

EDUCATION & EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE

Community Vision – Educate our children in schools that are effective, involve parents, and respect each child’s cultural and social diversity.

A high quality and effective education system plays a fundamental role in societal and community health. Investments in education and early childhood care pay off via a more educated workforce, involved citizens, higher business productivity and profits, as well as increased tax revenues and support for the non-profit sector. Public education is guided by an increasingly complex set of factors such as federal and state policies, funding allocations, community values and mandated standardized testing. Early childhood care is also guided by numerous policies as well as changing community needs where the majority of parents are in the workforce.

Measuring the “health” of our local school districts is focused on local school districts. First, the **quality** of learning environments is gauged by the following indicators: Expenditures per Student; Pupil-to-Teacher Ratios; Expulsion Rates; Percentage of Classrooms with Highly Qualified Teachers; and the Percentage of Minority Teachers and Students.

The **effectiveness** of local education systems is measured by: Graduation Rate Percentages; Drop-Out Rate Percentages; General Equivalency Degree (GED Recipients; and Standardized Test Scores (ACT and CSAP). It should be noted that students who arrive to school with adequate nutrition and health care, and who are from safe families involved in their education, tend to do better in school. Thus, these public education indicators presented are heavily influenced by data reported in other sections of this report.

Quality Learning Environment

Total Expenditures Per Student is based on many factors such as State of Colorado funding formulas related to student enrollment, local school district mill levies, and Amendment 23 (a Constitutional Amendment directing State funding until 2011). Smaller, rural school districts receive more funding per student than larger school districts because the expense is higher. Most school districts also receive money via local, state and/or federal grants for special programs. In addition, some school districts are successful in passing new taxes for capital construction or operations, or for mill-levy overrides. During the 2005/2006 school year, Silverton and Durango held the top two spots for the total expenditures per student while Dolores and Cortez spent the least.

Quality Learning Environment – Total Expenditures per Student										
Year	Bayfield	Cortez	Dolores	Dove Creek	Durango	Ignacio	Mancos	Pagosa	Silverton	CO
98-99	\$16,653	\$6,342	\$6,920	\$7,380	\$6,831	\$8,206	\$6,810	\$7,601	\$13,352	\$7,821
99-00	\$9,981	\$6,582	\$7,116	\$7,383	\$7,344	\$8,114	\$6,955	\$6,469	\$12,992	\$8,255
00-01	\$12,288	\$6,806	\$7,487	\$8,873	\$7,875	\$9,122	\$9,919	\$6,839	\$13,157	\$8,631
01-02	\$8,238	\$6,646	\$8,021	\$23,557	\$8,143	\$8,589	\$7,529	\$7,415	\$15,140	\$9,385
02-03	\$8,382	\$6,972	\$8,218	\$16,033	\$9,166	\$9,036	\$7,577	\$8,260	\$13,237	\$10,151
03-04	\$8,265	\$7,478	\$8,386	\$12,244	\$21,607	\$9,779	\$8,234	\$14,052	\$14,666	\$10,592
04-05	\$9,438	\$7,557	\$7,836	\$25,831	\$16,285	\$9,665	\$8,957	\$8,976	\$16,236	\$11,869
05-06	\$9,818	\$7,913	\$8,709	\$12,819	\$16,341	\$10,631	\$11,047	\$10,480	\$17,028	\$11,554

Source: Colorado Department of Education website (www.cde.state.co.us) and individual school districts.
District Revenues and Expenditures, Comparison of All Program Expenditures

Pupil-to-teacher ratios show that every school district in the region is now lower than the state ratio of 16.6. This is a positive trend because a lower ratio means more individual attention and instruction per student.

