

Second Regular Session
Seventy-fifth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

ENGROSSED

*This Version Includes All Amendments Adopted
on Second Reading in the House of Introduction*

LLS NO. 26-0938.01 Renee Leone x2695

SENATE BILL 26-156

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Kipp and Carson,

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Phillips and Gonzalez R.,

Senate Committees

Business, Labor, & Technology
Appropriations

House Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 **CONCERNING CHANGES TO THE STATE WORK FORCE DEVELOPMENT**
102 **COUNCIL'S PRACTICES, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH,**
103 **REDUCING AN APPROPRIATION.**

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)

The bill implements changes to the practices of the state work force development council (council), including by:

- Streamlining requirements for the council's talent pipeline report based on industry changes over the last several years;

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing law.
Dashes through the words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law.

SENATE
Amended 2nd Reading
April 28, 2026

- Creating greater flexibility to allow the council to develop certain criteria for the creation of career pathways based on data and feedback collected by the council;
- Updating the duties of the council to better reflect the council's current education, training, and workforce preparation practices; and
- Amending the directives for and duties of the position of the postsecondary and workforce readiness statewide coordinator, who works under the direction of the council, to better align with the updated working structure of that position as related to several other entities.

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

2 **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **amend with**
3 **relocated provisions** 24-46.3-100.3 as follows:

4 **24-46.3-100.3. Definitions.**

5 As used in this article 46.3, unless the context otherwise requires:

6 (1) [**Formerly 24-46.3-104 (2)(a)**] "Apprenticeship" means a
7 registered apprenticeship program with a written plan that is designed to
8 move an apprentice from a low- or no-skill entry-level position to full
9 occupational proficiency. The program must comply with the parameters
10 established under the FEDERAL "National Apprenticeship Act", 29 U.S.C.
11 sec. 50, as amended, and regulations promulgated under the act, and must
12 be administered by the United States department of ~~labor's office of~~
13 ~~apprenticeship~~ LABOR or a state apprenticeship agency recognized by the
14 United States department of labor. An individual business, an employer
15 association, or a labor organization sponsors a registered apprenticeship.
16 Upon finishing a training program, the apprentice earns a "completion of
17 registered apprenticeship" certificate, which is an industry-issued and
18 nationally recognized credential that validates proficiency in an
19 apprenticeable occupation, or is awarded a certificate of completion.

1 (2) [Formerly 24-46.3-104 (2)(b)] "Career pathway" means a
2 series of connected education and training strategies and support services
3 that enable ~~individuals~~ AN INDIVIDUAL to secure industry-relevant skills
4 ~~and~~ OR certification where applicable, to obtain employment within an
5 occupational area, and to advance to higher levels of future education and
6 employment.

7 (3) [Formerly 24-46.3-104 (2)(b.5)] "Certificate of completion"
8 means a certificate awarded to an apprentice in recognition of the
9 successful completion of an apprenticeship program.

10 ~~(1)~~ (4) "Department" means the department of labor and
11 employment.

12 ~~(2)~~ (5) "Federal act" means the federal "Workforce Innovation and
13 Opportunity Act", 29 U.S.C. sec. 3101 et seq.

14 (6) [Formerly 24-46.3-104 (2)(d)] "Growing industries" means
15 industries that are:

16 (a) Projected to create new jobs annually for at least the next ten
17 years; OR

18 (b) ALIGNED WITH THE STATE'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
19 STRATEGY.

20 (7) [Formerly 24-46.3-104 (2)(e)] "Partners" means, at a
21 minimum, state agencies and organizations described in section
22 24-46.3-103, the state board for community colleges and occupational
23 education created in section 23-60-104, ~~C.R.S.~~, and interested
24 postsecondary education providers.

25 ~~(3)~~ (8) "State council" means the state work force development
26 council created in section 24-46.3-101 (1).

27 (9) [Formerly 24-46.3-104 (2)(g)] "Top jobs" means jobs that

1 have strong projected average openings per year for ten years and pay a
2 living HIGH wage as defined in the Colorado talent pipeline report
3 prepared pursuant to section 24-46.3-103.

