

CHAPTER 237

EDUCATION - PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SENATE BILL 25-315

BY SENATOR(S) Bridges and Kirkmeyer, Amabile, Exum, Mullica, Coleman;
also REPRESENTATIVE(S) Bird and Sirota, McCluskie, Taggart, Bacon, Boesenecker, Camacho, Carter, Duran, Froelich,
Gonzalez R., Hamrick, Lieder, Lindsay, Phillips, Smith, Valdez.

AN ACT

CONCERNING MEASURES TO REINVENT POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAMS,
AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, MAKING AND REDUCING AN APPROPRIATION.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** part 2 to article 54 of title 22 as follows:

PART 2
POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS FUNDING

22-54-201. Legislative declaration. (1) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS THAT:

(a) THE DEPARTMENT IS COMMITTED TO IMPROVING THE POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS OPTIONS AND OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS ACROSS THE STATE;

(b) POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS OPPORTUNITIES INCREASE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT, DECREASE DROPOUT RATES, AND IMPROVE STUDENTS' LONG-TERM WORKFORCE OUTCOMES;

(c) THE COLORADO EVALUATION AND ACTION LAB, HOUSED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER, FOUND THAT CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT IS SHOWN TO BE HIGHLY EFFECTIVE IN INCREASING COLLEGE GRADUATION FOR COLORADO STUDENTS ACROSS VARIOUS DEMOGRAPHICS. STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATE IN CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT ARE TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT MORE LIKELY TO ATTEND COLLEGE, ARE EIGHT PERCENT MORE LIKELY TO EARN A TWO-YEAR DEGREE ON TIME, ARE TEN PERCENT MORE LIKELY TO EARN A FOUR-YEAR DEGREE ON TIME, AND EARN HIGHER WAGES FIVE YEARS AFTER ENTERING THE WORKFORCE. THEREFORE, MAINTAINING

Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material added to existing law; dashes through words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law and such material is not part of the act.

GUARANTEED TRANSFER PATHWAYS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS AND COLLEGES IS BENEFICIAL TO STUDENTS IN COLORADO AND TO THE STATE AS A WHOLE.

(d) IT IS THE DEPARTMENT'S GOAL THAT FOR THE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATING CLASS OF 2029, AND FOR EACH HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATING CLASS THEREAFTER, ONE HUNDRED PERCENT OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES WILL HAVE ACHIEVED AT LEAST ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

(I) EARNED A QUALITY, IN-DEMAND NON-DEGREE CREDENTIAL;

(II) EARNED TWELVE POSTSECONDARY CREDITS THAT COUNT TOWARD A POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIAL; OR

(III) PARTICIPATED IN AT LEAST ONE HIGH-QUALITY WORK-BASED LEARNING OPPORTUNITY;

(e) IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THE GOAL DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (1)(d) OF THIS SECTION, THE SECONDARY, POSTSECONDARY, AND WORK-BASED LEARNING INTEGRATION TASK FORCE RECOMMENDED STREAMLINING POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAMMING AND FUNDING TO INCREASE ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDIT, INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIALS, AND WORK-BASED LEARNING, COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS THE "BIG THREE", BY MITIGATING BARRIERS AND OFFERING PROGRAMMING THAT SUPPORTS ACHIEVEMENT IN THE BIG THREE;

(f) THE POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS FINANCIAL STUDY FOUND THAT STUDENT ACCESS TO EXISTING POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAMS IS INEQUITABLE, WITH ONLY FIFTY-FOUR PERCENT OF THE STATE'S ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY-EIGHT SCHOOL DISTRICTS PARTICIPATING IN THE FUNDED PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THE STUDY;

(g) STUDENT INDIVIDUAL CAREER AND ACADEMIC PLANS PROVIDE A PROCESS AND PORTFOLIO FOR STUDENTS TO EXPLORE THEIR INTERESTS AND VARIOUS POSTSECONDARY CAREER AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS THE BIG THREE; AND

(h) IN ADDITION TO THE STUDENT INDIVIDUAL CAREER AND ACADEMIC PLANS DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (1)(g) OF THIS SECTION, EDUCATORS PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE IN HELPING STUDENTS MEET STUDENTS' POSTSECONDARY WORKFORCE AND READINESS GOALS AND ACHIEVING SUCCESS IN THE BIG THREE.

(2) THEREFORE, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY DECLARES THAT:

(a) IT IS BENEFICIAL TO CONSOLIDATE CURRENT POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAMS THAT THE DEPARTMENT ADMINISTERS INTO THREE FUNDING STREAMS FOR THE PURPOSE OF BUILDING CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT AND EXPAND ACCESS TO VALUABLE POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS;

(b) IT IS BENEFICIAL FOR LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS TO RECEIVE FLEXIBILITY WITH RESPECT TO THEIR FUNDING TO ESTABLISH OR INCREASE STUDENT

PARTICIPATION IN OPPORTUNITIES FOR POSTSECONDARY CREDIT ATTAINMENT, INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIALS, AND WORK-BASED LEARNING AND TO ENABLE SCALING EFFECTIVE AND INNOVATIVE PRACTICES IN THE BIG THREE; AND

(c) FUNDING RECIPIENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONSIDER WAYS IN WHICH TO COLLABORATE AND LEVERAGE ECONOMIES OF SCALE ACROSS LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS TO EXPAND ACCESS FOR STUDENTS.

22-54-202. Definitions. AS USED IN THIS PART 2, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

(1) "DEPARTMENT" MEANS THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CREATED IN SECTION 24-1-115.

(2) "INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIAL" MEANS AN INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION AND A NONDEGREE CREDENTIAL, AS BOTH ARE DEFINED IN SECTION 23-5-145.8, THAT SATISFY THE REQUIREMENTS DEVELOPED PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-5-145.6 (2) AND IDENTIFIED IN THE MOST RECENT ANNUAL COLORADO TALENT PIPELINE REPORT PREPARED PURSUANT TO SECTION 24-46.3-103 (3).

(3) "JOHN W. BUCKNER POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS INNOVATION GRANT PROGRAM" OR "INNOVATION GRANT PROGRAM" MEANS THE JOHN W. BUCKNER POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS INNOVATION GRANT PROGRAM CREATED IN SECTION 22-54-204.

(4) "LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER" MEANS A SCHOOL DISTRICT, A CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZED BY A SCHOOL DISTRICT PURSUANT TO PART 1 OF ARTICLE 30.5 OF THIS TITLE 22, A CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZED BY THE STATE CHARTER SCHOOL INSTITUTE PURSUANT TO PART 5 OF ARTICLE 30.5 OF THIS TITLE 22, OR A BOARD OF COOPERATIVE SERVICES CREATED AND OPERATING PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 5 OF THIS TITLE 22 THAT OPERATES ONE OR MORE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

(5) "POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS START-UP FUNDING" OR "START-UP FUNDING" MEANS FUNDING PURSUANT TO SECTION 22-54-203.

(6) "POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS SUSTAIN FUNDING" OR "SUSTAIN FUNDING" MEANS FUNDING PURSUANT TO SECTION 22-54-205.