Quality Learning Environment – Pupil to Teacher Ratio										
Year	Bayfield	Cortez	Dolores	Dove Creek	Durango	Ignacio	Mancos	Pagosa	Silverton	CO
98-99	15.7	15.4	14.9	13.4	15.2	13.7	13.4	18.1	8.1	17.4
99-00	16.4	15.4	14.4	12.7	16.1	13.6	13.5	17.8	7.5	17.3
00-01	16.4	15.1	14.9	12.7	15.3	13.2	13.1	17.3	6.9	16.8
01-02	17.3	15.5	15.8	10.6	15	12.5	13.1	17.2	12.7	16.6
02-03	16.8	16.1	14.4	10.4	14.2	12.2	13.2	16.9	10.4	16.8
03-04	16.6	15.5	13.2	10.4	14.5	12.2	13.5	16.9	10.4	17.1
04-05	16.3	16	13.6	10.8	14.7	11.9	12.1	16.3	8.3	17.1
05-06	14.8	14.9	13.6	12.1	14.8	11.9	11.4	16.9	9	17.1
06-07	15.7	14.2	12.5	11.7	15.2	12.4	12.2	15.7	7.5	16.6

Source: Colorado Department of Education Web site (www.cde.state.co.us) and individual s

Expulsion Rates decreased from 2004 to 2006 in Bayfield, Cortez, Durango and Ignacio and increased for the Pagosa and Mancos. Silverton and Dove Creek reported no expulsions over this time period. Mancos, Ignacio, and Cortez are exceeding the state expulsion rate, though it is difficult to draw conclusions regarding expulsion rates for smaller school districts, because one event involving several students can trigger a higher-than-average expulsion rate.

Quality Learning Environment – Expulsion Rate in %										
Year	Bayfield	Cortez	Dolores	Dove Creek	Durango	Ignacio	Mancos	Pagosa	Silverton	CO
1997	0.8	n/a	n/a	2.8	0.6	n/a	n/a	0.8	0	n/a
1998	0.004	0.77	*	0	0.6	n/a	n/a	0.5	0	n/a
1999	0.5	0.05	0	0	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.3	0	0.3
2000	0.2	1.2	0	0	0.7	1	0	0	0	0.3
2001	0.7	1.1	0.2	0	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	0	0.3
2002	0.3	0.8	0	0	0.5	0.9	0	0.4	0	0.3
2003	0.9	1.7	0	0.4	0.6	0.7	0.2	0.6	0	0.3
2004	0.4	1.2	0.3	0	0.3	2	0	0.1	0	0.3
2005	0.2	1.4	1	0	0.3	0.8	0	0.4	0	0.3
2006	0	0.6	0.3	0	0.1	0.5	1.4	0.5	0	0.3

*Included in drop out rate

n/a = Data not available

Source: Colorado Department of Education website (www.cde.state.co.us) and individual school districts

Highly Qualified Teachers are measured by each district’s percentage of core classes taught by “highly qualified instructors” defined by the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). The law requires that all teachers of core subject areas meet the requirements for designation as a highly qualified instructor by 2005-2006. Core areas include English, reading, language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, social studies, visual art, music, and drama. In order to become highly qualified, teachers must obtain a bachelor's degree in the subject area they are teaching or obtain additional college credit in that subject area sufficient to meet NCLB requirements. Two districts – Mancos and Silverton – met the 100 percent benchmark in 2006/2007. No state numbers are yet available for this table.

% of Classrooms Taught by Highly Qualified Teachers									
Year	Bayfield	Dolores	Dove Creek	Durango	Ignacio	Mancos	Cortez	Pagosa Springs	Silverton
2003-04	94.38	88.55	87.88	88.63	90.8	95.59	91.81	98.89	78.11
2004-05	91.81	95.68	94.21	94.5	100	97.44	93.47	98.11	64.58
2005-06	89.31	93.48	94.83	98.57	100	95.11	90.87	98.75	86.75
2006-07	90.49	95.55	91.94	99.61	95.6	100	92.17	92.9	100

Source: Colorado Department of Education website (www.cde.state.co.us)

The **Percentage of Minority Teachers and Students** counts are used to present data about how school districts hire and retain teachers of color, and how many minority students are in enrolled in school. Diverse teaching staff can serve as powerful role models for students of color. From 1996 to 2007, the data show that region-wide, the number of minority students is rising fairly dramatically while the number of minority teachers is decreasing. None of the school districts have reached the 9.9% state benchmark for minority teachers.

