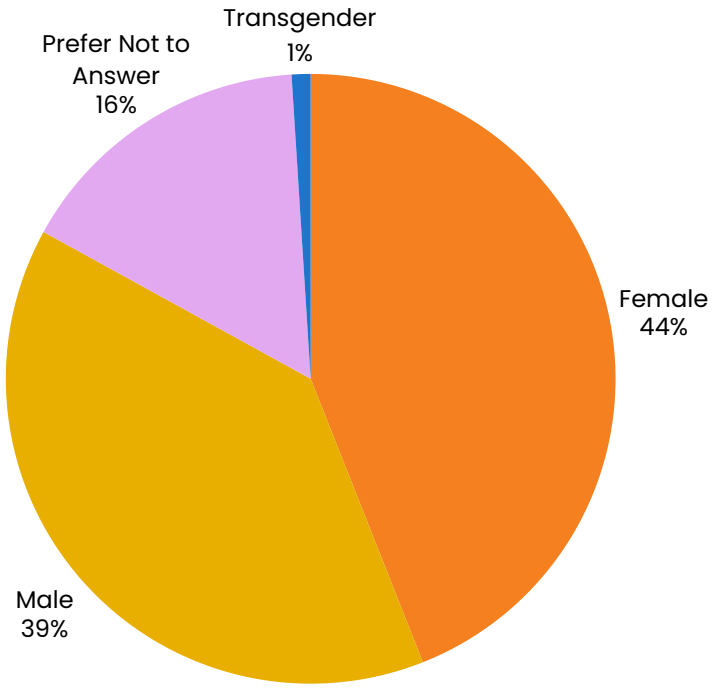
Dollars Leveraged
$700K

Youth Served
5,000

- CYC leads the Denver Opportunity Youth Initiative to **expand education and employment opportunities for young people ages 16-24** in partnership with the Aspen Institute Forum for Community Solutions, K-12 and higher education, and community-based organizations.
- **Nearly 13,000 16-24 year olds in Denver and Aurora are disconnected from high school, post-secondary, or the workforce,** so collective action is critical to build a stronger economy for all.
- The Denver Opportunity Youth Initiative **delivered 12 Belonging, Meaning, Well Being, and Purpose workshops to 172 people and created an interactive Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA) guide** made to support WIOA referrals for community-based organizations.