4 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **amend** 24-46.3-103
5 as follows:

6 **24-46.3-103. Growing industries and in-demand occupations**
7 **talent pipeline working group - annual Colorado talent report -**
8 **legislative declaration.**

9 (1) (a) The general assembly ~~hereby~~ finds ~~determines~~, and
10 declares that:

11 (I) Colorado's economy is diverse and constantly changing, and
12 its ~~key~~ GROWING industries are dependent on an ~~accurately~~
13 APPROPRIATELY skilled workforce to continue to thrive;

14 (II) Colorado's ~~key~~ GROWING industry employers continue to lack
15 the skilled workers they need to stay and grow in the state;

16 (III) THESE CONTINUOUSLY UNFILLED ROLES IN GROWING
17 INDUSTRIES CONSTITUTE IN-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS IN COLORADO, AND IT
18 IS IMPERATIVE TO THE STATE'S COMMUNITIES AND ECONOMY THAT THERE
19 IS A PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF HOW TO:

20 (A) DETERMINE WHICH OCCUPATIONS ARE IN-DEMAND; AND

21 (B) ACCESS TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR JOB PLACEMENT IN
22 IN-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS;

23 ~~(HH)~~ (IV) Coloradans miss opportunities for good jobs in growing
24 industries because they do not have access to the right education, training,
25 or adequate hands-on experience ~~at the right time~~ to secure employment
26 IN IN-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS;

27 ~~(IV)~~ (V) ~~Providing clear access to industry-driven career pathways~~

1 ~~for education and employment advancement can result in long-term~~
2 ~~improvements in the economic well-being of Coloradans and will provide~~
3 ~~industries with the talent pipeline needed to thrive now and in the future~~
4 MAINTAINING A COORDINATED STRATEGY ACROSS STATE AGENCIES TO
5 PROMOTE ACCESS TO INDUSTRY-DRIVEN CAREER PATHWAYS IS CRITICAL
6 TO SUPPORTING THE ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF COLORADANS AND OF
7 COLORADO'S INDUSTRIES;

8 ~~(V) (VI) Creating a coordinated system to advance the skills and~~
9 ~~educational attainment of Coloradans across workforce development and~~
10 ~~education, in alignment with economic development goals, and in~~
11 ~~partnership with industry~~ ENSURING THAT PROVIDERS OF EDUCATION AND
12 TRAINING, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT EXPERTS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPERS,
13 THE STATE, AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES HAVE A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF
14 THE LABOR MARKET AND THE STATE'S OCCUPATIONAL NEEDS is the most
15 promising way to advance Coloradans and supply industry with the talent
16 it demands;

17 ~~(VI) (VII) Deep, authentic, and ongoing employer engagement~~
18 ~~and input is~~ ARE critical to ensure that education and training programs
19 are ~~aligned with~~ DESIGNED TO MEET the real and current needs of industry;
20 and

21 ~~(VII) (VIII) Sector partnerships are a proven, established model~~
22 ~~of engaging employers and coordinating workforce development,~~
23 ~~economic development, and education~~ STRATEGIES in response to the
24 needs of industry and on behalf of ~~workers~~ INDIVIDUALS seeking good
25 jobs.

26 (b) The general assembly further finds ~~determines~~, and declares
27 that it ~~will be~~ IS beneficial to create a working group with the state

1 council, comprised of representatives from the relevant state departments
2 and offices, to discuss and determine the most effective way to use sector
3 partnerships at the regional level to align workforce development,
4 economic development, and education ~~in the state to~~ WITH the needs of
5 ~~key~~ GROWING industries AND IN-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS.