Quality Learning Environment – Percentage of Minority Teachers										
Year	Bayfield	Cortez	Dolores	Dove Creek	Durango	Ignacio	Mancos	Pagosa	Silverton	CO
1997	3	n/a	n/a	3.6	4	3	n/a	5.4	5	9
1998	1.5	3.9	2.2	4	4.6	20	5.4	4.8	0	n/a
1999	1.5	8	2	n/a	5.3	20	2	6	0	n/a
2000	1.5	4	2	0	4.8	14.1	2.7	5.7	0	9.4
2001	1.5	4	2	0	4.9	11.8	2.7	4.3	0	9.8
2002	1.4	4.1	1.9	3.7	5.8	11.4	2.8	8.4	0	9.6
2003	1.5	3	2	n/a	4.5	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	n/a
2004	1.3	8.1	1.9	0	4.5	5.7	2.8	7.8	0	9.6
2005	0	6.4	3.6	0	5.4	7.8	2.7	5.7	0	9.6
2006	1.1	6.8	5.3	0	5.3	9.4	2.8	4.5	0	9.9

Quality Learning Environment – Percentage of Minority Students										
Year	Bayfield	Cortez	Dolores	Dove Creek	Durango	Ignacio	Mancos	Pagosa	Silverton	CO
1997	9	n/a	n/a	3.2	15	12	n/a	19	19	28.7
1998	10.7	31.9	19.1	9.9	16	57.4	18.7	21.7	19.8	29.4
1999	8.8	33.7	18.1	n/a	16.9	58.1	22.1	21.8	14.3	30.5
2000	10	35.9	15.1	7.2	17.5	61	22.1	12.1	10.1	31.8
2001	8.6	37.6	15.3	9.4	17	62.4	23.7	21.2	13	33.2
2002	9.1	38.4	16.6	9.5	17.6	62.9	27.1	22.5	11.8	34.3
2003	10.2	39.3	17.5	10	18.7	65.2	26.6	22.4	21.2	35.5
2004	8.9	40.1	17.9	10.7	19.1	67.5	27.7	24.7	30.5	36.5
2005	10.7	41	19.5	15.9	20.5	66.6	23.7	26.2	29.3	37.5
2006	11.8	41.5	15.1	13.3	21	66.5	23.7	28.2	24.2	38.1
2007	12.3	43	17	10.2	21.5	63.8	25.5	29	25	38.5

Source: Colorado Department of Education website (www.cde.state.co.us) and individual school districts
n/a = Data not available

Effective Learning Environment

The **Graduation Rates** shown are the percentage of students who received a high school diploma versus those who were enrolled and could have graduated during a four-year period. Enrollment for the graduation rate is calculated by the number of eighth-graders in the district four years earlier and adjusted for transfers in and out of the district during the high school years. Trends over an 10-year period show that only the Dolores and Pagosa graduate rates decreased. Eight school districts outpaced the state rate of 74.1% in 2005/2006.

Effective Learning Environment – Graduation Rate in Percentages										
Year	Bayfield	Cortez	Dolores	Dove Creek	Durango	Ignacio	Mancos	Pagosa	Silverton	CO
95-96	75.3	59.1	91.1	100	n/a	n/a	82.9	82.4	100	77.7
96-97	86.8	61.8	79.2	96.2	83.8	55.7	85.4	84.8	72.7	78.5
97-98	84.4	63.3	82.1	93.3	84.1	65.5	85.7	76.9	100	80.1
98-99	85.7	65.2	78.6	92.6	78.5	63.4	89.2	80.2	87.5	79.9
99-00	84	50.4	83.8	95.5	83.2	90.1	83	90.7	83.3	80.9
00-01	96.4	59.9	80	100	56.9	84.3	90.2	95.4	81.8	80.5
01-02	84.9	56	95.3	100	66.6	75.4	83.6	94.3	84.6	81.8
02-03	91.5	65.3	93.8	100	76.1	86.5	85.1	94.9	80	83.6
03-04	82.1	54.2	95.7	92.3	83.2	82.5	84.8	87.1	75	82.5
04-05	92.6	60.8	88.5	100	73.3	72.9	91.9	86.3	100	80
05-06	97	59.5	83.7	100	77.6	77.5	90	80.6	100	74.1

