

A photograph of three students sitting on wooden steps. The student on the left is wearing a pink shirt and blue jeans with a tear, holding a laptop. The student in the middle is wearing a yellow cardigan and blue jeans with a large tear, wearing black boots, and holding a laptop. The student on the right is wearing an orange sweater and blue jeans with a tear, wearing colorful boots, and holding a tablet. The background is a light green tiled floor.

REPORT ON BLENDED AND SUPPLEMENTAL LEARNING

MARCH 2020



DIRECTOR'S SUMMARY

Defining “blended learning” can be a challenge. Textbook definitions make sense; however, these definitions are cumbersome for stakeholders to unravel and apply. In light of this, we are seeing a subtle shift in the field, away from using “blended learning,” and toward simply referring to **combining technology with great instructional practices** to leverage each school and district’s vision. Much easier to understand, that language explains why each implementation of blended learning looks so unique and different. Blended learning is not itself an end, but rather a means to deliver an education that is more personalized, specialized, applied, and equitable. And, this is why Colorado Empowered Learning (CEL) has retooled our mission to reflect our project as an **implementation assistance** program that helps schools and educators combine technology with strong instructional practices.

CEL’s focus on implementation assistance continues to be the foundational triad of supplemental courses, consultative support, and professional development for educators. And since establishing CEL in 2015-16, we have had exceptional impact and growth. Consider these data. Since 2015:

- ◆ 9,790 **supplemental courses** to 8,672 students across Colorado - 38% annual growth
- ◆ 4,349 enrollments in our **professional development** program
- ◆ **Certification** of 105 educators as Teachers of Blended Learning
- ◆ **Consultative** support to 50 unique districts

As we engage in our work and the conversations with stakeholders in the field, it is readily apparent that Colorado school district are developing their understanding of blended learning, which is why [Colorado’s Blended Learning Roadmap](#) continues to be a critical part of our plan. While the scope of the Roadmap is greater than any one project, department, or agency, CEL is leading the effort to collaboratively engage partners in moving the plan forward. Derived from stakeholder feedback, CEL’s focus on moving forward with the Roadmap includes launching more effective communication, highlighting case studies, establishing a system to ensure equitable pricing for technology, fostering collaboration through open education resources, and developing partnership with other organizations to help fulfill our vision.

Administratively, **Colorado River BOCES** was the re-designated this fall by the Colorado Department of Education as the BOCES responsible for the leadership, administration, and management of the program.

This report is intended to provide you with information related to last year’s accomplishments, as well as, highlights of the current year. It was intentionally built on the same template to allow comparison from our previous reports.

It is certainly my honor and privilege to serve as the Project Director for Colorado Empowered Learning, and I look forward to continuing to improve the equity and quality of educational programs across our great state.

Best regards,

Dr. Ken Haptonstall, Ph.D.
Project Director and Executive Director of the Colorado River BOCES

Enhancing Equity and access by combining technology with strong instructional practice and student centered learning.

INTRODUCTION

STATUTORY OVERVIEW

Empowering Digital Learning for All Act

Revised in 2016, House Bill 16-1222 refocused the state's effort in assisting districts in the implementation of blended learning and expanding supplemental course offerings to more students in Colorado. The priorities of the legislation are:

“(I) Expanding the availability of supplemental online education courses and blended learning strategies;

(II) Increasing significantly the number of students who enroll in high-quality, effective, and affordable supplemental online education courses;

(III) Working with school districts, charter schools, and BOCES to create, offer, and sustain their own high-quality, effective, and affordable supplemental online education courses and blended learning, as well as targeted professional development and mentoring support;

(IV) Assisting educators in local public education agencies to increase their competency specifically in using digital learning strategies to lead and instruct in, and otherwise implement, digital learning; and

(V) Documenting and sharing best practices in providing supplemental online education courses and blended learning.” (C.R.S. 22-5-119)

Additionally, the statute calls for the articulation of Colorado's vision and a roadmap for integrating blended and supplemental learning in our schools.

