



Joint Budget Committee Staff

Memorandum

To: Interested Persons
From: Amanda Bickel, JBC Staff (303-866-4960)
Date: August 27, 2025
Subject: [Additional Information on Higher Education Appropriations as of the End of the 2025 Regular Legislative Session](#)

This memo provides additional data and information on the appropriations adopted by the General Assembly for the institutions of Higher Education during the *2025 regular legislative session*, as well as the history of appropriations and expenditures for the higher education institutions. This information was included in the annual Appropriations Report for prior years (FY 2024-25 and earlier). It is included in this separate memorandum, instead of the Appropriations Report, for FY 2025-26.

Summary of Department of Higher Education Appropriations

The table below summarizes the allocation of General Fund appropriations in this Department in FY 2024-25 and FY 2025-26, as of the end of the 2025 regular legislative session. As described in table footnotes, the comparison between the two years is affected by the relocation of some appropriations between line items and to the Department of Natural Resources in FY 2025-26, as well as by a temporary FY 2024-25 funding increase.

Higher Education General Fund Appropriations FY 2024-25 and FY 2025-26 ¹				
	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26	Change	Percentage Change
Adams State University	\$28,074,295	\$28,629,817	\$555,522	2.0%
Colorado Mesa University	49,217,113	50,222,108	1,004,995	2.0%
Metropolitan State University ³	102,577,951	90,244,147	-12,333,804	-12.0%
Western Colorado University	24,942,246	25,343,605	401,359	1.6%
Colorado State University System	246,127,882	250,984,722	4,856,840	2.0%
Fort Lewis College	23,188,891	23,835,422	646,531	2.8%
University of Colorado System ^{2,3}	352,251,853	348,499,172	-3,752,681	-1.1%
Colorado School of Mines	37,054,876	38,140,624	1,085,748	2.9%
University of Northern Colorado	69,004,345	70,554,317	1,549,972	2.2%
Community College System ³	293,557,242	296,223,133	2,665,891	0.9%
Auraria Higher Education Center ³	0	31,435,042	31,435,042	n/a
Colorado Mountain College	13,101,832	13,427,901	326,069	2.5%
Aims Community College	15,479,910	15,867,083	387,173	2.5%
Area Technical Colleges	22,352,277	22,911,338	559,061	2.5%
Subtotal-Governing Boards/Institutions	\$1,276,930,713	\$1,306,318,431	\$29,387,718	2.3%
Financial Aid	313,707,693	320,310,585	6,602,892	2.1%

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Higher Education General Fund Appropriations FY 2024-25 and FY 2025-26 ¹				
	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26	Change	Percentage Change
Lease Purchase Payments/Capital-related for Higher Education Buildings	38,334,111	34,723,058	-3,611,053	-9.4%
History Colorado	7,819,004	7,893,612	74,608	1.0%
Other ³	57,483,348	15,103,183	-42,380,165	-73.7%
TOTAL	\$1,694,274,869	\$1,684,348,869	(\$9,926,000)	-0.6%
¹ Includes College Opportunity Fund stipends and fee-for-service contracts reappropriated to state governing boards, grants to local district colleges and area technical colleges, and all GF appropriations in enacted bills.				
² Includes General Fund restoration of funds that were temporarily reduced due to enhanced federal Medicaid payments for University of Colorado Health Sciences Center medical services.				
³ General Fund support for the Auraria Higher Education Center (AHEC) was included in amounts for Metro, CU, and the community college system in FY 2024-25 and relocated to a separate AHEC line item in FY 2025-26 in S.B. 25-316.				
³ Includes eliminating a \$30.0 million one-time supplemental appropriation provided in FY 2024-25 (related to funds originally appropriated in HB23-1246) and relocation of \$10.4 million for the CO State Forest Service to the Department of Natural Resources in FY 2025-26.				