Source: Colorado Department of Education website (www.cde.state.co.us) and individual school districts

Drop-out Rates are decreasing across the region with the exception of Cortez and Pagosa Springs. Drop-out rates are calculated for students in 7th through 12th grade. A drop-out is a student who leaves school for any reason, except death, expulsion, or transfer, prior to completing a high school diploma. If a student leaves a school district without a request to forward educational records, the student is considered a drop-out, although he or she may have enrolled in another school without the district’s knowledge. School districts that have charter schools, after-school tutoring programs, links to Adult Education Programs, “second chance” educational offerings and the like increase their chances of helping *all* students stay in school.

Effective Learning Environment – Drop-Out Rate in Percentages										
Year	Bayfield	Cortez	Dolores	Dove Creek	Durango	Ignacio	Mancos	Pagosa	Silverton	CO
1997	0.9	n/a	n/a	0.5	2.3	4	n/a	3.5	1.4	3.6
1998	0.2	4.7	3	1.1	2.2	2.7	1.1	2	4.7	3.5
1999	0	5.6	1.5	0.6	2.1	2.7	2.6	1.2	0	3.3
2000	2	0.3	1.2	5.9	2	3.3	2.1	1	0	3
2001	2.2	3	0	5	1.9	4.6	4.3	0.6	1.5	2.9
2002	0	0.5	0	6.1	3.4	5.6	2.7	0.9	1.9	2.6
2003	0.3	0.2	0	4.4	2.9	2.2	1	0.1	3.2	2.4
2004	0.3	6.3	4.3	0	1.6	1.5	2.5	2.5	0	4.7
2005	0.1	7.2	2	0	2.9	1.7	2.1	2.8	0	4.5

*Included in drop out rate

n/a = Data not available

Source: Colorado Department of Education website (www.cde.state.co.us) and individual school districts

Drop-out rates are calculated for grades 7-12 and include alternative schools in the districts.

Data on the number of people receiving a **General Equivalency Degree (GED)** gives a more complete picture of the number of people who complete a high school education. There are adult education programs in Durango, Ignacio, Bayfield, Pagosa Springs, Silverton, and Cortez that provide classes and testing for the General Equivalency Degree (GED). These programs provide important educational access for students who drop out of traditional schools and for other non-traditional students as well. The Durango Adult Education

Effective Learning Environment – # of GED Recipients				
	Archuleta	Dolores	La Plata	Montezuma
Total from 2001 - 2006	136	12	594	135

Center started a satellite center in Silverton in 2004 and continues this service for residents in that county.

Source: Colorado Dept of Education website (www.cde.state.co.us)

ACT Average Scores are one form of standardized testing used to measure progress and achievement. The ACT test measures student readiness for college. While standardized testing is controversial in Colorado and the US, this data is used because it provides consistent, comparable and available indicators that can be collected for all school districts over time. Generally, the data in the table below reflects a downward trend over the last 12 years in ACT scores from the 1990s to mid-2000s. Cortez, Dove Creek, Ignacio, and Mancos are below the state’s average ACT score of 19.1 for the most recent year of 2007. Starting in the school year 2000/2001, the State of Colorado required all 11th-graders to take the ACT test as part of its new accountability program. The 2001 figures, therefore, include *all* high school juniors not just college-bound students. Prior to 2001, only test scores for college-bound pupils were reported. This dramatic difference in reporting testing scores is reflected in the data shown along with other changes in ACT reporting. *Therefore, for comparison purposes, these ACT test scores should be analyzed in two sets: scores prior to 2001 and scores beginning in 2001 to the present.*