Leadership

A Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), selected by the Colorado Department of Education, leads, manages, and administers the program, and Colorado River BOCES is honored to serve as the designated BOCES. Colorado River BOCES identified two non-profit providers to assist in the delivery of the program:

 **[Colorado] Digital Learning Solutions (CDLS)** is the state-supported supplemental program that provides Colorado districts access to high quality online courses that supplement their existing course offerings in a 21st century learning environment.

 **iLearn Collaborative (iLC's)** goal is to empower education agencies to improve education and create options for all students. iLC works in a collaborative environment to promote, implement, and support quality student-centered learning.



COLORADO EMPOWERED LEARNING

EQUITY, ACCESS, OPPORTUNITY, APPLICATION

House Bill 16-1222 established a framework for redesigning the statewide supplemental and blended learning program. Colorado Empowered Learning (CEL) was created to implement the policy.

CEL's mission is to harness the talents and knowledge of Colorado educators to expand equity and access through blended learning in K-12 Education.

Founded on three pillars of support for districts, schools, and students, and with increased demand, CEL has raised the bar for services in 2019-20.

Empowered Students

Affordable and rigorous supplemental course offerings for middle and high school to support credit enhancement, advancement, or recovery needs. Ensure that your students have access to high quality learning materials, the most up-to-date and relevant content, a certified teacher, and the same opportunities as others across the state.

Goal: 2,400 Course enrollments provided at an average cost of \$135 per enrollment.

Empowered Educators

Engaging professional development in blended learning that can lead to certification!

Led by teachers in a personalized environment with blended access anywhere/anytime. Over 20 courses available!

Goal: 700 Educator enrollments at a cost of \$25 per enrollment. During the 2019-20 school year, to date, there have been over 750 enrollments.

Empowered Districts

Partner with experts who have leveraged technology in their schools and districts to drive learning outcomes within budget constraints. These experts now work full time to help others learn from their wins and their mistakes. This work is hard, but you do not need to do it alone!

Goal: Foundational consultation provided to 15 districts and Phase II consultative support for 10 districts, provided at no cost.

www.colorado.gov/cel



[COEmpLearn](#)



COLORADO
EMPOWERED LEARNING

BLENDDED LEARNING

WHAT IT IS, AND WHAT IT IS NOT

Confusion abounds around the idea of blended learning. Let's start with the definition used in Colorado's legislation:

"Blended learning" means a formal education program through which a student learns at least in part through digital content with some element of student control and at least in part at a supervised physical location that is not the student's home.
C.R.S. 22-5-119 (3) (b)

Blended learning:

- is an authorized and mainstream component of public education, an instructional delivery model.
- provides students with control over their learning, promoting student agency.
- occurs in part in typical educational settings like classrooms, the workplace, and the community.
- requires the talent and expertise of a teacher who plans and leads instruction while facilitating learning.

Blended learning is not:

- an online school.
- a replacement for teachers.
- the same as a one-to-one program (one device for each student).

Blended learning is more than technology-rich educational environment. Rather, blended learning is an instructional delivery model that provides students some control over their learning, whether it be the time, path, place or pace of learning, promoting greater personalization, providing for deeper application of knowledge, and expanding opportunities for all students.

"Blended learning is an exciting direction and evolution resulting from years of online education."

Colorado Representative Bob Rankin



SUPPLEMENTAL LEARNING

WHAT IS SUPPLEMENTAL LEARNING?

Supplemental learning has existed in some form since the mid 1990s. Collaborative and single district program success encouraged Colorado to pass legislation to support providing supplemental learning to across the state in 2007.

Supplemental learning consists of courses provided through digital content, led by a licensed teacher, and provided to students who are enrolled in traditional schools ("brick and mortar"). These courses are delivered under the authority of the local school district and documented in the student's transcript.

Provided by local schools to enrich the learning opportunities for students, supplemental learning reaches a variety of needs:

- Expanding Curricular Offerings
- Opportunity for students to catch up (Credit Recovery)
- An entry point for schools to begin blended learning implementation
- The needs of diverse learners
- The divergent interests of students

Supplemental is part of a Blended Environment

At the heart of blended learning is the concept of providing student agency. "Agency is the capacity and propensity to take purposeful initiative--the opposite of helplessness. Young people with high levels of agency do not respond passively to their circumstances; they tend to seek meaning and act with purpose to achieve the conditions they desire in their own and others' lives." [Tom Vander Ark](#)

Supplemental courses offer students the opportunity to exercise their initiative as it relates to their interest and learning needs. The Christensen Institute defines

four broad models of blended learning programs, one of which encompasses supplemental learning - [A La Carte](#). Supplemental learning is not confined to this level of blended learning, but does traditionally lend itself to an extension of local offerings. However, with simple

adjustments in delivery, supplemental courses can increase the degree to which blending occurs.