FY 2025-26 State Funding and Tuition Increase for Higher Education

The FY 2025-26 Appropriations Report section for the Department of Higher Education includes an incremental budget change entitled “State funding and tuition for higher ed” of \$197.9 million total funds, including \$39.0 million General Fund, \$128.5 million cash funds, and \$30.4 million reappropriated funds. The reappropriated funds represent a double-count of a portion of the General Fund appropriation. The other components of this budget item are described in more detail below.

State Funding – General Fund: The General Assembly makes annual adjustments to General Fund support for public institutions of higher education using the formula established in H.B. 20-1366 (Higher Education Funding Allocation Model). As described in the FY 2025-26 Appropriations Report, the appropriation includes an increase of \$39.0 million General Fund (2.5 percent). It also includes an aligned increase for financial aid, as required by statute. The table below includes detail on how the General Fund component of the appropriation increase was allocated among the higher education institutions’ governing boards in the FY 2025-26 Long Bill (S.B. 25-206).

FY 2025-26 State Funding Increase for Higher Education - Enacted Long Bill Formula Amounts Originating as General Fund ¹				
	Base Funding for Student Stipends, Fee-for-Service Contracts under 23-18-303.5, Specialty Education, and Grants for local district and area technical colleges, and aligned financial aid FY 2024-25 base	FY 25-26 Appropriation: Student Stipends, Fee-for-Service Contracts under 23-18-303.5, Specialty Education, and Grants for local district and area technical colleges, and aligned financial aid	Increase Provided	Percentage Increase in Funding
Adams State University	\$28,009,295	\$28,564,817	\$555,522	2.0%
Colorado Mesa University	48,852,113	50,007,108	1,154,995	2.4%

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FY 2025-26 State Funding Increase for Higher Education - Enacted Long Bill Formula Amounts Originating as General Fund ¹				
	Base Funding for Student Stipends, Fee-for-Service Contracts under 23-18-303.5, Specialty Education, and Grants for local district and area technical colleges, and aligned financial aid FY 2024-25 base	FY 25-26 Appropriation: Student Stipends, Fee-for-Service Contracts under 23-18-303.5, Specialty Education, and Grants for local district and area technical colleges, and aligned financial aid	Increase Provided	Percentage Increase in Funding
Metropolitan State U.	102,212,951	105,652,276	3,439,325	3.4%
Western Colorado U.	24,677,246	25,178,605	501,359	2.0%
CO State U. System	244,573,710	250,244,188	5,670,478	2.3%
Fort Lewis College	23,123,891	23,770,422	646,531	2.8%
U. of Colorado System	345,453,959	354,022,851	8,568,892	2.5%
Colorado School of Mines	37,054,876	38,140,624	1,085,748	2.9%
U. of Northern Colorado	68,939,345	70,489,317	1,549,972	2.2%
Community College System	292,590,037	299,818,196	7,228,159	2.5%
Sub-total, State Gov Brds	1,215,487,423	1,245,888,404	30,400,981	2.5%
Colorado Mountain College	13,036,832	13,362,901	326,069	2.5%
Aims Community College	15,479,910	15,867,083	387,173	2.5%
Area Technical Colleges	22,352,277	22,911,338	559,061	2.5%
Total Institutions	\$1,266,356,442	\$1,298,029,725	\$31,673,283	2.5%
Need Based Grants	253,688,723	261,015,441	7,326,718	
Other Aligned Financial Aid	39,267,362	39,267,362	0	
Total Aligned Financial Aid	292,956,085	300,282,803	7,326,718	2.5%
Grand Total²	\$1,559,312,527	\$1,598,312,528	\$39,000,001	

¹Base amounts and increases are limited to amounts that are part of higher education formula funding. Appropriations for limited purpose fee-for-service contracts, annualizations for prior year statutory changes, and other technical adjustments are not included.

²The incremental change shown in the Appropriations Report also corrects a minor technical base error, resulting in a total of \$39,000,012 General Fund.