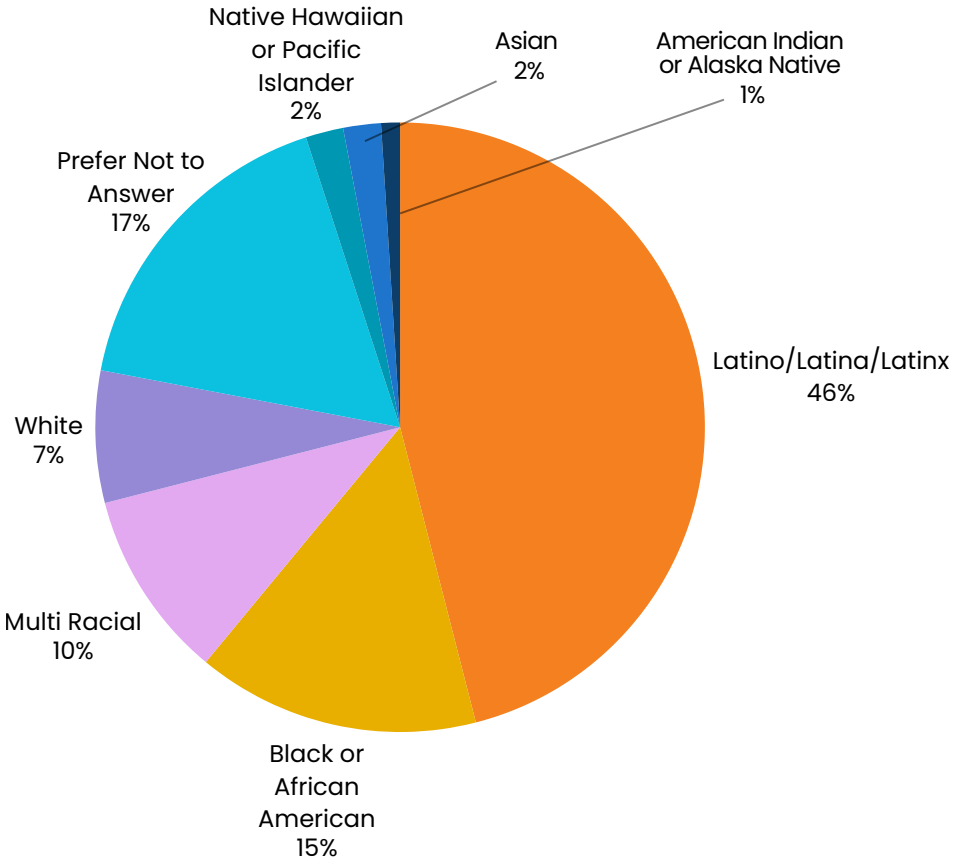
THE STUDENTS WE SERVE

GENDER



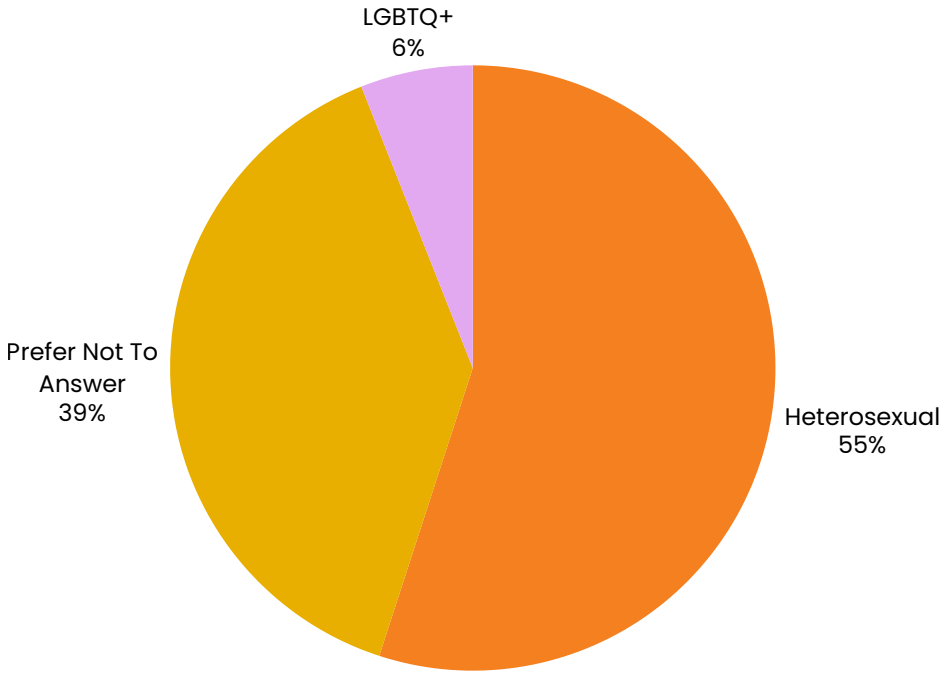
Programming that supports students ages 14 and older.

RACE



THE STUDENTS WE SERVE

SEXUAL ORIENTATION



Programming that supports students ages 14 and older.

60% **of schools CYC serves have a majority population of students from low-income families.**