Not A Full-Time Online School

Full-time online programs are ones where the student was not enrolled in a brick-and-mortar school and took all of their courses from an online provider.



SUPPLEMENTAL LEARNING

EXPANDING COURSE OPTIONS TO COLORADO STUDENTS

In partnership with Colorado Digital Learning Solutions, we offer over 200 courses to students across the state.

Supplemental learning combines digital content and tools taught by a Colorado Teacher, in partnership with a site facilitator, to provide high quality, rigorous learning at an affordable price.

Supplemental learning enhances every school's ability to provide a broad course catalogue to all students.

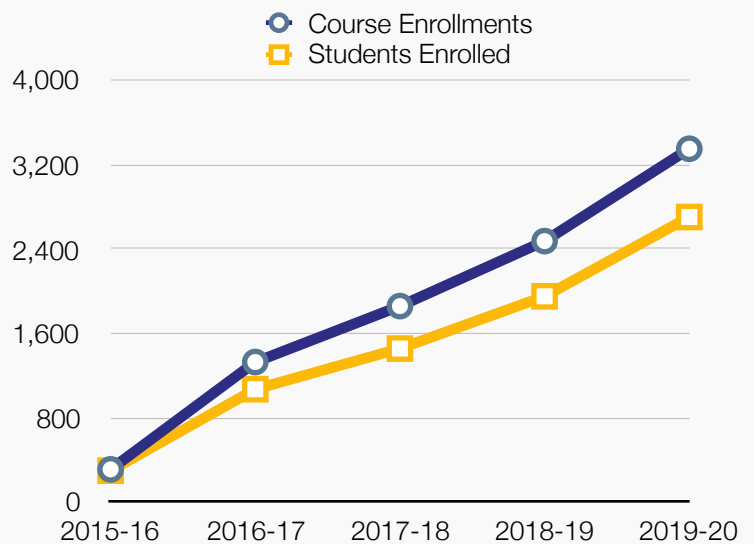
Supplemental learning allows students in grades 3-12 to access an expanded course offering regardless of school location or size. Courses can be accessed to provide Advanced Placement, Credit Recovery, Career and Technical Education, Expanded Electives, and serve students of differing abilities.

Cost per course enrollment was reduced by 50% in 2018-19 with traditional courses offered at \$135 and include AP and CTE courses.

The success of supplemental learning is dramatically impacted by the role of the site facilitator, who serves to help guide students and as a resource for content and other related questions.

2019-20 Goal: 3000 Course Enrollments

Actual: 3352 Course Enrollments



***Trending steadily upward**
Supplemental learning
continues to grow. Carrying the
growth rate forward, we
anticipate over 4000 course
enrollments in 2020-21!*



SUPPLEMENTAL LEARNING

APPLICATION IN COLORADO DISTRICTS

South Routt School District (Northwest BOCES)

South Routt is a small rural district that leverages Colorado Empowered Learning's supplemental courses in order to provide additional course offerings to students and to address scheduling conflicts. In their model, they leverage an experienced, certified classroom teacher to serve as a site coordinator. In this role, she ensures that students succeed in a digital setting, developing the independent study skills required for success in college, career, and life. This teacher is then supported by a paraprofessional, the school guidance counselor, and the multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) coordinator, ensuring the identification of, and support for, all students who would benefit from the program.

Dolores County School District (San Juan BOCES)

Dove Creek High School and Middle School, in Dolores County School District 2, wants to give its students the same opportunities found in large urban districts, but it struggles to attract quality teachers to its rural location that can teach all the subjects of interest to students. To address this, it has paired a local teacher with a virtual teacher to co-teach core classes such as pre-algebra, Algebra I and II, and pre-calculus for students in grades 8-12. As a result, students can now graduate having completed more advanced coursework, better prepared for success in college. In addition, to support students' Individual Career and Academic Plans (ICAP), the district further leverages supplemental courses supported by Colorado Empowered Learning. These allow students the opportunity to explore their specific interests, emphasizing the connection between school and their futures.