State Funding – Tuition Cash Funds: The General Assembly provides cash funds appropriations for student tuition at the state higher education institutions. Footnotes to the FY 2025-26 Long Bill specify that the appropriation is based on an assumption that tuition rates for resident undergraduate students will increase by no more than 3.5 percent over FY 2024-25 rates for the same credit hours and course of study, with some exceptions. This restriction also applies to tuition rates for nonresident students for whom the State pays a portion of tuition, which currently applies solely to nonresident students at Fort Lewis College.

The table below shows the FY 2024-25 base tuition appropriations after mid-year adjustments and FY 2025-26 tuition appropriations. In addition to the 3.5 percent rate increases described above, these calculations incorporate enrollment changes, based on the Legislative Council Staff March 2025 forecast, and other rate increases. Tuition rates for most nonresident students are assumed to increase by 3.0 percent on average, but these increases are not restricted, and the actual increase will vary based on institutions' assessments of market

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conditions. As in prior years, FY 2025-26 tuition appropriations are expected to be modified mid-year, when better data is available.

Tuition FY 2025-26 Increase over FY 2024-25 Appropriation				
	FY 2024-25 Revenue Estimate	FY 2025-26 Revenue Estimate	Change	Percentage Change
Adams State University	\$24,093,039	\$25,204,933	\$1,111,894	4.6%
Colorado Mesa University	82,978,422	89,579,790	6,601,368	8.0%
Metropolitan State University	109,848,100	111,115,755	1,267,655	1.2%
Western Colorado University	22,065,671	22,853,626	787,955	3.6%
Colorado State University System	553,548,320	578,917,328	25,369,008	4.6%
Fort Lewis College	47,288,543	47,706,975	418,432	0.9%
University of Colorado System	1,359,224,761	1,417,388,775	58,164,014	4.3%
Colorado School of Mines	214,801,528	228,524,019	13,722,491	6.4%
University of Northern Colorado	73,484,560	75,053,590	1,569,030	2.1%
Community College System	326,826,193	346,363,087	19,536,894	6.0%
TOTAL/WEIGHTED AVERAGE	\$2,814,159,137	\$2,942,707,878	\$128,548,741	4.6%

Overview of FY 2025-26 Funding for Higher Education Institutions

Total funding for educational services at the institutions consists primarily of funding that originates as General Fund and tuition revenue, but it also includes other sources, such as fees, limited gaming revenue, and tobacco master settlement revenue. In addition, General Fund amounts from the funding formula are augmented by funds to be used for specific purposes. The tables below provide a more complete picture of appropriations by institution and the changes adopted between FY 2024-25 and FY 2025-26.

None of the amounts shown include capital construction funding provided by the State or revenue that is not included in state budget documents, such as housing, dining, and research revenue received by the institutions.

Institutional versus Student Perspective on Costs and Revenue

Institutional perspective -- Total Revenue: The estimated increase in total revenue and total revenue per student FTE, based on amounts in the Long Bill and other legislation, is shown below.

Total Amount from State Support, Tuition, Fees, Other Sources FY 2025-26 Increase over FY 2024-25 Appropriation ¹				
	FY 2024-25 Revenue Estimate	FY 2025-26 Revenue Estimate	Change	Percentage Change
Adams State University	\$56,088,274	\$57,763,652	\$1,675,378	3.0%
Colorado Mesa University	141,178,402	149,019,275	7,840,873	5.6%
Metropolitan State University	249,630,332	254,187,312	4,556,980	1.8%
Western Colorado University	52,329,474	53,641,184	1,311,710	2.5%

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Total Amount from State Support, Tuition, Fees, Other Sources FY 2025-26 Increase over FY 2024-25 Appropriation ¹				
	FY 2024-25 Revenue Estimate	FY 2025-26 Revenue Estimate	Change	Percentag e Change
Colorado State University System	887,930,277	919,090,483	31,160,206	3.5%
Fort Lewis College	76,947,525	78,012,488	1,064,963	1.4%
University of Colorado System	1,802,487,438	1,866,614,884	64,127,446	3.6%
Colorado School of Mines	275,326,657	293,449,316	18,122,659	6.6%
University of Northern Colorado	159,169,637	162,592,717	3,423,080	2.2%
Community College System	669,242,861	696,584,638	27,341,777	4.1%
TOTAL/WEIGHTED AVERAGE	\$4,370,330,877	\$4,530,955,949	\$160,625,072	3.7%