LIFE EVENTS

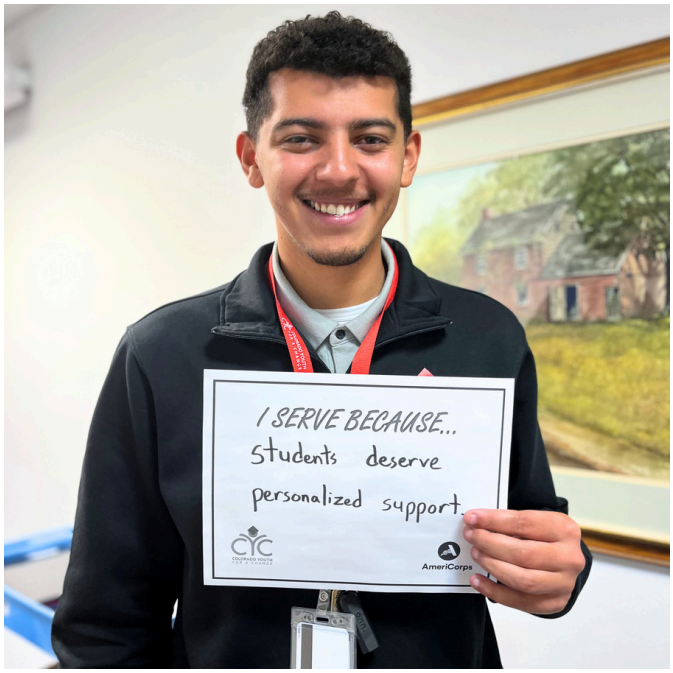
Eligible for free/reduced lunch	**52%**
Currently or formerly involved with the court system	**20%**
Currently pregnant or parenting	**6%**
Currently or formerly experiencing homelessness	**12%**
Currently or formerly in child welfare system	**3%**

WHAT OUR AMERICORPS MEMBERS SAY

"Reading Corps has impacted my students by giving them more confidence in reading. They are learning to love reading and wanting to read more! Reading Corps has provided a space for them to feel welcomed, loved, and respected."
-Reading Corps Member



"Students can get farther ahead when they are connected to the support and resources they need. With this being my second service term, it's been really great to watch some of my students grow and achieve their goals!"
-Corps for a Change Member



"Colorado Youth for a Change not only gave me the opportunity for a teaching job, but they also helped me prepare for my role with all the trainings and support. I gained confidence advancing from a basic tutor to a full-on 8th grade math teacher. I could not have made this leap without the preparation, support, and encouragement of my CYC AmeriCorps team."
-Math Corps Member

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE YEAR



Corps for a Change member Marissa Garcia was featured on The Jennifer Hudson Show, where she shared her experience supporting students through the Youth Mental Health Corps. We are proud of Marissa for representing Colorado Youth for a Change and advocating for youth mental health. Following her service, she joined CYC's team supporting the Corps for a Change program as a full-time staff member. Her journey demonstrates the lasting impact of national service!

This year, 12 Reading Corps members completed their fourth and final term of AmeriCorps service. Collectively, they provided more than 1.4 million minutes of tutoring, helping students build foundational reading skills and confidence. We are grateful for their years of dedication and the lasting impact they have made on students, schools, and communities across Colorado.



We are so grateful to the sponsors and supporters of Colorado HB26-1418 for their leadership and commitment to expanding mental health services for young people across our state. We especially recognize Representatives Sean Camacho and Yara Zokaie and Senators Judy Amabile and Dylan Roberts for championing this effort, along with the many legislators, advocates, partners, and community members who helped elevate the urgent need for stronger youth mental health supports and programming. Special thanks to our coalition members: Gary Advocacy, Boys & Girls Clubs in Colorado, Colorado Children's Campaign, Disability Law Colorado, Alpine Achievers, Inc, Children's Hospital, and Youth Healthcare Alliance.

THANK YOU TO OUR SCHOOL DISTRICT PARTNERS, DONORS, AND SUPPORTERS!

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Englewood Schools
Estes Park School District R-3
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Jeffco Public Schools
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Mesa County Valley School District 51
Poudre School District R-1
School District 27J
Thompson School District
Weld County RE-5J School District
Weld Re-8 School District
Widefield School District 3



21 School Districts Served Across the State

2025/26
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(July 2025-June 2026)



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(July 2025-June 2026)