Deer Trail School District (East Central BOCES)

Working hand in hand with Deer Trail Administration, CDLS helped them leverage the talent of their existing staff by providing a collaborative approach to offering English classes to their secondary students. Superintendent and Principal, BJ Buchmann, said, "During this entire time of implementation for our online class support, I've found the CDLS team to be supportive, constructive, flexible and cordial in working within the instructional framework both CDLS and our admin team discussed. The availability of the CDLS online program supported our students at a time that we found it extremely difficult. Please know that we would not have been able to provide quality instruction without the help from the CDLS team and their online teaching staff."



SUPPLEMENTAL LEARNING AT A GLANCE

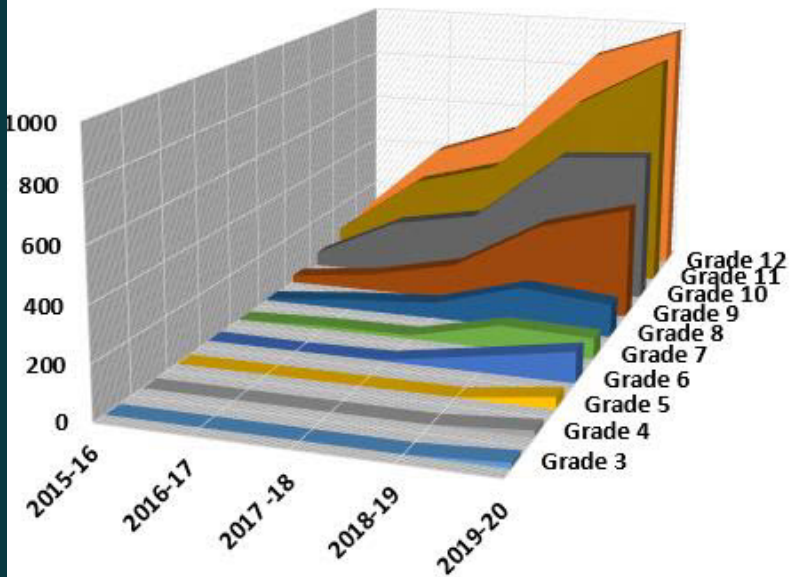
\$775,166 operating budget

SERVED THIS YEAR...

1,951 STUDENTS

85 School Districts Served
66 of which are **SMALL** Rural

Course Enrollment Growth by Grade Level



2475 course
enrollments (2018-19)

Enrollments in
younger grades are trending
Up!

66% of funding from the state

over **200** courses offered

successful completion rate **85%**
(fall 2018)

**Course Enrollments show a steady
33% year over year growth**

\$125 district cost per
COURSE on average

95% successful completion rate in the Blended/Hybrid Model

CONSULTING

EMPOWERING DISTRICTS EMPOWERING STUDENTS

In our third year service, CEL Consulting Services ensure that the courses and technology selected at a given school or district are aligned with both its learning model and its readiness for student-centered learning. Through our work, we facilitate the adoption and evolution of leading technology that supports pedagogical best practice, bridging between the Ed Tech and Education worlds.

Through our partnership with the iLearn Collaborative, districts across the state can receive foundational consulting support that assists planning and covers a variety of areas.



STRATEGY

Identify the learning goals for students, answering key questions such as: where does blended learning fit in the bigger picture, which model(s) should the district implement, and how should technology and human capital be managed to support this?



BROADBAND

Systematically determine current broadband performance, assess future needs, and create a plan to upgrade broadband infrastructure.



IT HARDWARE

Define hardware strategies, including the ratio of students to devices, a plan for providing devices, and the selection of device types. Support procurement aligned with strategy.



TRAINING

Assess existing Professional Development opportunities in the district and then add the supplemental resources and capabilities needed to ensure that students and teachers thrive in blended classrooms.