¹ Excludes adjustments to funding for the Auraria Higher Education Center in SB25-316

Total Estimated Revenue per Total Student FTE FY 2025-26 ¹			
	Total Revenue (State support, tuition, fees)	Total Projected Student FTE	Revenue per Student FTE
Adams State University	\$57,763,652	2,346.9	\$24,613
Colorado Mesa University	149,019,275	8,581.9	17,364
Metropolitan State University	254,187,312	12,099.2	21,009
Western Colorado University	53,641,184	2,252.4	23,815
Colorado State University System	919,090,483	28,979.1	31,716
Fort Lewis College	78,012,488	2,964.1	26,319
University of Colorado System	1,866,614,884	61,226.6	30,487
Colorado School of Mines	293,449,316	7,792.3	37,659
University of Northern Colorado	162,592,717	5,906.7	27,527
Community College System	696,584,638	52,075.3	13,376
TOTAL/WEIGHTED AVERAGE	\$4,530,955,949	184,224.4	\$24,595

¹ Excludes adjustments to funding for the Auraria Higher Education Center in SB25-316

Student perspective – tuition and fees: The weighted average of tuition and fees for resident and nonresident students, based on the Legislative Council Staff tuition and enrollment forecasts are shown below by governing board. The Long Bill reflects increases for FY 2025-26 of up to 3.5 percent in tuition rates for most resident students and estimated increases of 3.0 percent for most nonresident students.

Student Viewpoint: Tuition and Mandatory Fees (Weighted Average, Graduate and Undergraduate) FY 2025-26 Estimated			
	Resident Tuition	Nonresident Tuition	Mandatory Fees (all students)
Adams State University	\$9,441	\$13,046	\$1,665
Colorado Mesa University	9,511	16,220	864
Metropolitan State University	8,663	21,029	3,075
Western Colorado University	7,113	20,056	2,417
Colorado State University System	13,545	32,370	3,044

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Student Viewpoint: Tuition and Mandatory Fees (Weighted Average, Graduate and Undergraduate) FY 2025-26 Estimated			
	Resident Tuition	Nonresident Tuition	Mandatory Fees (all students)
Fort Lewis College	7,698	23,112	2,183
University of Colorado System	14,996	40,011	1,181
Colorado School of Mines	19,551	41,746	3,437
University of Northern Colorado	10,948	23,504	2,876
Community College System	6,394	13,193	380

Student Enrollment Estimates

The estimates below reflect the Legislative Council Staff enrollment forecast used for Long Bill calculations.