Effective Learning Environment - Average ACT Scores										
Year	Bayfield	Cortez	Dolores	Dove Creek	Durango	Ignacio	Mancos	Pagosa	Silverton	CO
1995	20	n/a	n/a	18	22.4	21.3	n/a	20.7	22.4	21.4
1996	22.4	n/a	n/a	18	22	19.4	n/a	22.3	n/a	21.4
1997	20.8	n/a	n/a	20.1	21.9	19.9	n/a	23.4	22.7	21.5
1998	20.8	19.6	23.7	19.8	22.2	21.8	n/a	22.9	21.4	21.7
1999	21.3	21	19.5	n/a	22.4	19.3	20.7	20.2	21.9	21.5
2000	21.7	20.5	19.5	n/a	21	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	21.5
2001	19.5	17	19.5	19.2	19.8	16.8	17.5	19.4	n/a	18.6
2002	20.4	17.5	19.9	18.9	19.6	15.8	17.4	18.8	n/a	18.8
2003	18.8	17.8	18.9	18.4	19.9	16.8	19.4	18.4	n/a	19
2004	19.2	16.7	17.8	19.9	19.3	14.9	19.6	18.2	n/a	18.8
2005	20.1	16.6	19.6	18.5	19.6	16.7	19.5	19.3	n/a	19
2006	19.4	17.7	19.2	18.2	19.4	15.9	19.3	18.4	n/a	19
2007	20.7	16.3	19	18.5	20.2	17.6	18.4	19.2	n/a	19.1

Source: Colorado Department of Education website (www.cde.state.co.us) and individual school districts
n/a= Data not available

The **CSAP (Colorado Student Assessment Program)** measures student progress toward meeting state performance standards in reading, writing, math, and science. Each year’s CSAP test scores represent a different group of students, and in smaller districts, one or two students can have a significant impact on increases or declines in test scores. Generally, differences of 5 percentage points or more are considered statistically significant. Math scores have been added to this year's Index to reflect the importance the federal government has placed on student achievement in literacy and mathematics as defined by No Child Left Behind. Enacted in 2001, the federal law requires school districts to meet state-defined achievement targets in reading and math so that by 2014, all children score proficient in these areas.

Reading Progress: State-wide test scores for fourth-grade reading have remained stable for the past three years, while locally Dolores, Dove Creek, and Ignacio have shown statistically significant improvement. Bayfield, Durango, and Mancos scores have declined. The source for all of the following tables is the Colorado Department of Education website at www.cde.state.co.us.

Effective Learning Environment – 4th Grade CSAP Reading Scores % Proficient and Advanced										
Year	Bayfield	Cortez	Dolores	Dove Creek	Durango	Ignacio	Mancos	Pagosa	Silverton	CO
1997	69	n/a	n/a	72	62	40	n/a	47	n/a	57
1998	53	41	72	82	61	35	43	61	n/a	57
1999	79	44	62	74	69	54	62	54	n/a	59
2000	68	53	56	52	68	54	60	62	n/a	62
2001	79	44	65	34	78	41	59	55	n/a	63
2002	68	44	61	43	78	60	67	58	n/a	59
2003	68	44	61	43	78	60	67	58	n/a	63
2004	71	49	82	n/a	75	54	48	75	n/a	63
2005	83	51	61	50	83	51	67	61	n/a	64
2006	89	50	78	52	86	65	73	65	n/a	68
2007	77	47	70	74	74	65	59	63	n/a	64

Seventh-grade reading scores also have remained stable state-wide as have scores in Bayfield, Cortez, and Durango. Cortez and Pagosa Springs scores show improvement, while test scores in Ignacio and Mancos have declined over the past three years. Data was not available for Dove Creek or Silverton because fewer than 16 students were tested.