6 (2) The state council, the department of higher education, the
7 department of education, the department of labor and employment, and
8 the Colorado office of economic development shall work collaboratively
9 to:

10 (a) ~~Discuss and determine needs across key industries and~~
11 ANALYZE COLORADO'S LABOR MARKET CONDITIONS TO IDENTIFY
12 GROWING INDUSTRIES AND IN-DEMAND occupations ~~including~~ AND
13 IDENTIFY challenges TO and opportunities ~~in~~ FOR developing and growing
14 relevant talent pipelines;

15 (b) IDENTIFY THE IN-DEMAND AND HIGH-WAGE OCCUPATIONS IN
16 COLORADO THAT ARE ELIGIBLE FOR FEDERAL SUPPORT, AS DEFINED IN THE
17 FEDERAL "HIGHER EDUCATION ACT OF 1965", 20 U.S.C. SEC. 1001 ET
18 SEQ., OR A SUCCESSOR ACT;

19 ~~(b)~~ (c) Ensure that the talent pipeline development infrastructure
20 includes:

21 (I) A listening process to collect ~~workforce needs for key~~
22 ~~industries~~¹ FEEDBACK ON OCCUPATIONAL DEMAND FROM employers;

23 (II) ~~Curriculum alignment for high-demand occupation skill needs~~
24 ANALYSIS OF THE STATE'S CURRENT TRAINING CAPACITY AND ABILITY TO
25 SUPPORT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FOR IN-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS;

26 (III) ~~Occupation-aligned education and training options with a~~
27 ~~clearly articulated progression~~ ANALYSIS OF THE SKILLS ESSENTIAL FOR

1 IN-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS TO ASSIST TRAINING PROVIDERS IN
2 MAINTAINING THE RELEVANCE OF THEIR PROGRAMS; AND

3 ~~(IV) Skills assessments; and~~

4 ~~(V) (IV) Academic career counseling;~~

5 ~~(c) (d) Utilize sector partnerships to:~~

6 (I) Advise the development of career pathway programs for
7 ~~critical~~ IN-DEMAND occupations in ~~key~~ GROWING industries; ~~and~~

8 (II) Ensure the coordination of education and workforce initiatives
9 to develop a strong talent pipeline; and

10 (III) PROVIDE RESOURCES TO, PARTICIPATE IN, AND PROMOTE
11 CAREER EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES THAT ARE ALIGNED WITH IN-DEMAND
12 OCCUPATIONS, AS APPROPRIATE; AND

13 ~~(d) (e) Utilize existing measures and data systems to improve~~
14 ~~systems~~ alignment and interagency communication.

15 (3) (a) In doing the work specified in subsection (2) of this
16 section, the state council, in partnership with the department of higher
17 education, the department of education, the department of labor and
18 employment, and the Colorado office of economic development, shall
19 ~~coordinate the production of~~ PRODUCE an annual Colorado talent report.
20 In preparing the annual Colorado talent report, the state council, the
21 departments, and the office may use previously collected data and are not
22 required to collect new data. ~~for the purposes of the report.~~ The talent
23 report shall MUST:

24 ~~(I) Take into consideration the data contained in the annual job~~
25 ~~skills report produced by the department of higher education and use such~~
26 ~~data to inform workforce development issues across key industries;~~

27 ~~(H) (I) Utilize state-level data generated from state-level sources~~

1 whenever possible;

2 ~~(HH)~~ (II) Utilize and, as appropriate, expand existing data-sharing

3 agreements between agencies and partners;

4 ~~(IV)~~ Provide a progress report on the status of career pathway

5 programs targeted at key industries;

6 ~~(V)~~ (III) Provide an analysis of data regarding the skills required

7 for key industry jobs IN-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS; AND

8 ~~(VI)~~ (IV) Include recommendations related to FOR advancing

9 talent pipeline and career pathways development.

10 ~~(VII)~~ Include recommendations regarding the alignment and

11 consistency of data nomenclature, collection practices, and data-sharing.

12 The recommendations shall not allow the disclosure of the personally

13 identifiable information of a student enrolled in kindergarten or one of

14 grades one through twelve without informed written permission from the

15 student's parent or legal guardian. The recommendations may disclose

16 de-identified, anonymous, or aggregate

17 kindergarten-through-twelfth-grade student data without permission from

18 a parent or legal guardian.

19 ~~(VIII)~~ Repealed.