(7) "POSTSECONDARY CREDIT ATTAINMENT" MEANS A TRANSFERRABLE COLLEGE CREDIT THAT MAY BE ATTAINED WHILE A STUDENT IS IN HIGH SCHOOL, IN ALIGNMENT WITH THE COLORADO COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION ADMISSIONS STANDARDS SET FORTH IN SECTION 23-1-113, WHICH MAY INCLUDE THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF A CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT COURSE AS DESCRIBED IN SECTIONS 22-35-103 AND 22-35-104 (5)(b), A SUFFICIENT SCORE AS DETERMINED BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION ON AN END-OF-COURSE ADVANCED PLACEMENT EXAM, OR A SUFFICIENT SCORE IN AN INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE COURSE.

(8) "WORK-BASED LEARNING" MEANS DEMONSTRATING LEARNING THROUGH WORK OR AT WORK, CONSISTENT WITH THE WORK-BASED LEARNING QUALITY EXPECTATIONS ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO SECTION 8-83-602 (5). "WORK-BASED LEARNING" INCLUDES THE SAME MEANING AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 8-83-601.

22-54-203. Start-up funding - rules - repeal. (1) FOR THE 2025-26 BUDGET YEAR THROUGH THE 2027-28 BUDGET YEAR, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL USE THIS SECTION TO DETERMINE EACH LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER'S POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS START-UP FUNDING.

(2) (a) A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER'S START-UP FUNDING IS DETERMINED BY A FORMULA DEVELOPED OR ADOPTED BY THE STATE BOARD.

(b) THE STATE BOARD SHALL DEVELOP OR ADOPT A FORMULA TO DETERMINE A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER'S START-UP FUNDING. THE PURPOSE OF THE FORMULA IS TO ENHANCE EQUITY IN ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAMS BY ALLOCATING FUNDS TO LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS WHOSE CHARACTERISTICS ARE CONSIDERED BY THE FORMULA'S FACTORS AND DEMONSTRATE THE NEED FOR RESOURCES TO ACHIEVE EQUITY THROUGH DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAMS. AT A MINIMUM, THE FORMULA MUST INCLUDE FACTORS THAT REFLECT THE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER'S:

(I) PARTICIPATION IN POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS OPPORTUNITIES;

(II) PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO ARE ENROLLED IN GRADES NINE THROUGH TWELVE AND ARE ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE LUNCH PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE FEDERAL "RICHARD B. RUSSELL NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH ACT", 42 U.S.C. SEC. 1751 ET SEQ.;

(III) CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM RATE OF STUDENTS WHO ARE ENROLLED IN GRADES NINE THROUGH TWELVE;

(IV) HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE; AND

(V) DROPOUT RATE, EXCLUDING STUDENTS WHO ARE OR WERE ENROLLED IN AN ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL.

(c) THE STATE BOARD SHALL ESTABLISH A MINIMUM NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND A MAXIMUM NUMBER OF STUDENTS TO BE USED AS A PART OF THE STUDENT COUNT IN DETERMINING START-UP FUNDING SO THAT, NOTWITHSTANDING THE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER'S ACTUAL STUDENT COUNT USED FOR PURPOSES OF DETERMINING START-UP FUNDING, A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER'S STUDENT COUNT IS NOT LESS THAN THE MINIMUM NUMBER OR MORE THAN THE MAXIMUM NUMBER. THE PURPOSE OF ESTABLISHING A MINIMUM NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND A MAXIMUM NUMBER OF STUDENTS IS TO ENSURE THAT START-UP FUNDING IS NOT DISPROPORTIONATELY DISTRIBUTED.

(d) THE DATA USED FOR EACH FACTOR OF THE FORMULA MUST BE THE MOST RECENT DATA VALIDATED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

(e) THE FORMULA MAY APPLY A DIFFERENT WEIGHT TO EACH FACTOR.

(f) THE FORMULA MUST APPLY A HIGHER WEIGHT TO PREVIOUSLY LOW PARTICIPATION IN POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS OPPORTUNITIES.

(g) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL CALCULATE AND DISTRIBUTE THE START-UP FUNDS DETERMINED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION.

(3) (a) A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER SHALL USE START-UP FUNDING FOR ELIGIBLE EXPENSES THAT ARE ASSOCIATED WITH DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAM THAT ALIGNS WITH THE STATE'S WORKFORCE DEMANDS OR PRIORITIES AND SUPPORTS STUDENTS IN SUCCESSFULLY EARNING POSTSECONDARY CREDIT OR INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIALS, OR SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING WORK-BASED LEARNING REQUIREMENTS. CATEGORIES OF ELIGIBLE EXPENSES INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

(I) PROGRAM PLANNING AND DESIGN;

(II) COURSE MATERIALS, TECHNOLOGY, AND EQUIPMENT;

(III) PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, CERTIFICATION, AUTHORIZATION, OR LICENSURE;

(IV) CONTRACTING WITH AN ENTITY OR HIRING SCHOOL STAFF TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAM;

(V) INDIVIDUAL CAREER AND ACADEMIC PLAN RESOURCES, AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 22-2-136, AND SUPPORTS, INCLUDING ACADEMIC AND CAREER ADVISING AND EXPLORATION; AND

(VI) COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT.

(b) LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO COLLABORATE WITH EACH OTHER TO MAXIMIZE ECONOMIES OF SCALE AND EXPAND STUDENT ACCESS TO A POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAM.

(4) THE STATE BOARD SHALL ADOPT RULES GOVERNING:

(a) ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER TO RECEIVE START-UP FUNDING PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS MAY VARY BASED ON THE TYPE OF LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER.

(b) THE FORMULA DEVELOPED OR ADOPTED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (2) OF THIS SECTION;

(c) CATEGORIES OF ELIGIBLE EXPENSES AND ELIGIBLE EXPENSES WITHIN THE CATEGORIES;

(d) ELIGIBILITY FOR, AND DISTRIBUTION OF, FUNDING FOR ELIGIBLE EXPENSES WITHIN THE CATEGORIES DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (3) OF THIS SECTION. ELIGIBILITY MAY REQUIRE SATISFACTION OF CERTAIN CONDITIONS. ELIGIBILITY AND DISTRIBUTION RATES MAY BE CATEGORIZED OR LIMITED BASED ON LOCAL-EDUCATION-PROVIDER-SPECIFIC DEMOGRAPHICS OR OTHER FEATURES AS SPECIFIED BY STATE BOARD RULE.

(e) REQUIREMENTS OF LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS THAT RECEIVE FUNDING PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION; AND

(f) ANY OTHER RULES DEEMED NECESSARY BY THE STATE BOARD FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION.

(5) THE DEPARTMENT MAY NOT USE MORE THAN FIVE PERCENT OF THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF START-UP FUNDING IN THE 2026-27 BUDGET YEAR THROUGH THE 2027-28 BUDGET YEAR TO OFFSET THE DIRECT AND INDIRECT COSTS INCURRED IN ADMINISTERING START-UP FUNDING.

(6) THIS SECTION IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2029.

22-54-204. John W. Buckner postsecondary and workforce readiness innovation grant program - creation - funding - rules. (1) BEGINNING IN THE 2028-29 BUDGET YEAR, THE JOHN W. BUCKNER POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS INNOVATION GRANT PROGRAM IS CREATED IN THE DEPARTMENT TO PROVIDE GRANTS TO LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS THAT:

(a) ARE REQUIRED TO ADOPT A PRIORITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN OR A TURNAROUND PLAN, OR AUTHORIZE SCHOOLS THAT ARE REQUIRED TO ADOPT A PRIORITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN OR A TURNAROUND PLAN, FOR THE CURRENT OR PRIOR SCHOOL YEAR; OR

(b) DEMONSTRATE, OR AUTHORIZE A SCHOOL THAT DEMONSTRATES, A LOW LEVEL OF ATTAINMENT ON THE POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS INDICATOR FOR THE PRIOR SCHOOL YEAR.