Effective Learning Environment – 7th Grade CSAP Reading Scores % Proficient and Advanced										
Year	Bayfield	Cortez	Dolores	Dove Creek	Durango	Ignacio	Mancos	Pagosa	Silverton	CO
1999	62	47	59	78	59	45	51	43	56	56
2000	54	52	61	57	66	31	80	53	59	59
2001	78	55	63	n/a	75	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2002	71	53	51	59	65	41	73	60	n/a	59
2003	69	56	58	33	72	41	66	60	n/a	61
2004	75	51	53	59	74	36	69	65	n/a	61
2005	75	49	73	43	80	51	74	73	n/a	64
2006	82	56	73	44	81	47	67	65	n/a	64
2007	79	58	77	n/a	76	37	65	85	n/a	65

Writing Progress: State-wide test scores for fourth-grade writing have remained stable for the past three years with Dolores and Mancos scores showing improvement. All other school districts excluding Pagosa Springs and Ignacio, posted declines.

Effective Learning Environment – 4th Grade CSAP Writing Scores % Proficient and Advanced										
Year	Bayfield	Cortez	Dolores	Dove Creek	Durango	Ignacio	Mancos	Pagosa	Silverton	CO
1997	38	n/a	n/a	45	37	20	n/a	26	n/a	31
1998	46	20	35	59	31	13	30	21	n/a	36
1999	53	24	26	39	39	22	42	26	n/a	34
2000	45	26	28	14	39	22	37	28	n/a	36
2001	47	25	41	38	45	21	37	34	n/a	46
2002	49	29	39	29	62	39	33	53	n/a	50
2003	49	29	39	29	62	39	33	53	n/a	59
2004	48	31	52	n/a	62	43	45	55	n/a	53
2005	59	34	37	38	70	44	36	40	n/a	52
2006	68	29	48	28	68	44	50	44	n/a	50
2007	49	26	44	32	63	40	45	41	n/a	49

In seventh grade, state test scores remained stable as well. Cortez, Dolores, and Pagosa Springs showed improvement, while Bayfield, Durango and Ignacio test scores remained stable. Only Mancos showed a decline. Data are not available for Dove Creek or Silverton because fewer than 16 students were tested.

Effective Learning Environment – 7th Grade CSAP Writing Scores % Proficient and Advanced										
Year	Bayfield	Cortez	Dolores	Dove Creek	Durango	Ignacio	Mancos	Pagosa	Silverton	CO
1999	46	31	32	57	52	21	34	37	n/a	41
2000	40	34	37	36	48	24	57	42	n/a	42
2001	53	41	51	57	60	38	43	52	n/a	52
2002	54	30	36	35	55	22	53	45	n/a	50
2003	58	41	34	28	60	30	56	48	n/a	53
2004	60	38	42	48	74	23	69	44	n/a	52
2005	73	35	61	39	73	34	66	60	n/a	56
2006	74	44	56	40	73	33	56	59	n/a	56
2007	69	52	66	n/a	70	32	54	77	n/a	60

Math Progress: Colorado began administering third and fourth-grade math tests in 2006, so no conclusions about long term trends can be drawn regarding student progress toward meeting the state’s math standards.

Effective Learning Environment – 4th Grade CSAP Math Scores % Proficient and Advanced										
Year	Bayfield	Cortez	Dolores	Dove Creek	Durango	Ignacio	Mancos	Pagosa	Silverton	CO
2006	90	46	75	48	78	57	85	66	n/a	69
2007	65	48	61	68	83	56	68	73	n/a	71

In seventh grade, Cortez, Dolores, Mancos, and Pagosa Springs test scores improved significantly over the past three years, while Durango and Ignacio scores remained stable. Bayfield math scores declined. Data are not available for Dove Creek or Silverton because fewer than 16 students were tested.