20 ~~(IX)~~ Include the report regarding the industry infrastructure grant

21 program, prepared as required by section 24-46.3-405.

22 (b) The heads of the department of higher education, the

23 department of education, the department of labor and employment, and

24 the Colorado office of economic development shall include the

25 recommendations from the state council, and any comments they may

26 wish to add concerning the recommendations, to the house of

27 representatives and senate committees of reference with jurisdiction over

1 ~~business issues by January 1, 2015. The heads of the departments shall~~
2 ~~annually present such recommendations and comments during the~~
3 ~~legislative hearings required pursuant to the "State Measurement for~~
4 ~~Accountable, Responsive, and Transparent (SMART) Government Act",~~
5 ~~part 2 of article 7 of title 2, C.R.S.~~ MAY SHARE THEIR ANALYSIS ON HOW
6 DATA IN THE REPORT IMPACTS THE STATE'S STRATEGIC GOALS THROUGH
7 THEIR REGULAR REPORTING MECHANISMS.

8 (c) IN JANUARY OF EACH YEAR, THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER
9 EDUCATION, THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, THE DEPARTMENT OF
10 LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT, AND THE COLORADO OFFICE OF ECONOMIC
11 DEVELOPMENT SHALL SUMMARIZE THE COLORADO TALENT REPORT, THEIR
12 RECOMMENDATIONS, AND OTHER COMMENTS IN A PRESENTATION TO THE
13 SENATE BUSINESS, LABOR, AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE AND THE HOUSE
14 OF REPRESENTATIVES BUSINESS AFFAIRS AND LABOR COMMITTEE, OR
15 THEIR SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES, DURING THE HEARINGS HELD PURSUANT
16 TO THE "SMART ACT", PART 2 OF ARTICLE 7 OF TITLE 2.

17 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 24-46.3-104, **amend**
18 (1), (3)(a), (3)(b), (3)(c), (6), and (7); and **repeal** (2), (5), and (5.5) as
19 follows:

20 **24-46.3-104. Career pathways - design - legislative declaration**
21 **- definition.**

22 (1) The general assembly ~~hereby~~ finds that creating
23 industry-driven career pathways for education assists students in entering
24 the ~~work force~~ WORKFORCE and provides industries with the talent
25 pipeline necessary to fuel Colorado's economy. Recognizing the need for
26 the coordinated development of career pathways for students, the general
27 assembly enacted section 24-46.3-103 in 2014, tasking the state council

1 to work collaboratively with the department of higher education, the
2 department of education, the department of labor and employment, and
3 the Colorado office of economic development to ~~create the talent pipeline~~
4 ~~development infrastructure for use in creating~~ ANALYZE COLORADO'S
5 LABOR MARKET CONDITIONS AND IN-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS TO INFORM
6 THE CREATION AND EVOLUTION OF career pathways for students. Creating
7 career pathways for ~~growing Colorado industries with occupations in high~~
8 ~~demand~~ JOB PLACEMENT IN GROWING INDUSTRIES AND IN-DEMAND
9 OCCUPATIONS will:

10 (a) ~~Increase the number of Colorado citizens accessing~~
11 ~~postsecondary education and apprenticeships~~ IMPROVE EDUCATION AND
12 CAREER ADVISING AND NAVIGATION FOR COLORADANS INTERESTED IN
13 POSTSECONDARY OPPORTUNITIES DESIGNED TO MEET LABOR MARKET
14 NEEDS;

15 (b) Increase the number of ~~Colorado citizens~~ COLORADANS
16 completing degrees, apprenticeships, and other credentials;

17 (c) ~~Decrease the need for remediation at the postsecondary level;~~

18 (d) Increase entry into ~~employment~~ IN-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS and
19 increase wages over time;

20 (e) Create better transitions for students in the career pathways
21 from high school, community colleges, or adult education programs to
22 apprenticeships, higher education, or into the ~~work force~~ WORKFORCE;

23 (f) Create better connections between postsecondary EDUCATION
24 and ~~work force~~ WORKFORCE readiness initiatives in high school and adult
25 ~~work force~~ WORKFORCE programs; and

26 (g) Through partnerships with industry, assist students in
27 obtaining work experience and employment during and after THEIR

1 participation in TRAINING AND educational programs.