(2) (a) THE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER SHALL USE INNOVATION GRANT PROGRAM FUNDING FOR ELIGIBLE EXPENSES ASSOCIATED WITH DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAM THAT ALIGNS WITH THE STATE'S WORKFORCE DEMANDS OR PRIORITIES AND SUPPORTS STUDENTS IN SUCCESSFULLY EARNING POSTSECONDARY CREDIT OR INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIALS, OR SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING WORK-BASED LEARNING REQUIREMENTS. CATEGORIES OF ELIGIBLE EXPENSES INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

(I) PROGRAM PLANNING AND DESIGN;

(II) COURSE MATERIALS, TECHNOLOGY, AND EQUIPMENT;

(III) PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, CERTIFICATION, AUTHORIZATION, OR LICENSURE;

(IV) CONTRACTING WITH AN ENTITY OR HIRING SCHOOL STAFF TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAM;

(V) INDIVIDUAL CAREER AND ACADEMIC PLAN RESOURCES, AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 22-2-136, AND SUPPORTS, INCLUDING ACADEMIC AND CAREER ADVISING AND EXPLORATION; AND

(VI) COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT.

(b) LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO COLLABORATE WITH EACH OTHER TO MAXIMIZE ECONOMIES OF SCALE AND EXPAND STUDENT ACCESS TO A POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAM.

(3)(a) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADMINISTER THE INNOVATION GRANT PROGRAM, INCLUDING REVIEWING THE APPLICATIONS RECEIVED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION.

(b) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL MAKE GRANT AWARD DETERMINATIONS.

(c) IN MAKING GRANT AWARD DETERMINATIONS, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL CONSIDER:

(I) WHETHER THE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER IS REQUIRED TO ADOPT A PRIORITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN OR A TURNAROUND PLAN FOR THE CURRENT OR PRIOR SCHOOL YEAR;

(II) THE CONCENTRATION OF SCHOOLS OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT, OR THE CONCENTRATION OF INSTITUTE CHARTER SCHOOLS OF THE STATE CHARTER SCHOOL INSTITUTE, THAT MUST IMPLEMENT A PRIORITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN OR A TURNAROUND PLAN;

(III) WHETHER THE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED UNDER THE STATE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM AS DECLINING IN PERFORMANCE; AND

(IV) THE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER'S LEVEL OF ATTAINMENT ON THE POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS INDICATOR, AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 22-11-204, IN THE PRIOR YEAR.

(d) IN MAKING GRANT AWARD DETERMINATIONS, THE DEPARTMENT MAY CONSIDER AND PRIORITIZE GRANT AWARDS TO LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS THAT HAVE A HIGHER THAN AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO ARE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS, THAT HAVE A HIGHER THAN AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO ARE ENROLLED IN GRADES NINE THROUGH TWELVE AND ARE ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE LUNCH PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE FEDERAL "RICHARD B. RUSSELL NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH ACT", 42 U.S.C. SEC. 1751 ET SEQ., THAT ARE A RURAL OR SMALL RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT, OR THAT HAVE A LIMITED CAPACITY TO OFFER POSTSECONDARY WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAMS.

(e) SUBJECT TO AVAILABLE FUNDING BASED ON ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS, EACH GRANT AWARDED MAY CONTINUE FOR UP TO THREE BUDGET YEARS. THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ANNUALLY REVIEW EACH GRANT RECIPIENT'S USE OF THE GRANT AWARD AND MAY RESCIND REMAINING GRANT FUNDS IF THE DEPARTMENT FINDS THAT THE GRANT RECIPIENT IS NOT MAKING ADEQUATE PROGRESS TOWARD ACHIEVING THE GOALS OF THE INTENDED USE OF THE GRANT AWARD.

(4) THE STATE BOARD MAY ADOPT RULES GOVERNING:

(a) APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS;

(b) ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY AND PRIORITIZATION REQUIREMENTS FOR A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION;

(c) ELIGIBLE EXPENSES WITHIN THE CATEGORIES DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (2) OF THIS SECTION;

(d) REQUIREMENTS OF LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS THAT RECEIVE FUNDING PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION; AND

(e) ANY OTHER RULES DEEMED NECESSARY BY THE STATE BOARD FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION.

(5)(a) THE DEPARTMENT MAY USE NOT MORE THAN FIVE PERCENT OF THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF INNOVATION GRANT PROGRAM FUNDING TO OFFSET THE DIRECT AND INDIRECT COSTS INCURRED IN ADMINISTERING THE INNOVATION GRANT PROGRAM.

(b) OF THE MONEY ANNUALLY APPROPRIATED FOR THE INNOVATION GRANT PROGRAM, THE DEPARTMENT MAY EXPEND AN AMOUNT THAT IS NECESSARY TO ENTER INTO ONE OR MORE CONTRACTS WITH A PUBLIC OR PRIVATE ENTITY TO PROVIDE THE USES DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (2)(a) OF THIS SECTION TO MULTIPLE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS THAT ARE ELIGIBLE FOR AN INNOVATION GRANT. THE ENTITY SHALL USE RESEARCH-BASED STRATEGIES AND HAVE A PROVEN RECORD OF SUCCESS WORKING WITH SCHOOLS UNDER SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES.

22-54-205. Sustain funding - rules - repeal. (1) FOR THE 2026-27 BUDGET YEAR, AND EACH BUDGET YEAR THEREAFTER, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL USE THIS SECTION TO DETERMINE EACH LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER'S POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS SUSTAIN FUNDING. TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL USE EXISTING DATA AND EACH LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER SHALL PROVIDE DATA TO THE DEPARTMENT TO INFORM THE DEPARTMENT OF EACH LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER'S SUSTAIN FUNDING AMOUNT.

(2)(a) A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER IS ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE REIMBURSEMENT FOR STUDENTS WHO, IN THE PRECEDING BUDGET YEAR, SUCCESSFULLY SATISFIED POSTSECONDARY CREDIT, RECEIVED AN INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIAL, OR SATISFIED WORK-BASED LEARNING REQUIREMENTS AS SPECIFIED BY STATE BOARD RULE. A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER IS ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE MULTIPLE REIMBURSEMENTS FOR ONE STUDENT. A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER IS ELIGIBLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE ENROLLED IN A P-TECH SCHOOL OR PARTICIPATING IN A TREP PROGRAM.

(b) (I) FOR THE 2026-27 BUDGET YEAR, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL DIVIDE THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF SUSTAIN FUNDING FOR REIMBURSEMENT INTO THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:

(A) TWENTY PERCENT OF THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF SUSTAIN FUNDING FOR REIMBURSEMENT FOR POSTSECONDARY CREDIT ATTAINMENT;

(B) FORTY PERCENT OF THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF SUSTAIN FUNDING FOR REIMBURSEMENT FOR INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIALS EARNED;

(C) THIRTY-FIVE PERCENT OF THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF SUSTAIN FUNDING FOR REIMBURSEMENT FOR WORK-BASED LEARNING; AND

(D) FIVE PERCENT OF THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF SUSTAIN FUNDING TO OFFSET THE DIRECT AND INDIRECT COSTS INCURRED IN ADMINISTERING THE SUSTAIN FUNDING.