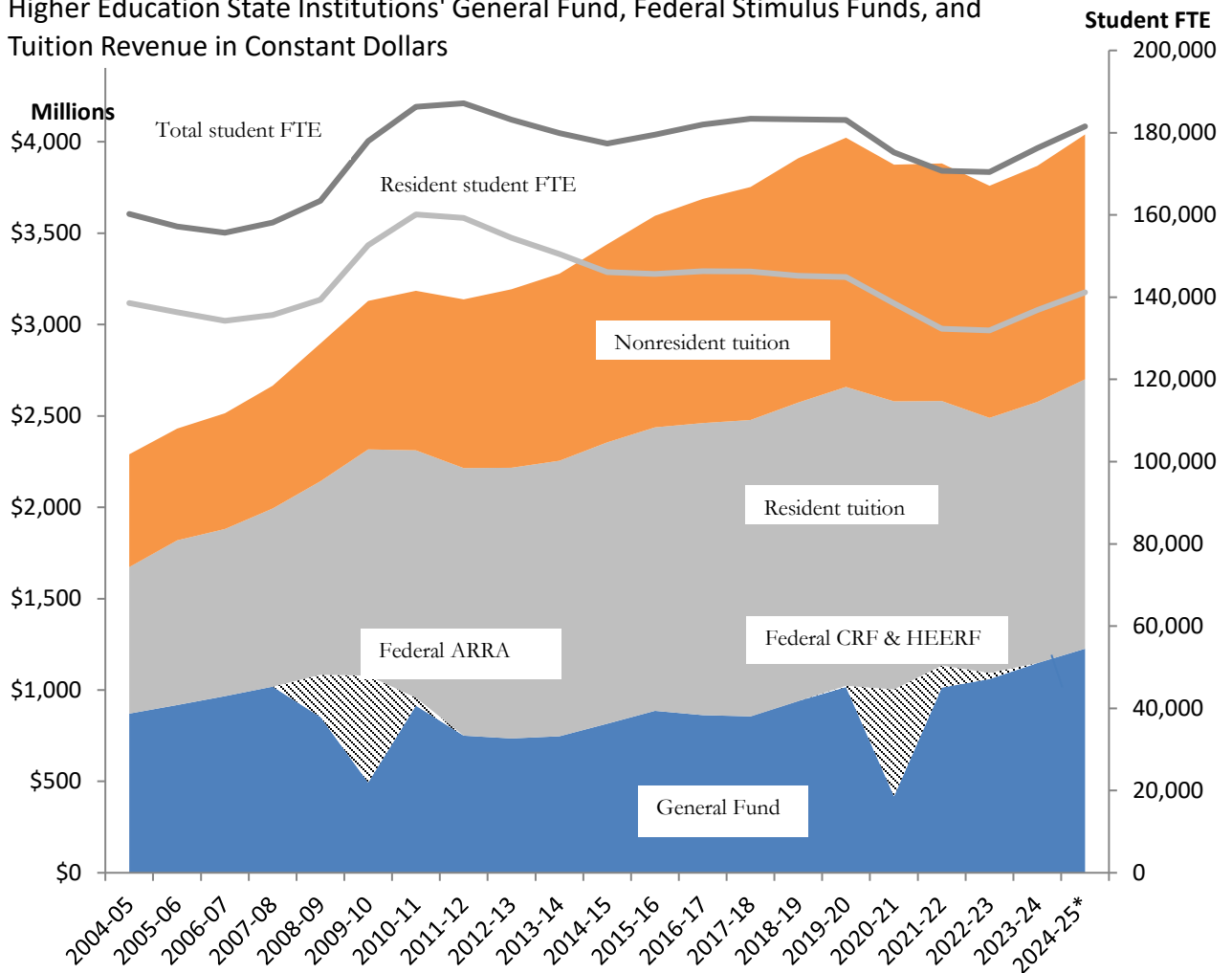
FY 2025-26 Student FTE Enrollment Estimates Used for Long Bill Appropriations (Legislative Council Staff Forecast)			
	Resident Student FTE	Non-Resident Student FTE	Total Student FTE
Adams State University	1,501.4	845.5	2,346.9
Colorado Mesa University	7,396.3	1,185.6	8,581.9
Metropolitan State University	11,589.7	509.5	12,099.2
Western Colorado University	1,724.5	527.9	2,252.4
Colorado State University System	19,077.3	9,901.9	28,979.1
Fort Lewis College	1,349.3	1,614.8	2,964.1
University of Colorado System	41,268.8	19,957.8	61,226.6
Colorado School of Mines	4,360.2	3,432.2	7,792.3
University of Northern Colorado	5,079.5	827.2	5,906.7
Community College System	50,106.9	1,968.4	52,075.3
TOTAL	143,453.8	40,770.7	184,224.4

The Legislative Council Staff enrollment forecast and related historic enrollment information is available at the following link: <https://leg.colorado.gov/publications/higher-education-enrollment-and-tuition-revenue-forecast>

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Higher Education Enrollment and Funding Trends – Actual Data