2 (2) As used in this section, unless the context otherwise requires:

3 (a) "Apprenticeship" means a registered apprenticeship program
4 with a written plan that is designed to move an apprentice from a low- or
5 no-skill entry-level position to full occupational proficiency. The program
6 must comply with the parameters established under the "National
7 Apprenticeship Act", 29 U.S.C. sec. 50, as amended, and regulations
8 promulgated under the act, and must be administered by the United States
9 department of labor's office of apprenticeship or a state apprenticeship
10 agency recognized by the United States department of labor. An
11 individual business, an employer association, or a labor organization
12 sponsors a registered apprenticeship. Upon finishing a training program,
13 the apprentice earns a "completion of registered apprenticeship"
14 certificate, which is an industry-issued and nationally recognized
15 credential that validates proficiency in an apprenticeable occupation, or
16 is awarded a certificate of completion.

17 (b) "Career pathway" means a series of connected education and
18 training strategies and support services that enable individuals to secure
19 industry-relevant skills and certification where applicable, to obtain
20 employment within an occupational area, and to advance to higher levels
21 of future education and employment.

22 (b.5) "Certificate of completion" means a certificate awarded to
23 an apprentice in recognition of the successful completion of an
24 apprenticeship program.

25 (c) "Critical occupations" means top jobs or employment in jobs
26 that lead to top jobs.

27 (d) "Growing industries" means industries that are projected to

1 create new jobs annually for at least the next ten years.

2 (c) ~~"Partners" means, at a minimum, state agencies and~~
3 ~~organizations described in section 24-46.3-103, the state board for~~
4 ~~community colleges and occupational education created in section~~
5 ~~23-60-104, C.R.S., and interested postsecondary education providers.~~

6 (f) ~~"State council" means the state work force development~~
7 ~~council created in section 24-46.3-101.~~

8 (g) ~~"Top jobs" means jobs that have strong projected average~~
9 ~~openings per year for ten years and pay a living wage as defined in the~~
10 ~~Colorado talent pipeline report prepared pursuant to section 24-46.3-103.~~

11 (3) (a) The state council, in collaboration with its partners, and
12 after consulting with local ~~work force~~ WORKFORCE boards and a task
13 force within the department of education consisting of leadership from
14 the department of education and superintendents of local school districts,
15 shall design, MAINTAIN, AND UPDATE integrated career pathways for
16 students within industry sectors identified in the annual Colorado talent
17 report prepared pursuant to section 24-46.3-103 ~~that are~~ AS growing
18 industries and that have ~~critical~~ IN-DEMAND occupations. ~~that are without~~
19 ~~clearly articulated career pathways.~~

20 (b) (I) In collaboration with its partners pursuant to subsection
21 (3)(a) of this section, AND AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 2026-27 ACADEMIC
22 YEAR AND AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH ACADEMIC YEAR THEREAFTER, the
23 state council shall,

24 (A) ~~Design at least one career pathway that is ready for~~
25 ~~implementation by or before the 2016-17 academic year for critical~~
26 ~~occupations in a growing industry; and~~

27 (B) subject to available appropriation or money from other

1 sources, design ~~at least two~~ OR UPDATE career pathways that are ready for
2 implementation ~~at the beginning of each subsequent academic year for~~
3 ~~critical~~ IN-DEMAND occupations in growing industries.

4 (II) ~~Based on the top jobs listing in the talent pipeline report~~
5 ~~prepared in January 2014, the first three growing industries for design of~~
6 ~~a career pathway are construction and related skilled trades, information~~
7 ~~technology, and health care~~ THE STATE COUNCIL SHALL CONTINUE TO
8 WORK TO IDENTIFY GROWING INDUSTRIES AND IN-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS
9 THAT ARE APPROPRIATE FOR CAREER PATHWAY DEVELOPMENT BASED ON
10 THE DATA PROVIDED IN THE ANNUAL COLORADO TALENT REPORT.