(II) NOTWITHSTANDING SUBSECTION (2)(b)(I) OF THIS SECTION, IF MONEY THAT IS ALLOCATED TO A CATEGORY IS NOT EXPENDED BECAUSE OF INSUFFICIENT DEMAND, THE MONEY MAY BE REALLOCATED TO ANOTHER CATEGORY TO SATISFY THAT CATEGORY'S DEMAND.

(III) THIS SUBSECTION (2)(b) IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2028.

(c) (I) FOR THE 2027-28 BUDGET YEAR, AND EACH BUDGET YEAR THEREAFTER, THE STATE BOARD SHALL DETERMINE THE PERCENTAGES OF THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF SUSTAIN FUNDING FOR REIMBURSEMENT ASSIGNED TO THE POSTSECONDARY CREDIT ATTAINMENT, INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIALS, AND WORK-BASED LEARNING CATEGORIES, EXCEPT THAT THE FIVE PERCENT OF THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF SUSTAIN FUNDING TO OFFSET THE DIRECT AND INDIRECT COSTS INCURRED IN ADMINISTERING THE SUSTAIN FUNDING MUST NOT BE CHANGED. THE PERCENTAGES FOR EACH CATEGORY ARE DETERMINED BY STATE BOARD RULE.

(II) IN DETERMINING THE PERCENTAGES OF THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF SUSTAIN FUNDING FOR REIMBURSEMENT ASSIGNED TO EACH CATEGORY PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (2)(c)(I) OF THIS SECTION, THE STATE BOARD SHALL CONSIDER THE AVAILABILITY OF POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS, STUDENT PARTICIPATION, AND EVIDENCE OF STUDENT OUTCOMES.

(III) NOTWITHSTANDING SUBSECTION (2)(c)(I) OF THIS SECTION, IF MONEY THAT IS ALLOCATED TO A CATEGORY IS NOT EXPENDED BECAUSE OF INSUFFICIENT DEMAND, THE MONEY MAY BE REALLOCATED TO ANOTHER CATEGORY TO SATISFY THAT CATEGORY'S DEMAND.

(d) A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER MAY RECEIVE FUNDING FROM ONE OR MULTIPLE CATEGORIES DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (2)(b)(I) OF THIS SECTION IN EACH BUDGET YEAR; EXCEPT THAT IN A BUDGET YEAR WHEN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY DOES NOT APPROPRIATE A SUFFICIENT AMOUNT TO FULLY FUND THE DISTRIBUTIONS REQUIRED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF EACH ELIGIBLE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER'S DISTRIBUTION BY A PROPORTIONATE PERCENTAGE OF THE AMOUNT REQUIRED TO FULLY FUND THE DISTRIBUTIONS REQUIRED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION.

(3) (a) A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER SHALL USE SUSTAIN FUNDING FOR EXPENSES THAT ARE ASSOCIATED WITH MAINTAINING AND EXPANDING ITS POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAM THAT ALIGNS WITH THE STATE'S WORKFORCE DEMANDS OR PRIORITIES. CATEGORIES OF ELIGIBLE EXPENSES INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

(I) PROGRAM PLANNING AND DESIGN;

(II) COURSE MATERIALS, TECHNOLOGY, AND EQUIPMENT;

(III) PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, CERTIFICATION, AUTHORIZATION, OR LICENSURE;

(IV) CONTRACTING WITH AN ENTITY OR HIRING SCHOOL STAFF TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAM;

(V) INDIVIDUAL CAREER AND ACADEMIC PLAN RESOURCES, AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 22-2-136, AND SUPPORTS, INCLUDING ACADEMIC AND CAREER ADVISING AND EXPLORATION;

(VI) COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT; AND

(VII) WAGES FOR EMPLOYED APPRENTICES PARTICIPATING IN REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIPS.

(b) LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO COLLABORATE WITH EACH OTHER TO MAXIMIZE ECONOMIES OF SCALE AND EXPAND STUDENT ACCESS TO A POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAM.

(4) THE STATE BOARD SHALL ADOPT RULES GOVERNING:

(a) ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION, INCLUDING CRITERIA THAT CONSTITUTE A STUDENT'S SUCCESSFUL SATISFACTION OF POSTSECONDARY CREDIT, INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIAL, OR WORK-BASED LEARNING REQUIREMENTS. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS MAY VARY BASED ON THE TYPE OF LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER.

(b) CATEGORIES OF ELIGIBLE EXPENSES, AND ELIGIBLE EXPENSES WITHIN THE CATEGORIES;

(c) REIMBURSEMENT ELIGIBILITY AND RATES, INCLUDING LIMITS ON A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER'S ANNUAL TOTAL REIMBURSEMENT AND ANNUAL REIMBURSEMENT FROM ONE OR MULTIPLE CATEGORIES, BASED ON LOCAL-EDUCATION-PROVIDER-SPECIFIC FEATURES OR OTHER FEATURES;

(d) REQUIREMENTS OF A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER THAT RECEIVES FUNDING PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION; AND

(e) ANY OTHER RULES DEEMED NECESSARY BY THE STATE BOARD FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION.

(5) (a) A SCHOOL DISTRICT THAT AUTHORIZES A CHARTER SCHOOL SHALL FORWARD TO THE DISTRICT CHARTER SCHOOL AN AMOUNT EQUAL TO ONE HUNDRED PERCENT OF THE SUSTAIN FUNDING AMOUNT THAT THE SCHOOL DISTRICT RECEIVES FOR A STUDENT WHO IS ENROLLED IN THE DISTRICT CHARTER SCHOOL AND WHO SATISFIES THE CRITERIA THAT CONSTITUTE THE STUDENT'S SUCCESSFUL

SATISFACTION OF POSTSECONDARY CREDIT, INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIAL, OR WORK-BASED LEARNING REQUIREMENTS.

(b) THE STATE CHARTER SCHOOL INSTITUTE SHALL FORWARD TO AN INSTITUTE CHARTER SCHOOL AN AMOUNT EQUAL TO ONE HUNDRED PERCENT OF THE SUSTAIN FUNDING AMOUNT THAT THE STATE CHARTER SCHOOL INSTITUTE RECEIVES FOR A STUDENT WHO IS ENROLLED IN THE INSTITUTE CHARTER SCHOOL AND WHO SATISFIES THE CRITERIA THAT CONSTITUTE THE STUDENT'S SUCCESSFUL SATISFACTION OF POSTSECONDARY CREDIT, INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIAL, OR WORK-BASED LEARNING REQUIREMENTS.