IMPLEMENTATION

Support the district in ongoing project management and implementation, including assessing the human capital at the district, bringing in necessary support, building the capacity of the district staff over time.



FINANCE

Determine financial goals for implementation, define the anticipated costs of implementation and ongoing operations of the blended model, and assess ways to cover the costs.



CONSULTING

DISTRICTS LARGE AND SMALL BENEFIT

After their successful first year of implementation, CEL consulting services have been in high demand for schools districts, both large and small. While small districts lack the capacity to implement systemic change without help, large districts face the same leadership challenges on a grander scale. Consulting services have been essential to supporting those districts who received foundational consultant last year as they implement the action plan established.

Goal: Provide foundational Consultation Services to 15 (new) districts in 2019-20.
Provide Phase II support to 10 school district who received foundational support in 2018-19.

Wiggins School District (RE-50J), Wiggins, Colorado

Wiggins is a small rural district (546 students) that has made team teaching a strategic priority, with the goal of individualizing learning for each and every student. With the state's support through the Colorado Empowered Learning program, Wiggins was able to enhance and evolve its team teaching strategy to further meet the needs of students. Teachers received professional development on blended learning techniques and have begun integrating digital components into their team teaching and day-to-day instructional strategies. As teachers have gained comfort with these techniques, the district is also taking advantage of Colorado's Digital Content Warehouse, customizing not just their teaching approach, but also the content taught, to better reflect student needs and interests.

Poudre Valley School District

"ILC partners with school districts to offer consultancy that ensures we are preparing learners for success in a changing world. They provided us the framework to delve deeply into our current state of blended & personalized learning. We looked at our practices through the lens of various stakeholders. And the final report identified our strengths as well as areas we can improve. We felt well supported throughout our Blended Learning review process. Having access to high quality online professional development offered staff and leaders the just-in-time classes we were seeking." - Kim LeClaire, Director of Education Technology, Poudre Valley School District



CONSULTING SERVICES AT A GLANCE

26 districts engaged in consultative services

70% rural engagement

Engagement	Districts	Totals
Rural	Platte Canyon, Cheraw, Sheridan, Rangely, Platte Valley Weld, Ignacio, Clear Creek, Buena Vista, Holly, Ouray, Gunnison, Norwood	16
Non-Rural	Brighton, Colorado Springs D-II, Cheyenne Mountain	7
On Deck for new Engagement 2020-21	Hayden, RE-6J, Dolores RE-4A, (with 10 other districts who have expressed interest)	4

100% of cost covered by state

Nine districts engaged in phase II consulting support to implement plans

Districts report needing this **support**, but were previously unable to locate or afford it.

Large districts find that CEL's experienced support amplifies the impact of their staff

Districts are extending support beyond the scope of the project

TREND Alert! Consultation leads to professional development which leads to better and more equitable outcomes for students.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ADVANCING EDUCATORS

Through our partnership with the iLearn Collaborative, CEL helps educators reach their full potential by providing Professional Development in technology-enabled, student-centered learning. Courses are built for educators by educator-innovators and leaders, are immediately applicable in the classroom, are designed for optimum participation, and available for college credit and micro-credentials.

Training models include multiple methods to meet the needs of districts, schools, and individual educators.

Certification in Blended Learning

Through our courses, educators can earn micro-credentials and certification as a blended learning instructor.



Delivery Highlights

- Courses are designed to be completed in 3 weeks and are worth 15-clock hours towards re-certification, with most eligible for college credit.
- Courses are facilitated by experienced blended and personalized learning educators, who supplement digital materials with project-based work, synchronous group activities, one-on-one coaching, and personalized feedback on assignments.
- Learning progressions through course offerings guide educators through personalized pathways from introductory through advanced levels of knowledge and experience, meeting the instructional needs of participants.
- Participants can control when and what to learn through On-Demand and Just-In-Time course offerings.
- Courses can be delivered through the same Learning Management System utilized by students, modeling how to deliver an engaging experience.
- The course delivery and design models the instructional practices we are teaching, allowing enrollees to experience what it is like to be a blended, personalized learning student.
- Districts can use any of the delivery models: Signature Blend, Workshop, or Train the Trainer



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

COURSES FOR EVERY LEVEL

Blended Series

- ❖ Learning Management Systems Basics
- ❖ Introduction to Blended Learning
- ❖ Instructional Best Practices in Blended Learning
- ❖ Creating Digital Content for Blended Learning
- ❖ Rotation Models: Which model is best for your class?
- ❖ The Flipped Classroom: How Can This Work in Your Classroom?