11 (c) Industry, through regional sector partnerships, ~~and~~ statewide
12 trade associations, AND OTHER APPROPRIATE COUNCILS OR ENTITIES, shall
13 review each career pathway annually to ensure that the career pathway
14 remains relevant to the industry and shall provide input for ongoing
15 adjustments to the career pathway to meet ~~work force~~ WORKFORCE needs.

16 (5) ~~The state council and partners shall use the model developed~~
17 ~~to create the manufacturing career pathway pursuant to section~~
18 ~~23-60-1003, C.R.S., including any improvements to the model based upon~~
19 ~~the implementation of the manufacturing career pathway. Consistent with~~
20 ~~the manufacturing career pathway, career pathways created pursuant to~~
21 ~~this section must have the components described in section 23-60-1003~~
22 ~~(2), C.R.S., as they relate to the specific career pathway being created.~~

23 (5.5) (a) ~~As used in this subsection (5.5), "energy sector" means~~
24 ~~current and emerging establishments and partnerships engaged in~~
25 ~~electromechanical generation and maintenance, electrical energy~~
26 ~~transmission and distribution, energy efficiency and environmental~~
27 ~~technology, and renewable energy production. The energy sector includes~~

1 ~~but is not limited to occupations and activities relating to the~~
2 ~~development, installation, and maintenance of products or technologies~~
3 ~~in the areas of carbon capture, energy storage, building electrification,~~
4 ~~electric vehicles, charging infrastructure, hydrogen fuel cell technology,~~
5 ~~and renewable natural gas.~~

6 ~~(b) The state council and partners, including the department of~~
7 ~~natural resources, shall create an industry-driven energy sector career~~
8 ~~pathway for implementation by or before the 2022-23 academic year. The~~
9 ~~state council shall comply with the provisions of this section, including~~
10 ~~career pathway design, components, implementation, industry review, and~~
11 ~~promotion of the energy sector career pathway.~~

12 ~~(c) The strengthening photovoltaic and renewable careers~~
13 ~~(SPARC) workforce development program, created in part 5 of this~~
14 ~~article 46.3, shall provide money and other supports for in-demand and~~
15 ~~growing occupations in the energy sector career pathway created pursuant~~
16 ~~to this subsection (5.5).~~

17 (6) Once a career pathway is completed pursuant to this section,
18 the state council, IN COORDINATION WITH PARTNER AGENCIES, TRADE
19 ASSOCIATIONS, AND OTHER COUNCILS OR ENTITIES, shall facilitate
20 outreach and training ~~related to advising~~ TO ADVISE students on the career
21 pathways for all partners involved in implementing the career pathway,
22 as well as other local, regional, or state entities that are interested in
23 promoting the career pathway to students.

24 (7) (a) Once a career pathway is completed pursuant to this
25 section, the state council shall, subject to available appropriation or
26 money from other sources, collaborate with the department of higher
27 education and the department of labor and employment to ~~create a~~

1 ~~microsite concerning~~ PUBLISH the career pathway on a state-provided, free
2 online resource. At a minimum, the following information must be
3 included:

- 4 (I) Industry-sector career awareness;
- 5 (II) Salary and wage information for the industry-sector career;
- 6 (III) The industry-sector employment forecast;
- 7 (IV) Information on programs within the career pathway, services
8 provided, and financial aid opportunities for students; and
- 9 (V) Online student support services.

10 (b) ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS MAY, IN DESIGNING OR UPDATING
11 PROGRAMS:

12 (I) INTEGRATE CAREER PATHWAYS INTO STUDENT ADVISING AND
13 ACADEMIC PLANNING;

14 (II) ALIGN ACADEMIC AND TRAINING PROGRAMS TO PROVIDE
15 CLEAR CURRICULAR SEQUENCES THAT LEAD TO STACKABLE,
16 INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIALS; AND

17 (III) EMBED ALIGNED, WORK-BASED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AS
18 AN INTEGRAL COMPONENT OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE IN
19 COLLABORATION WITH INDUSTRY.