22-54-206. Qualified industry credentials. (1) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 30, 2026, AND ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 30 EACH YEAR THEREAFTER, THE DEPARTMENT AND THE WORK FORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION, THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT, THE COLORADO COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM, AND THE COLORADO OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SHALL JOINTLY DEVELOP, AND PUBLISH ON THE DEPARTMENT'S AND THE WORK FORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL'S WEBSITES, A LIST OF THE QUALIFIED INDUSTRY CREDENTIALS THAT MEET THE QUALITY STANDARDS REQUIRED PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-5-145.8 (2)(c) FOR THE NEXT SCHOOL YEAR. AT LEAST ANNUALLY, THE DEPARTMENT AND THE WORK FORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION, THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT, THE COLORADO COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM, AND THE COLORADO OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SHALL IDENTIFY AND REVIEW THE QUALIFIED INDUSTRY CREDENTIALS BY IDENTIFYING THE JOBS INCLUDED IN THE COLORADO TALENT REPORT, PREPARED PURSUANT TO SECTION 24-46.3-103, WITH THE GREATEST REGIONAL AND STATE DEMAND, INCLUDING HIGH-SKILL, HIGH-WAGE JOBS IN IN-DEMAND INDUSTRIES, AND, AFTER CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT INDUSTRIES, IDENTIFYING THE QUALIFIED INDUSTRY CREDENTIALS THAT HAVE LABOR MARKET VALUE AND ARE LIKELY TO LEAD TO THE IDENTIFIED JOBS. ANY QUALIFIED INDUSTRY CREDENTIAL THAT THE DEPARTMENT AND THE WORK FORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL JOINTLY DETERMINE DO NOT DEMONSTRATE LABOR MARKET VALUE MAY BE REMOVED FROM THE DEPARTMENT'S AND THE WORK FORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL'S WEBSITES.

(2)(a) EACH LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER SHALL REGULARLY COMMUNICATE TO ALL MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND THE STUDENTS' FAMILIES:

(I) THE AVAILABILITY OF CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS; AND

(II) THE AVAILABILITY OF INDUSTRY CREDENTIAL AND WORK-BASED LEARNING PROGRAMS AND THE BENEFITS A STUDENT RECEIVES AS A RESULT OF SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING ONE OF THESE PROGRAMS OR COURSES.

(b) TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, ALL COMMUNICATIONS ISSUED PURSUANT TO THIS SUBSECTION (2) MUST BE PROVIDED IN A LANGUAGE THAT THE STUDENTS AND THE STUDENTS' FAMILIES UNDERSTAND. THE GOAL OF THE COMMUNICATIONS MUST BE TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION IN, AND COMPLETION OF, INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIALS.

22-54-207. Gifts, grants, and donations. THE DEPARTMENT MAY SEEK, ACCEPT, AND EXPEND GIFTS, GRANTS, OR DONATIONS FROM PRIVATE OR PUBLIC SOURCES FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS PART 2.

22-54-208. Postsecondary and workforce readiness program report.
(1) BEGINNING JANUARY 2028, AND EACH JANUARY THEREAFTER, THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SHALL REPORT, AT A MINIMUM, FINDINGS REGARDING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF HAVING CONSOLIDATED THE POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAMS THAT THE DEPARTMENT ADMINISTERED INTO THE FUNDING STREAMS CREATED IN THIS PART 2 FOR THE PURPOSE OF BUILDING CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT AND EXPAND ACCESS TO VALUABLE POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, OR THEIR SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES, AS PART OF THE "SMART ACT" PRESENTATION REQUIRED PURSUANT TO PART 2 OF ARTICLE 7 OF TITLE 2.

(2) ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 1, 2029, THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SHALL REPORT, AT A MINIMUM, FINDINGS REGARDING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF HAVING CONSOLIDATED THE POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAMS THAT THE DEPARTMENT ADMINISTERED INTO THE FUNDING STREAMS CREATED IN THIS PART 2 FOR THE PURPOSE OF BUILDING CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT AND EXPAND ACCESS TO VALUABLE POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS. PRIOR TO CREATING THE REPORT, THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SHALL CONSULT WITH JOINT BUDGET COMMITTEE STAFF TO DETERMINE THE REPORT'S CONTENT.

(3) NOTWITHSTANDING THE REQUIREMENT IN SECTION 24-1-136 (1)(a)(I), THE REQUIREMENT TO SUBMIT THE REPORT DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS SECTION CONTINUES INDEFINITELY.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-35-108, **amend** (2)(c); and **add** (8) and (9) as follows:

22-35-108. Accelerating students through concurrent enrollment program - objectives - non-tuition expenses - rules - repeal. (2) (c) For the 2025-26 state fiscal year, ~~and each state fiscal year thereafter~~, the local education provider shall not designate a total number of ASCENT program participants that is greater than the total number of ASCENT program participants that it designated in the 2024-25 state fiscal year.

(8) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY LAW TO THE CONTRARY, THE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER SHALL NOT DESIGNATE A QUALIFIED STUDENT AS AN ASCENT PROGRAM PARTICIPANT FOR THE 2026-27 STATE FISCAL YEAR OR ANY STATE FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER.

(9) THIS SECTION IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2029.

SECTION 3. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-35-108.5, **repeal** (2)(b)(II) as follows:

22-35-108.5. Teacher recruitment education and preparation (TREP) program - objectives - selection criteria - rules - definition - repeal.

~~(2) (b) (II) The general assembly shall annually fund each potential TREP program participant at the same per-pupil rate as determined by the ASCENT program as described in section 22-35-108. For the 2022-23 budget year, the general assembly shall appropriate funding for no more than two hundred TREP program participants.~~

SECTION 4. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-30.5-112.2, **amend** (2)(b); and **repeal** (1)(b) as follows:

22-30.5-112.2. Charter schools - at-risk supplemental aid - definitions - legislative declaration. (1) As used in this section, unless the context otherwise requires:

~~(b) "ASCENT program" means the accelerating students through concurrent enrollment program created in section 22-35-108.~~

(2) (b) (I) Each qualifying school district must receive at-risk supplemental aid if the percentage of at-risk pupils in a district charter school authorized by the qualifying school district prior to July 1, 2004, is less than the percentage of at-risk pupils in the qualifying school district. The amount of the school district's at-risk supplemental aid is equal to the difference between one hundred percent of district per pupil revenues and one hundred percent of adjusted district per pupil revenues for each pupil enrolled in the district charter school, not including online pupils or pupils enrolled in the ~~ASCENT or~~ TREP program.

(II) Each district charter school in a qualifying school district that was initially authorized prior to July 1, 2004, must receive at-risk supplemental aid if the percentage of at-risk students in the district charter school exceeds the percentage of at-risk pupils in the qualifying school district. The amount of the district charter school's at-risk supplemental aid is equal to the difference between one hundred percent of adjusted district per pupil revenues and one hundred percent of district per pupil revenues for each pupil enrolled in the district charter school, not including online pupils or pupils enrolled in the ~~ASCENT or~~ TREP program. A school district shall pass through one hundred percent of a district charter school's at-risk supplemental aid to the district charter school.

(III) Each district charter school in a school district that is not a qualifying district and whose percentage of at-risk pupils exceeds the percentage of at-risk pupils in the chartering school district must receive at-risk supplemental aid. The amount of the district charter school's at-risk supplemental aid is equal to the difference between one hundred percent of adjusted district per pupil revenues and one hundred percent of district per pupil revenues for each pupil enrolled in the district charter school, not including online pupils or pupils enrolled in the ~~ASCENT or~~ TREP program. A school district shall pass through one hundred percent of a district charter school's at-risk supplemental aid to the district charter school.

SECTION 5. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-30.5-513, **amend** (4.5)(b) as follows:

22-30.5-513. Institute charter schools - funding - at-risk supplemental aid - legislative declaration - definitions. (4.5) (b) The institute charter school's at-risk supplemental aid is equal to one-half of the difference between one hundred percent of the accounting district's per pupil revenues and one hundred percent of the accounting district's adjusted per pupil revenues for each pupil enrolled in the district charter school, not including online pupils or pupils enrolled in the ~~ASCENT~~ or TREP program.