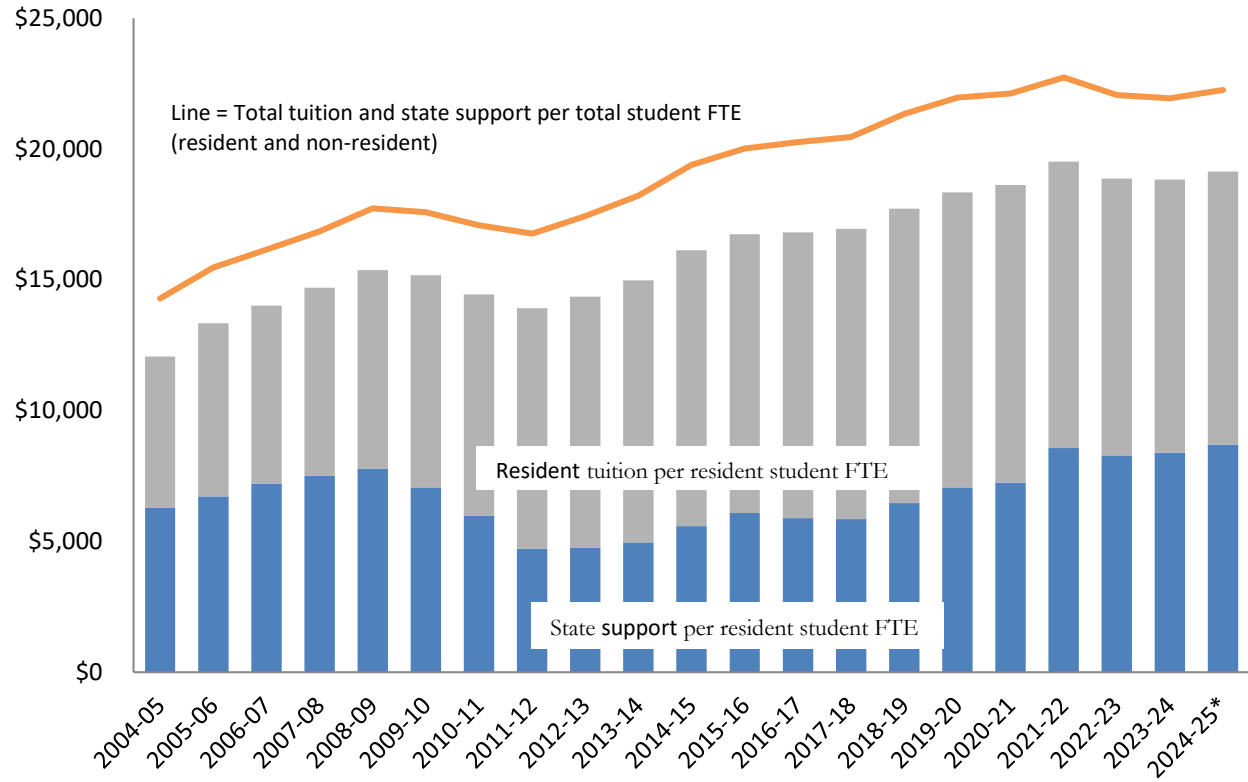
Higher Education State Institutions' General Fund, Federal Stimulus Funds, and Tuition Revenue in Constant Dollars



*FY 2024-25 tuition and FTE amounts are estimates used for appropriations.