20 ~~(b)~~ (c) The state council may use money appropriated by the
21 general assembly pursuant to section 24-46.3-101 (13) or money from any
22 other source to add additional information and tools to a THE ONLINE
23 PLATFORM THAT PROMOTES career pathways. ~~microsite, similar to the~~
24 ~~information and tools provided in the microsite relating to the~~
25 ~~manufacturing career pathway.~~

26 **SECTION 4.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 24-46.3-302, **amend**
27 (1) and (2)(a) as follows:

1 **24-46.3-302. Postsecondary and workforce readiness statewide**
2 **coordinator - position created - duties.**

3 (1) (a) There is created the position of postsecondary and ~~work~~
4 ~~force~~ WORKFORCE readiness statewide coordinator to work under the
5 direction of the state ~~work force development~~ council. The statewide
6 coordinator ~~works~~ SHALL WORK with and ~~helps to~~ HELP coordinate the
7 efforts of local education providers, businesses, industry, area technical
8 colleges, community colleges, apprenticeship programs, the department
9 of education, the ~~work force development~~ STATE council, the career and
10 technical education division within the Colorado community college
11 system, the department of higher education, college preparation programs,
12 and other appropriate entities to raise the level of postsecondary and ~~work~~
13 ~~force~~ WORKFORCE readiness that Colorado high school graduates ~~achieve~~
14 HAVE ACCESS TO, especially with regard to readiness upon high school
15 graduation, for skilled career positions in business and industry,
16 INCLUSIVE OF INDICATORS IDENTIFIED IN THE SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY
17 FRAMEWORK.

18 (b) The executive committee of the state ~~work force development~~
19 council shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with the
20 commissioner of education as necessary to enable the statewide
21 coordinator to collaborate with the office of postsecondary readiness and
22 other appropriate offices and divisions within the department of education
23 in implementing initiatives to increase the level of postsecondary and
24 ~~work force~~ WORKFORCE readiness that high school graduates achieve.

25 (2) (a) The statewide coordinator shall assist local WORKFORCE
26 CENTERS AND education providers in:

27 (I) Developing and implementing initiatives to increase the level

1 of postsecondary and ~~work force~~ WORKFORCE readiness OPPORTUNITIES
2 that high school graduates ~~achieve, which may include but need not be~~
3 ~~limited to~~ HAVE ACCESS TO, INCLUDING specialized, industry-based
4 curricula and programs; apprenticeship programs; and internships and
5 externships;

6 ~~(H) Implementing concurrent enrollment programs as provided in~~
7 ~~article 35 of title 22, C.R.S., and in entering into concurrent enrollment~~
8 ~~agreements with area technical colleges, community colleges, and~~
9 ~~four-year institutions of higher education;~~

10 ~~(HH) (II) Identifying local industry and work force~~ WORKFORCE
11 needs and existing educational tools, programs, and resources to help
12 prepare middle and high school students to meet those needs upon
13 graduating from high school;

14 ~~(IV) (III) Working with state and federal programs that provide~~
15 career and ~~work force~~ WORKFORCE development opportunities for AND
16 OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH AND students enrolled in middle and high school
17 and in accessing ~~any~~ state or federal ~~moneys that are~~ MONEY THAT IS
18 available to local education providers to support and implement the
19 programs;

20 ~~(V) (IV) Promoting opportunities for industry to engage in the~~
21 ~~classroom~~ with students enrolled in grades six through twelve AND
22 OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH; AND

23 ~~(VI) Engaging students with the manufacturing career pathway~~
24 ~~created pursuant to section 23-60-1003, C.R.S.; and~~

25 ~~(VH) (V) Developing partnerships with businesses, industry,~~
26 INDUSTRIES, unions, area technical colleges, community colleges,
27 apprenticeship programs, and other entities to create opportunities for

1 students to participate in educational and training programs that lead to
2 obtaining a career entry-level credential THE SKILLS, CREDENTIALS, AND
3 EXPERIENCE NECESSARY TO OBTAIN EMPLOYMENT IN IN-DEMAND
4 OCCUPATIONS IN COLORADO.