SECTION 6. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-35-102, **repeal** (3) as follows:

22-35-102. Legislative declaration. (3) ~~The general assembly further finds and declares its intention that the administrative costs incurred by the department of education in its implementation of the accelerating students through concurrent enrollment program created in section 22-35-108 shall be supported by federal funds available for government services pursuant to section 14002 of Title XIV of the federal "American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009", Public Law 111-5 of the one hundred eleventh United States Congress.~~

SECTION 7. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-35-103, **repeal** (1.5) as follows:

22-35-103. Definitions. As used in this article 35, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1.5) ~~"ASCENT program" means the accelerating students through concurrent enrollment program created in section 22-35-108.~~

SECTION 8. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-35-104, **amend** (1)(a)(III), (1)(d) introductory portion, and (1)(e) as follows:

22-35-104. Enrollment in an institution of higher education - cooperative agreement. (1) (a) (III) Except as described in subsections (1)(c) and (1)(d) of this section and ~~sections 22-35-108 and~~ SECTION 22-35-109, a local education provider shall not limit the number of postsecondary courses, including academic courses and career and technical education courses, ~~which~~ THAT may include ~~course-work~~ COURSEWORK related to apprenticeship programs or internship programs, in which a qualified student may concurrently enroll during the ninth, tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade, except to the degree that the local education provider is unable to provide access to the postsecondary courses due to technological capacity.

(d) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (1)(a) of this section, if a qualified student is not a participant in the ~~ASCENT or TREP~~ program and has not satisfied the minimum requirements for graduation established by ~~his or her~~ THE QUALIFIED STUDENT'S local education provider by the end of ~~his or her~~ THEIR twelfth-grade year and is therefore retained by the local education provider for additional instruction, the qualified student ~~shall~~ MUST not concurrently enroll in postsecondary courses, including academic or career and technical education courses, ~~which~~ THAT may include ~~course-work~~ COURSEWORK related to apprenticeship programs or internship programs, that are worth more than a total of nine credit hours, including gateway courses, as defined in section 23-1-113 (11)(b.5), with additional supports through supplemental academic instruction, as

defined in section 23-1-113 (1)(e). Furthermore, the qualified student ~~shall~~ MUST not concurrently enroll in more than:

(e) Except as described in ~~paragraphs (c) and (d) of this subsection (1) SUBSECTIONS (1)(c) AND (1)(d) OF THIS SECTION and sections 22-35-108 and SECTION 22-35-109~~, the state board by rule shall not limit the number of postsecondary courses, including academic courses and career and technical education courses, ~~which~~ THAT may include ~~course work~~ COURSEWORK related to apprenticeship programs or internship programs, in which a qualified student may concurrently enroll during the ninth, tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade.

SECTION 9. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-35-107, **amend** (6)(a), (6)(e), and (7) introductory portion; and **repeal** (6)(d) and (7)(a) as follows:

22-35-107. Concurrent enrollment advisory board - created - membership - duties - reports - repeal. (6) The board has the following duties:

(a) Establishing guidelines for the administration of ~~the ASCENT program pursuant to section 22-35-108 (4) and the TREP program pursuant to section 22-35-108.5 (4);~~

(d) ~~On or before December 1, 2022, considering and making recommendations to the state board and the education committees of the house of representatives and senate, or any successor committees, regarding the feasibility of a waiver process whereby a local education provider, on behalf of a qualified student, could apply to the department for a waiver of certain provisions of section 22-35-108, which waiver would allow the local education provider to designate the student as an ASCENT program participant in the second year following the year in which the qualified student was enrolled in the twelfth grade of the local education provider so long as the qualifying student:~~

(f) ~~Was so designated in the year directly following the year in which the qualified student was enrolled in the twelfth grade of the local education provider;~~

(H) ~~Requires fifteen or fewer credit hours of postsecondary course work to achieve a postsecondary credential; and~~

(III) ~~Is eligible for free or reduced-price lunch pursuant to the federal "Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act", 42 U.S.C. sec. 1751 et seq.;~~

(e) Submitting to the state board for its approval or disapproval recommendations made pursuant to ~~paragraphs (c) and (d) of this subsection (6) SUBSECTION (6)(c) OF THIS SECTION;~~

(7) On or before December 1, 2010, and on or before December 1 each year thereafter, the board shall prepare a report and submit it to the state board and the commission. The report, at a minimum, ~~shall~~ MUST include:

(a) ~~Any guidelines that the board has established pursuant to paragraph (a) of subsection (6) of this section; and~~

SECTION 10. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-35-113, **amend** (1)(a) as follows:

22-35-113. Concurrent enrollment - website. (1) By July 1, 2020, the department of education and the department of higher education, with advice from the state board, shall make available to the public a concurrent enrollment website to provide information to students, parents, and legal guardians concerning concurrent enrollment options and requirements. The departments must ensure that the website is clear, easy to navigate, and generally user-friendly. In addition, the website must, at a minimum:

(a) Clearly explain, differentiate, compare, and contrast concurrent enrollment; dual enrollment programs; early college; ~~the ASCENT program;~~ the TREP program; p-tech high schools, as defined in section 22-35.3-102; international baccalaureate programs; and advanced placement courses;

SECTION 11. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-35-115, **add** (8) as follows:

22-35-115. Postsecondary and workforce readiness programs - financial study - funding - reports - legislative declaration - definitions - repeal. (8) THIS SECTION IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026.

SECTION 12. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 22-35-116 as follows:

22-35-116. Teacher recruitment and preparation (TREP) program and pathways in early technology early college high schools (p-tech) working group - report - repeal. (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL CONVENE A WORKING GROUP THAT INCLUDES EDUCATORS TO MAKE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND PREPARATION PROGRAM, CREATED IN SECTION 22-35-108.5, AND THE PATHWAYS IN TECHNOLOGY EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOLS, CREATED IN PART 1 OF ARTICLE 35.3 OF THIS TITLE 22, AND ANY RELATED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

(2) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1, 2025, THE WORKING GROUP SHALL REPORT ITS FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE JOINT BUDGET COMMITTEE.

(3) THIS SECTION IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2027.

SECTION 13. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-35.3-103, **amend** (4) as follows:

22-35.3-103. Pathways in technology early college high schools - design - requirements - approval. (4) A p-tech school is subject to the state assessment requirements specified in section 22-7-1006.3 and the accountability requirements specified in article 11 of this title 22. In addition, the commissioner and the executive director may establish indicators for measuring the performance of each p-tech school, which indicators may include the ability of students who graduate from a p-tech school to obtain employment in the field or to pursue additional postsecondary education in the field, as well as any relevant performance indicators established for the concurrent enrollment ~~ASCENT~~, and TREP programs.

SECTION 14. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-54-103, **amend** (5.2); and **repeal** (1.4) as follows:

22-54-103. Definitions. As used in this article 54, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1.4) "ASCENT program" means the accelerating students through concurrent enrollment program created in section 22-35-108.