Intermediate Courses

- ❖ Differentiation Strategies in a Blended Environment
- ❖ Personalized Learning: Teacher's Data Dashboard
- ❖ Inquiry in Blended Learning
- ❖ Instructional Best Practices for Librarians
- ❖ Instructional Best Practice: Math, Science, English, Social Studies, Special Education, and Health/PE
- ❖ Introduction to OER

Leadership Series

- ❖ Introducing Blended Learning to Your School or District
- ❖ Supporting Blended Learning in Your School or District

Advanced Courses

- ❖ Engaging Students Using Gamification
- ❖ Project-Based Learning in Blended Learning Environments
- ❖ Digital Tools for Online and Blended Classrooms
- ❖ Online Course Development (12-week, 60-hour course; 30 facilitated hours)

Personalized Learning Series

- ❖ Introduction to Personalized Learning
- ❖ Student Choice and Agency
- ❖ The Why, What & How of Personalized Learning
- ❖ Foundations of Personalized Learning
- ❖ Planning Instruction & Assessment in Personalized Learning
- ❖ Student Experiences in Personalized Learning
- ❖ Learning for Core Content
- ❖ Leading for Equity

"The extra content was extremely beneficial, as well as the use of tools we could incorporate in our own blended learning environment."~Amy Ross, Eaton High School

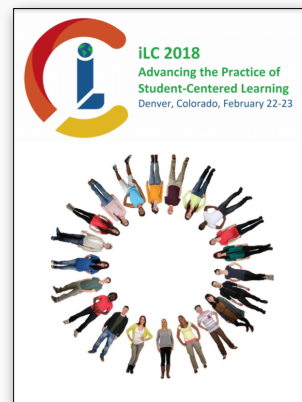
"I liked learning about the variety of models. It was helpful to see that I was already incorporating BL into my program and ideas of how to tweak what was already working."~Anonymous

"I really valued seeing other participants' examples. The option of creating a lesson or critiquing a lesson (differentiation) to apply knowledge."~Anonymous



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SHARING BEST PRACTICES



iLC CONFERENCE 2020

CEL was honored to be a platinum sponsor for the iLC 2020 Annual Conference at which over 250 attendees shared best practices and successful projects supporting blended learning. More than 50 breakout sessions were led by Colorado and national experts, and the conference included site visits to some local schools implementing a blended learning model.

Highlights

- ❖ 91% rated our keynote as “excellent” or “good”
- ❖ 91% found the sessions “useful”
- ❖ 73% of attendees are “likely to return” next year



Most Highly Rated Sessions

Technology Driven Differentiations & 50 Ways to Improve your Classroom with Technology, Vicki Davis

Using G-Suite Apps to Develop Blended Learning Playlists, Heather Ko, Poudre Valley School District

Our Story - Canon City Schools and our Transition to Blended Learning, Cañon City Schools

Leadership and Learning with Blended: From Implementation to Impact, St Vrain Valley School District

“Very practical for every level teacher.”



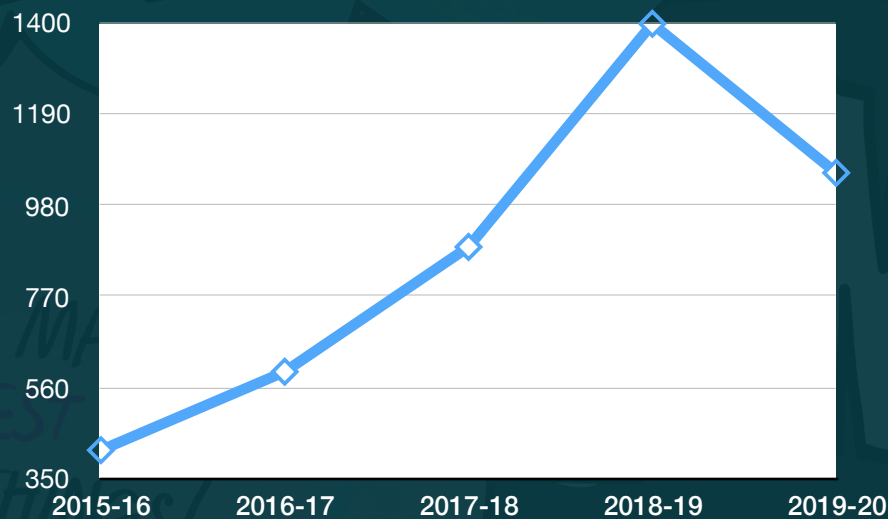
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT A GLANCE