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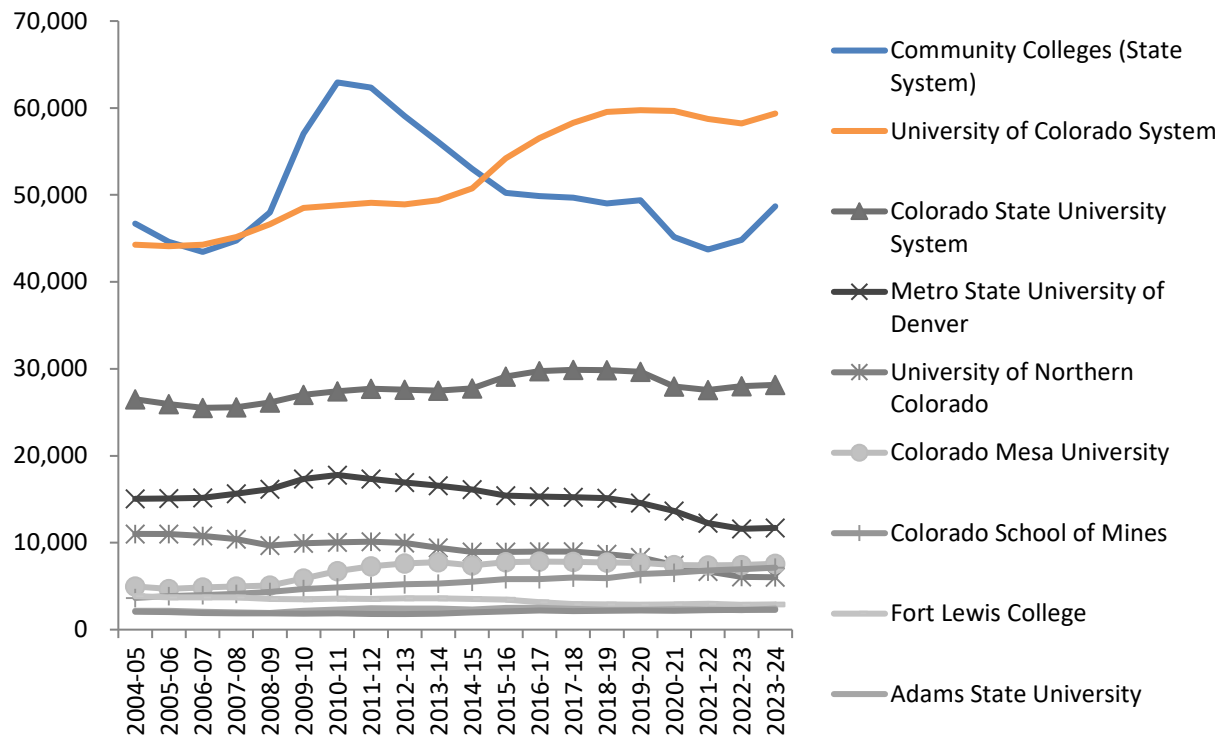
Higher Education State Institutions' General Fund, Federal Stimulus Funds,
and Tuition per Student FTE in Constant Dollars



*FY 2024-25 tuition and FTE amounts are estimates used for appropriations.