(5.2) "District extended high school pupil enrollment" means the number of pupils, on the pupil enrollment count day within the applicable budget year, who are concurrently enrolled in a postsecondary course, including an academic course or a career and technical education course, as a participant in the ASCENT program or the TREP program and the number of pupils, on the pupil enrollment count day within the applicable budget year, who are enrolled in grade thirteen or fourteen in a p-tech school. A pupil enrolled in a p-tech school pursuant to article 35.3 of this title 22 must be included in the district extended high school pupil enrollment as a full-time student. An ASCENT program participant or A TREP program participant who is enrolled in at least twelve credit hours of postsecondary courses, including academic courses and career and technical education courses, as of the pupil enrollment count day of the applicable budget year must be included in the district extended high school pupil enrollment as a full-time pupil. An ASCENT program participant or A TREP program participant who is enrolled in less than twelve credit hours of postsecondary courses, including academic courses and career and technical education courses, as of the pupil enrollment count day of the applicable budget year must be included in the district extended high school pupil enrollment as a part-time pupil.

SECTION 15. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-54-103.5, **amend** (8)(a); and **add** (8)(c) as follows:

22-54-103.5. District total program - rules - legislative declaration - repeal. (8) **District extended high school funding.** (a) A district's extended high school funding is:

(District extended high school pupil enrollment x ~~\$9,588~~ \$10,480, or an amount determined pursuant subsection (8)(b) of this section).

(c) (I) NOTWITHSTANDING SUBSECTIONS (8)(a) AND (8)(b) OF THIS SECTION, FOR THE 2025-26 BUDGET YEAR, THE DOLLAR AMOUNT THAT IS MULTIPLIED BY THE NUMBER OF FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT STUDENTS INCLUDED IN THE DISTRICT'S HIGH SCHOOL PUPIL ENROLLMENT WHO ARE THE DISTRICT'S ASCENT PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS IS SEVEN THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED FOUR DOLLARS (\$7,104).

(II) THIS SUBSECTION (8)(c) IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2028.

SECTION 16. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-54-104, **amend** (4.7)(a) and (4.7)(d); and **add** (4.7)(e) as follows:

22-54-104. District total program - legislative declaration - definitions - repeal. (4.7) (a) For the ~~2024-25~~ 2025-26 budget year and budget years thereafter,

a district's extended high school funding ~~shall be determined in accordance with the following formula~~ IS:

(District extended high school pupil enrollment x ~~\$6,135~~ \$10,480, or an amount determined pursuant to subsection (4)(d) of this section).

(d) For the ~~2024-25~~ 2025-26 budget year, and each budget year thereafter, the dollar amount set forth in subsection (4.7)(a) of this section must be increased by the percentage by which the statewide base per pupil funding for that budget year, as specified in subsection (5)(a) of this section, is increased over the statewide base per pupil funding for the 2007-08 budget year, as specified in subsection (5)(a)(XIV) of this section. ~~except that the dollar amount that is multiplied by the number of full-time equivalent students included in the district's extended high school pupil enrollment who are the district's ASCENT program participants must not increase or exceed the dollar amount during the 2023-24 budget year. The amount must be rounded to the nearest dollar.~~

(e) (I) NOTWITHSTANDING SUBSECTIONS (4.7)(a) AND (4.7)(d) OF THIS SECTION, FOR THE 2025-26 BUDGET YEAR, THE DOLLAR AMOUNT THAT IS MULTIPLIED BY THE NUMBER OF FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT STUDENTS INCLUDED IN THE DISTRICT'S HIGH SCHOOL PUPIL ENROLLMENT WHO ARE THE DISTRICT'S ASCENT PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS IS SEVEN THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED FOUR DOLLARS (\$7,104).

(II) THIS SUBSECTION (4.7)(e) IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2028.

SECTION 17. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-54-138, **amend** (2), (3)(a), (3.5)(a), (4)(b) introductory portion, (5)(a), (8) introductory portion, and (9) as follows:

22-54-138. Career development success program - created - funding - report - legislative declaration - definitions - repeal. (2) There is created the career development success program in the department of education to provide financial incentives for participating districts, a participating board of cooperative services, and participating charter schools to encourage pupils enrolled in grades nine through twelve to enroll in and successfully complete qualified industry-credential programs; qualified workplace training programs; and qualified advanced placement courses. For the 2017-18 budget year ~~and each budget year thereafter~~ THROUGH THE 2025-26 BUDGET YEAR, each participating district, each participating board of cooperative services, and each participating charter school, as provided in subsection (5) of this section, may receive up to one thousand dollars for each pupil who, in the preceding budget year, successfully completes a qualified industry-credential program; qualified workplace training program; or qualified advanced placement course.

(3)(a) On or before August 15, 2016, and on or before July 1 each year thereafter THROUGH JULY 1, 2025, the work force development council, in collaboration with the department of higher education, the department of education, the department of labor and employment, the Colorado community college system, and the Colorado office of economic development, shall publish on the council's website a list of the qualified industry-credential programs and qualified workplace training programs that meet the quality standards required pursuant to section 23-5-145.8 (2)(c) for

that school year. At least annually, the council and its partners shall identify and review the qualified industry-credential programs and qualified workplace training programs by identifying the jobs included in the Colorado talent report, prepared pursuant to section 24-46.3-103, with the greatest regional and state demand, including high-skill, high-wage jobs in in-demand industries, and, after consultation with relevant industries, identifying the programs that have labor market value and are likely to lead to the identified jobs. Any programs that the council determines do not demonstrate labor market value may be removed from the council's website.

(3.5) (a) ~~Beginning in the 2022-23 school year and for each school year thereafter~~ ~~THROUGH THE 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR~~, the department of education, in coordination with the department of labor and employment, the department of higher education, the Colorado community college system, and employers from in-demand industries, shall identify the top ten industry-recognized credentials, each of which must at a minimum meet the requirements specified in subsection (3.5)(b) of this section. For each of the identified credentials, the department of education shall identify the state content standards that align with the courses required to obtain the credential and post on the department's website an explanation of the standards and course alignments for each credential.

(4) (b) By June 30, 2017, and by June 30 each year thereafter ~~THROUGH JUNE 30, 2025~~, each participating district, each nonparticipating district on behalf of its participating charter schools, each participating board of cooperative services, and the institute on behalf of each participating institute charter school shall report to the department of education the total number of pupils enrolled in the participating district, the participating charter schools of the nonparticipating district, the participating board of cooperative services, or the participating institute charter schools who, during the school year that ends on that June 30:

(5) (a) ~~Beginning in the 2023-24 budget year and each budget year thereafter, the general assembly shall annually appropriate at least nine million five hundred thousand dollars to the department of education for the career development success program.~~ FOR THE 2025-26 BUDGET YEAR, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHALL APPROPRIATE FIVE MILLION DOLLARS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FOR THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT SUCCESS PROGRAM. FOR THE 2025-26 BUDGET YEAR, OF THE FIVE MILLION DOLLARS FOR THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT SUCCESS PROGRAM, THE DEPARTMENT MAY EXPEND AN AMOUNT THAT IS NECESSARY TO OFFSET THE DIRECT AND INDIRECT COSTS INCURRED IN ADMINISTERING POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READINESS START-UP FUNDING PURSUANT TO SECTION 22-54-203. The department shall distribute the money as provided in this subsection (5).

(8) At the hearing with the joint education committee of the general assembly held in accordance with section 2-7-203 in November or December 2017, and at the hearing held each year thereafter ~~THROUGH 2025~~, the department of education shall provide a report that describes the outcomes achieved by the career development success program. At a minimum, the report must include the following information:

(9) This section is repealed, effective ~~September 1, 2034~~ JULY 1, 2029.