1055 individual teacher enrollments from 16 districts

To date, **75** Teachers have completed Teacher Blended Learning Certification

96% responded that course facilitators were very good or outstanding

Enrollments are Soaring!



70% cost covered by state funding

92% of participants rated Very Good to Outstanding overall Course Satisfaction

70% successful completion rate is greater than typical online PD - the power of blended!

\$25 cost per course over **25** courses offered

Satisfaction data provided by survey of PD participants through March 2019
Colorado Empowered Learning

DIGITAL CONTENT WAREHOUSE

CREATING SUSTAINABLE EQUITY

Access to sustainable, high quality, teacher vetted, digital content facilitates the shift toward blended learning. Unfortunately, existing content is either privately curated at an unsustainable price or content is simply neither curated nor organized to make it useful at scale. Additionally, existing content is provided in single units or lessons, without being fully integrated, making it difficult for a district to approve. A Digital Content Warehouse of openly licensed educational resources (OER) addresses districts', schools', and teachers' needs by providing fully developed courses in a manner that allows the school or teacher to customize content and delivery to fit the educational process of the district.

The Digital Content Warehouse collaborates with school districts and other partners to create affordable, shared, full-length curriculum that has been curated and is ready for teachers to apply to their classes.

Currently Available Course

English: English 8, English 9, English 10, English 11, English 12

Mathematics: Math 7, Math 8/Pre-Algebra, Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2

Science: Science 8, Earth science, Biology

Social Sciences: Early US History - 8th grade, Civics, Economics 101, Modern US History, World Geography, World History, World Area Studies-Western Hemisphere, 6th grade, World Area Studies-Eastern Hemisphere, 7th grade

Electives: Health, Journalism, Lifetime Fitness-High School, Lifetime Fitness-Middle School, Marine Biology, Psychology, Computer Applications, Career Exploration-High School, Career Exploration-Middle School

AP Courses: AP Physics, AP environmental science, AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC

Colorado Districts Contributing Directly: Jefferson County School District 60 full-length digital student courses, with interest from Canon City Schools, D3 My Way, Lewis Palmer, Wiggins, Poudre, Weldon Valley, and Cherry Creek.

"Textbooks, are becoming obsolete. I read more than my share of textbooks. But it's a pretty limited way to learn something. Even the best text can't figure out which concepts you understand and which ones you need more help with. It certainly can't tell your teacher how well you grasped last night's assigned reading. But now, thanks to software, the standalone textbook is becoming a thing of the past." Bill Gates [Our 2019 Annual Letter](#)



FUNDING

HB 16-1222 provided \$1,220,000 of state funds to implement the act in FY19. Additionally, districts pay a supplemental course enrollment fee of \$125 (previously \$200) for core classes and \$200 for more advanced and elective courses. Participants in professional development courses pay \$25 (normally \$150) per course.

Our adopted budget for FY19 is presented below.