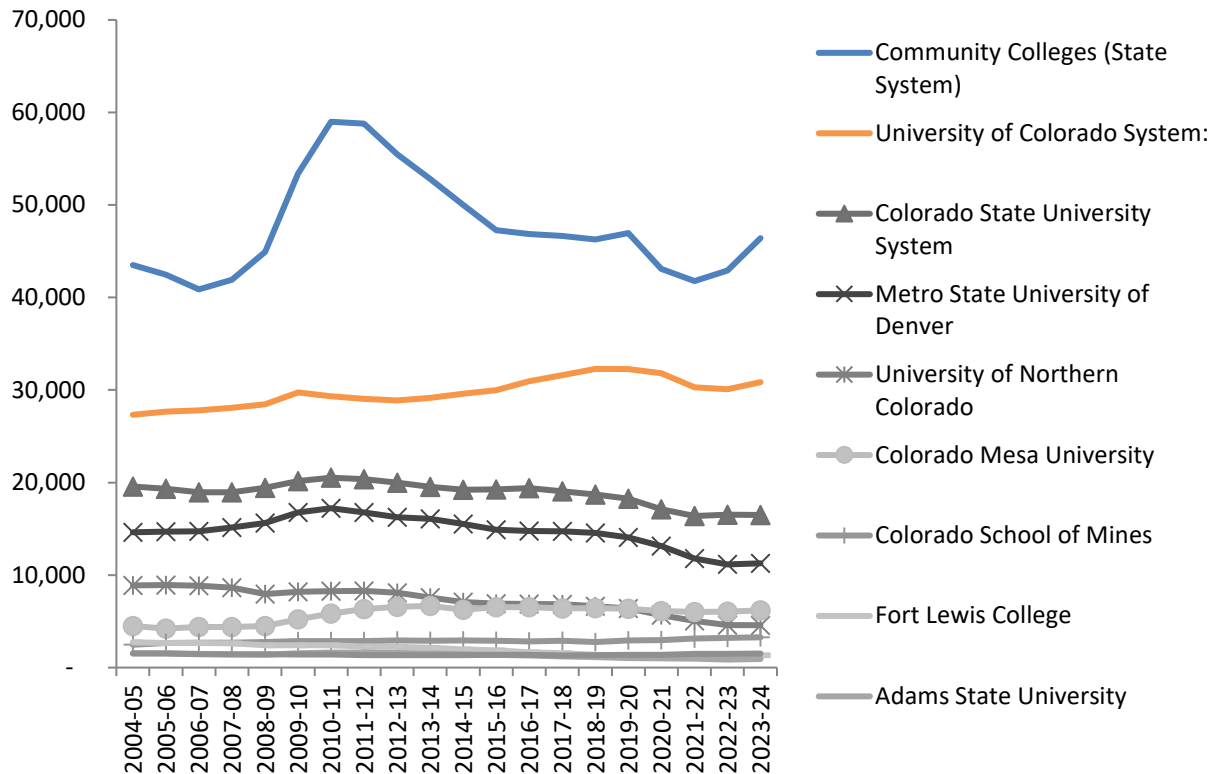
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Total Student FTE
(Resident & Nonresident, Undergraduate & Graduate)
Higher Education State Institutions



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Resident Undergraduate Student FTE Higher Education State Institutions



Funding Allocation Model

House Bill 20-1366 created a new funding model beginning in FY 2021-22 that includes provisions for calculating fee-for-service contracts for state institutions and makes related changes to the calculation of state funding to support specialty education programs (e.g., medical and veterinary programs), area technical colleges, and local district colleges.

Components of the Model: Under the funding model, fee-for-service contracts for institutions are based on three components:

- Step 1: Ongoing additional funding;
- Step 2: Performance funding; and
- Step 3: Temporary additional funding.

Ongoing additional funding is base building and may be awarded to an institution to make progress toward the commission's higher education master plan goals. This is a flexible portion of the model that has been used to distribute additional funds to various types of institutions.

Performance funding is calculated based on an institution's change over time in performance on each performance funding metric compared to other institutions' change in performance and adjusted based on each institution's share of funding in the previous state fiscal year. *The*

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majority of funding for the institutions, including their base support, is distributed through this section of the model.

The performance funding metrics include:

- Resident student full-time equivalent enrollment;
- Credential completion;
- Resident Pell-eligible student population share;
- Resident underrepresented minority student population share;
- Retention rate;
- One-hundred-percent-of-time graduation rate;
- One-hundred-fifty-percent-of-time graduation rate; and
- Resident first-generation undergraduate student population share.

The Joint Budget Committee determines the amount of funding allocated to each performance funding metric for a fiscal year after considering recommendations from the Colorado Commission on Higher Education and Department of Higher Education that are developed in collaboration with the institutions.

Temporary additional funding may be awarded to an institution for a specified period of time to address Commission master plan goals or other areas the Commission identifies. This section of the model has not been used to-date.

Special programs: Minimum funding for specialty education programs, local district colleges, and area technical colleges is based on their previous year's funding, increased or decreased by the average percentage change in funding provided through the performance portion of the model. However, these programs may receive additional support.

Model Version Used in FY 2054-26: For FY 2025-26, the Long Bill provides an increase of 2.5 percent through the performance funding portion of the model (Step 2).

An interactive version of the higher education funding model may be found here: https://co-lcs.shinyapps.io/co_higher_ed_finance/