Youth Healthcare Alliance

Champions for Colorado School-Based Clinics

2026 Colorado Legislative Session Overview

The main headline of the 2026 legislative session was that Colorado was in a serious budget deficit to the tune of billions of dollars and needed to cut substantial amounts of revenue. As a result, not many pieces of legislation that affected YHA's priorities were introduced outside of the budget process. Instead, YHA closely tracked priorities determined through the budgeting process, some of which resulted in "orbital bills," making changes in statute to align with budget decisions. Such determinations (either via budget or statute) critical to YHA and SBHCs include:

- **HB 1411** – Cover All Coloradans Medicaid program for pregnant people and children was reduced, specifically with an annual cap of $1,100 on dental services and behavioral health services switched to fee-for-service from capitatation, among other items. Also, Cover All Coloradan members would be moved out of the Accountable Care Collaborative (ACC) and unable to receive care coordination services offered in the ACC. This program will be capped at 25,000 if enrollment exceeds that number.
- **HB 1389** – Eliminates the requirement for the legislature to annually fund the Comprehensive Human Sexuality Education Grant program. This program had been funded at about $1 million annually, and this funding was removed with this bill; however, it keeps the option open in the future for the program to be funded by keeping the reference in statute.
- **SB 187** – Establishes a legislative commission to study Medicaid costs. This group of legislators will meet during the summer and fall and create recommendations.
- **Provider rate reductions by 2% across-the-board** – there are a few exceptions, including any provider rates that are below 85% parity with Medicare (e.g., primary care and pediatric codes), federally-qualified health centers, family planning modifiers; however, YHA is researching the impacts of these decisions on SBHCs.

Top Priority for Youth Healthcare Alliance

As school-based clinics rely on state funding for general operating grants to support their clinics, especially for any critical non-billable services and to support uninsured access to care, Youth Healthcare Alliance's number one priority each legislative session is always to defend the current state revenue and to find opportunities to increase revenue for school-based clinics.

CDPHE funding remains static for the SBHC Program at about $5.1 million (and 3.5 FTE for Program administration).

Critical Bills for School-Based Clinics

- **HB 1155 – Department of Health Care Policy & Financing Supplemental –** This was a bill to align the current fiscal year's spending with the budget that had passed at that time (for fiscal year 2025-26), and HCPF is allowed to propose adjustments in this process. YHA advocated, along with other provider groups, to the legislature to not cut entirely the access stabilization payments. These payments were critical for non-federally qualified health center SBHCs who were less likely to have the volume to participate in the Accountable Care Collaborative's incentive payment structure. Ultimately, the legislature decided to delay these payments to July 1, 2027.
- **SB 032 – Promoting Immunization Access –** Expands access to vaccines by broadening who may administer and prescribe vaccines (to include pharmacists), authorizing state agencies to rely on guidance from specified medical professional organizations (in addition to the federal ACIP), updating immunization program funding flexibility, and revising liability protections related to vaccine administration and distribution, among other changes.
- **SB 178 – Health Insurance Affordability Rates –** Creates new funding sources for the Health Insurance Affordability Enterprise, which further sustains programs such as the reinsurance program, on-exchange subsidies, and OmniSalud program.

FYI Bills

- **SB 009 – Charitable Organizations State Sales & Use Tax –** Codifies into Colorado statute the Department of Revenue's determination process of a charitable organization for the purposes of state sales and use tax, regardless of IRS determination.
- **SB 135 – State Public K-12 Education Funding –** Refers a measure to the ballot at the November 2026 election to allow the state to retain revenue collected up to a new limit for k-12 education, among other programs. This would allow specific revenue intended to fund k-12 education to be exempt from TABOR refunds and is estimated to be around $1million in 2027-2028.