5 **SECTION 5.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **amend** 24-46.3-303
6 as follows:

7 **24-46.3-303. Annual report.**

8 The state ~~work force development~~ council and the department of
9 education shall annually review the work of the statewide coordinator in
10 implementing the duties described in section 24-46.3-302, AND SUCH
11 REVIEW SHALL INCLUDE SPECIFIC METRICS AND DATA THAT DEMONSTRATE
12 THE PROGRESS AND GROWTH OF THE STATEWIDE COORDINATOR. The state
13 ~~work force development~~ council shall include a summary of the review
14 in the Colorado talent report prepared pursuant to section 24-46.3-103 (3).

15 **SECTION 6.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-43.7-109, **amend**
16 (14) as follows:

17 **22-43.7-109. Financial assistance for public school capital**
18 **construction - application requirements - evaluation criteria - local**
19 **match requirements - technology grants - career and technical**
20 **education capital construction grants - rules - definitions - repeal.**

21 (14) For fiscal year 2019-20 and for each succeeding fiscal year,
22 the board, with the support of the division and subject to the approval of
23 the state board regarding financial assistance awards as specified in this
24 section, may provide financial assistance in the form of career and
25 technical education capital construction grants. In conjunction with its
26 establishment of an annual financial assistance timeline as required by
27 subsection (2)(a) of this section, the board shall annually notify all

1 potential applicants, by such means as the board deems appropriate, that
2 it will accept and consider applications for financial assistance in the form
3 of career and technical education capital construction grants. To be
4 eligible for a career and technical education capital construction grant, an
5 applicant for financial assistance must apply specifically for that grant in
6 accordance with the financial assistance timeline established by the board
7 pursuant to subsection (2)(a) of this section and must submit an
8 application in the form prescribed by the board pursuant to subsection (4)
9 of this section. The board may award career and technical education
10 capital construction grants to fund career and technical education capital
11 construction projects. In awarding grants, the board shall consider
12 whether each grant application describes a career and technical education
13 capital construction project that concerns a professional field that is
14 identified as a ~~key~~ GROWING industry in the most recent annual Colorado
15 talent report produced by the state work force development council
16 pursuant to section 24-46.3-103 (3). Nothing in this subsection (14)
17 prohibits the board from considering other factors in awarding and
18 denying career and technical education capital construction grants.

19 **SECTION 7. Appropriation - adjustments to 2026 long bill. To**
20 **implement this act, the general fund appropriation made in the annual**
21 **general appropriation act for the 2026-27 state fiscal year to the**
22 **department of labor and employment for use by the division of**
23 **employment and training for workforce development council is decreased**
24 **by \$46,605.**

25 **(2) Subsection (1) of this section does not require a reduction of**
26 **an appropriation in the annual general appropriation act for the 2026-27**
27 **state fiscal year if:**

1 (a) The amount of the general fund appropriation made in the
2 annual general appropriation act for the 2026-27 state fiscal year to the
3 department of labor and employment for use by the division of
4 employment and training for workforce development council is less than
5 the amount of the adjustment required in subsection (1) of this section; or

6 (b) The annual general appropriation act for the 2026-27 state
7 fiscal year does not include an appropriation to the department of labor
8 and employment for use by the division of employment and training for
9 workforce development council.

10 **SECTION 8. Act subject to petition - effective date.** This act
11 takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the
12 ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August
13 12, 2026, if adjournment sine die is on May 13, 2026); except that section
14 7 of this act takes effect only if the annual general appropriation act for
15 the 2026-27 state fiscal year becomes law, in which case section 7 takes
16 effect upon the effective date of this act or of the annual general
17 appropriation act for state fiscal year 2026-27, whichever is later, and
18 except that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of
19 article V of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or
20 part of this act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will
21 not take effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be
22 held in November 2026 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of
23 the official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.