Effective Learning Environment – 7th Grade CSAP Math Scores % Proficient and Advanced										
Year	Bayfield	Cortez	Dolores	Dove Creek	Durango	Ignacio	Mancos	Pagosa	Silverton	CO
2003	56	32	20	33	50	23	63	23	n/a	41
2004	62	27	35	30	52	16	44	25	n/a	41
2005	58	22	38	35	56	18	46	27	n/a	46
2006	58	35	31	12	62	35	46	40	n/a	45
2007	46	32	47	n/a	56	16	58	64	n/a	50

Early Childhood Care

In Colorado, 66% of working families need child care. Child care facilities are licensed by law through the Colorado State Division of Child Care. The chart below compares the number of total young children in three age groups to the actual number of licensed slots in 2007.

Total # of Children and Licensed Child Care Slots, by Age Group 2007						
	Total # of Children	Available # of Slots	Total # of Children	Available # of Slots	Total # of Children	Available # of Slots
	0-1 yrs. old	0-1 yrs. old	1-2 yrs. old	1-2 yrs. old	2-4 yrs. Old	2-4 yrs. old
Archuleta County	119	8	86	20	325	107
La Plata County	440	90	430	183	1,377	811
Montezuma County	331	18	352	41	955	564
Totals	890	116	868	244	2,657	1,482

** Data not collected for Dolores or San Juan Counties because they do not have Head Start Programs

Source: Southwest Colorado Child Care Resource and Referral March 08

This data shows that the three largest counties in the region, Archuleta, La Plata and Montezuma, are only able to address 13% of the need for infant care; 28% of the need for children ages 1-2; and 56% of the need for children 2 to 4 years old. It is very important to note that Dolores and San Juan County, while not evaluated in the Tri County Head Start Needs Assessment data, are working hard to meet child care demands. Through the Dove’s Nest in Dove Creek and Tommy Knockers Pre-School in Silverton, a minimum of 248 children have access to child care.

While infant/toddler care appears to be the most critical need in southwest Colorado, there is also need for child care offered outside of regular business hours/days including: 12-hour, 24-hour and weekend care particularly given the nature of this region’s service economy.

There were 2,964 licensed slots counted via a point-in-time analysis done March 2008. Unlicensed child care is not included in the data, but due to demand for child care, is prevalent in our region.

Total # of Licensed Child Care Slots, By Age Group 2008					
Age Groups:	Archuleta	Dolores	La Plata	Montezuma	San Juan
Age 0 to 1	7	5	92	19	5
Age 1-2	24	5	206	60	5
Age 2-5	139	37	889	545	20
Age 5-6	36	0	115	16	0
Age 6+ (full day care)	3	0	114	4	0
Age 6+ (before/after school)	9	0	609	0	0
TOTAL	218	47	2,025	644	30

Source: Southwest Colorado Child Care Resource and Referral March 08

There are numerous ways to expand available access to child care but effective solutions take multi-system efforts, public will, heightened community awareness and financial resources. Solutions suggested by child care advocates, coalitions, providers and other experts include:

- *Capacity:* The first priority is that more child care centers are needed to increase the total number of slots. Local governments can help with donations of land and resources, and by relaxing or waiving certain building regulations or development fees. Organized child care coalitions can step up community awareness and education to make the case for action on the local level.
- *Subsidies:* More funding is needed for the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP), and to increase provider reimbursements for slots that are subsidized. The funding assists income-eligible families pay for child care and also help providers offer slots to lower-income families. However, the amount of the subsidy is not always enough to cover providers’ costs.
- *Donations:* Contributors who make a monetary contribution to promote child care in Colorado may be eligible for a State tax credit called the Child Care Contribution Credit which is valued at 50% of the contribution.
- *Child Care at Work Sites:* Business interests, chambers of commerce and economic development groups need to consider child care as a basic infrastructure component similar to schools, roads, and water. Local businesses can also consider establishing on-site child care for employees. A 2004 report entitled “*The Economic Impact of Child Care in Colorado*” can be found at: www.coloradokids.org.