CEL Operating Budget FY19	
Leadership and Administration	\$96,000
Financial Administration	\$25,045
Leadership	\$70,955
Innovation	\$69,000
INACOL and iLC 2019	\$10,000
Roadmap Implementation	\$25,000
State Plan Priorities	\$29,000
Travel / Misc	\$5,000
Supplemental Learning	\$700,000
Consulting Services	\$185,000
Professional Development	\$170,000
Total	\$1,220,000

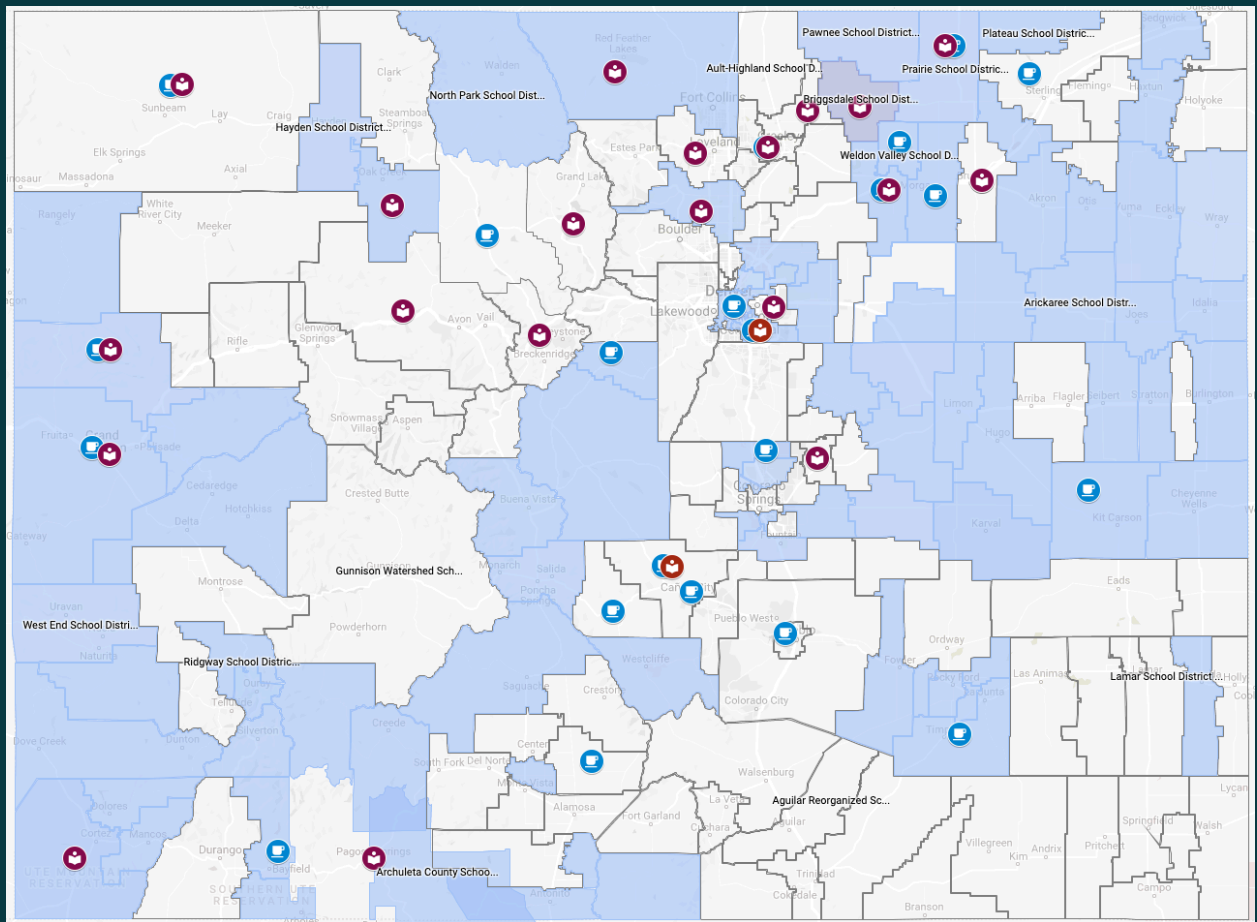
At the end of FY18, CEL maintained a fund balance of \$52,000. These funds are earmarked for funding additional one-time expenditures in implementing the Roadmap and unanticipated increases in services due to higher than projected demand.



STATEWIDE IMPACT

128 PARTICIPATING SCHOOL DISTRICTS 2019-20

Participating Colorado School Districts



Blue Shading = Participating Districts-Supplemental Program

Book Icon = Professional Development Districts

Coffee Cup Icon = Consulting Districts

Visit www.colorado.gov/cel