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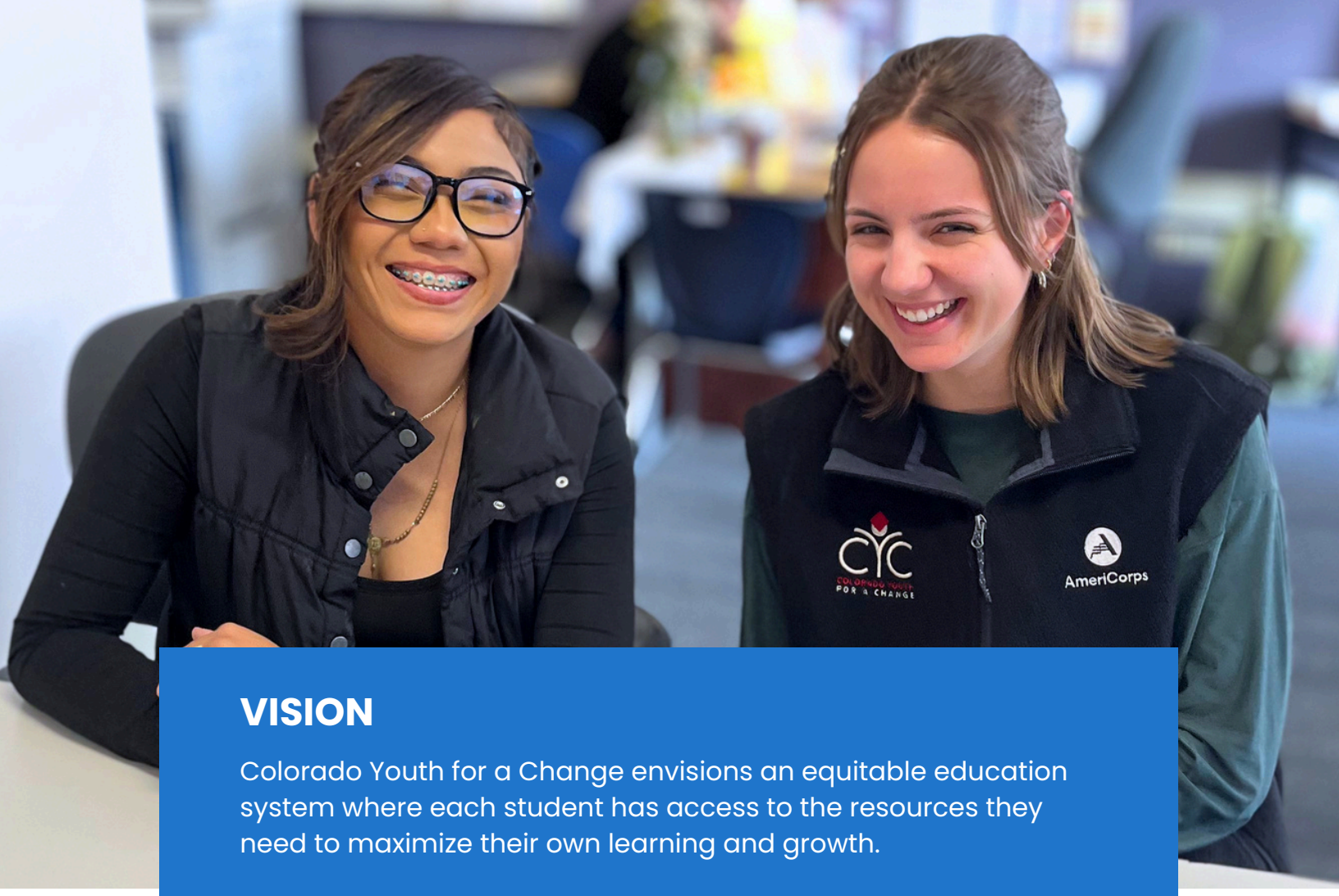
FINANCIALS

92% of Colorado Youth for a Change's revenue directly supported programs.

INCOME	
Federal Government	$2,493,631
School Districts & State Gov.	$1,252,986
Contributions & Special Events	$2,682,610
Total	**$6,429,227**

EXPENSES	
Programs	$6,341,715
Fundraising & General	$559,980
Total	**$6,901,695**

8% admin/fundraising | 92% direct programs



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.

MISSION

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

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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Colorado Youth For A Change

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