SECTION 18. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-1-135, **amend** (3)(b)(I) as follows:

23-1-135. Department directive - undergraduate degree and certificate programs - annual return on investment report - definition - repeal. (3)(b) The return on investment report must include information concerning the undergraduate degree and certificate programs offered at each institution including, at a minimum:

(I) The number of students enrolled in the undergraduate degree or certificate program and the number of degrees and certificates awarded annually for the program; specifically identifying the number of high school students enrolled and the number of degrees and certificates awarded; ~~through the career development success program created in section 22-54-138;~~

SECTION 19. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-5-145.6, **amend** (3)(b) as follows:

23-5-145.6. Opportunities for credential attainment - fund - report - definitions - repeal. (3) By January 1, 2024, the department, in consultation with the representatives described in section 23-5-145.5 (5), shall facilitate the creation of stackable credential pathways for at least three growing industries identified by the most recent Colorado talent report. By January 1, 2025, the department, in consultation with the representatives described in section 23-5-145.5 (5), shall facilitate the creation of stackable credential pathways for at least two additional growing industries identified by the most recent Colorado talent report. The department shall facilitate the creation of at least two stackable credential pathways for each industry. The stackable credential pathways must include:

(b) An inventory of credentials that are a part of the pathway, offered by accredited and nonaccredited providers, including training and industry credential providers, high schools, ~~programs recognized by the career development success program pursuant to section 22-54-138,~~ postsecondary institutions, and nonprofit organizations;

SECTION 20. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-5-145.8, **amend** (2)(c) as follows:

23-5-145.8. Credential quality standards - report - definitions. (2) (c) Beginning January 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, the department, in collaboration with the Colorado work force development council, the department of education, the department of labor and employment, and the Colorado office of economic development, shall evaluate nondegree credentials offered through state-recognized programs to ensure the credentials meet the quality standards set forth in the quality nondegree credentials framework. State-recognized programs that are required to ensure nondegree credential offerings meet the quality standards set forth in the quality nondegree credentials framework include, but are not limited to,

~~(I) The career development success program created pursuant to section 22-54-138, and~~

~~(II) the stackable credential pathways identified pursuant to section 23-5-145.6 (3).~~

SECTION 21. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 24-46.3-602, **amend** (4) as follows:

24-46.3-602. Definitions. As used in this part 6 and part 7 of this article 46.3, unless the context otherwise requires:

(4) "Industry-recognized credential" means ~~a credential through a program or offering qualified under the career development success program pursuant to section 22-54-138~~ AN "INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION", WHICH HAS THE SAME MEANING SET FORTH IN SECTION 23-5-145.8, AND A "NONDEGREE CREDENTIAL", WHICH HAS THE SAME MEANING SET FORTH IN SECTION 23-5-145.8, THAT SATISFY THE REQUIREMENTS DEVELOPED PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-5-145.6 (2) AND ARE IDENTIFIED IN THE MOST RECENT ANNUAL COLORADO TALENT PIPELINE REPORT PREPARED PURSUANT TO SECTION 24-46.3-103 (3).

SECTION 22. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 26.5-6-103, **amend** (5) as follows:

26.5-6-103. Pathways to the classroom and retention strategies for early childhood educators - standards - alignment across agencies - report - rules.

(5) The department, the department of higher education, and the department of education shall develop resources to support local communities to increase concurrent enrollment opportunities for high school students or other nontraditional students to earn higher education credits and degrees that allow them to serve as early childhood educators and shall support career pathways for high school students earning college credits toward becoming early childhood educators, including concurrent enrollment, career and technical education, ~~the ASCENT program~~, and other career pathways.

SECTION 23. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-91-104, **amend** (1), (4), and (5)(a) as follows:

22-91-104. School counselor corps grant program - application - criteria - grant awards - rules. (1) An education provider seeking a grant from the program ~~shall~~ MUST submit an application to the school counselor corps advisory board existing within the department in accordance with the rules adopted by the state board. The school counselor corps advisory board shall review each grant application received and make recommendations to the department ~~and state board~~ concerning whether a grant should be awarded to the education provider and the recommended amount of the grant. If the school counselor corps advisory board determines an application is missing any information required by rule to be included with the application, the school counselor corps advisory board may contact the education provider to obtain the missing information.

(4) The department ~~and the state board~~ shall consult with experts in the area of school counseling, including, but not limited to, school counselors, persons who provide education and professional development in the areas of school counseling and career counseling, and higher education admissions officers, in establishing any additional criteria for awarding grants and in reviewing applications and selecting grant recipients.

(5) (a) Subject to available appropriations, the ~~state board~~ DEPARTMENT shall award grants to applying education providers pursuant to this section. ~~The state~~

~~board shall base the grant awards on the department's recommendations.~~ Each grant has a term of four years beginning in the 2014-15 budget year. In making a grant award, the ~~state board~~ DEPARTMENT shall specify the amount of each grant.

SECTION 24. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **repeal** 22-35-114 and part 2 of article 95.5 of title 22.

SECTION 25. Appropriation - adjustments to 2025 long bill. (1) To implement this act, appropriations made in the annual general appropriation act for the 2025-26 state fiscal year to the department of education are adjusted as follows:

(a) The general fund appropriation for use by management and administration for grants administration is reduced by \$3,999;

(b) The appropriation from the state education fund created in section 17 (4)(a) of article IX of the state constitution for use by school district operations for state share of districts' total program funding is increased by \$2,257,275;

(c) The appropriation from the state education fund created in section 17 (4)(a) of article IX of the state constitution for use by school district operations for extended high school is decreased by \$6,703,048;

(d) The general fund appropriation for use by student pathways for the career development success program is decreased by \$4,521,670, and the related FTE is decreased by 0.6 FTE;

(e) The appropriation from the marijuana tax cash fund created in Section 39-28.8-501 (1), C.R.S., for use by student pathways for the concurrent enrollment expansion and innovation grant program is decreased by \$1,476,948, and the related FTE for college and career readiness is decreased by 0.3 FTE;

(f) The general fund appropriation for use by student pathways for the John W. Buckner automatic enrollment in advanced courses grant program is decreased by \$247,914, and the related FTE is decreased by 0.3 FTE.

(2) For the 2025-26 state fiscal year, \$5,018,715 is appropriated to the department of education for use by student pathways. This appropriation consists of \$4,773,583 from the general fund and \$245,132 from the state education fund created in section 17 (4)(a) of article IX of the state constitution. To implement this act, the department may use this appropriation as follows:

(a) \$482,217 from the general fund for postsecondary workforce readiness administration, which amount is based on an assumption that the department will require an additional 5.1 FTE; and

(b) \$4,291,366 from the general fund and \$245,132 from the state education fund created in section 17 (4)(a) of article IX of the state constitution for postsecondary workforce readiness start-up funding distributions to local education providers.

(3) For the 2025-26 state fiscal year, \$160,073 is appropriated to the department of education for use by school quality and support. This appropriation is from the

general fund and is based on an assumption that the division will require an additional 1.0 FTE. To implement this act, the division may use this appropriation for accountability and improvement planning. Any money appropriated in this subsection not expended prior to July 1, 2026, is further appropriated to the division for the 2026-27 state fiscal year for the same purpose.

SECTION 26. Effective date. This act takes effect upon passage; except that sections 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22 of this act take effect July 1, 2026.

SECTION 27. Safety clause. The general assembly finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety or for appropriations for the support and maintenance of the departments of the state and state institutions.

Approved: May 23, 2025