

SENATE COMMITTEE OF REFERENCE REPORT

Chair of Committee

March 16, 2026
Date

Committee on Education.

After consideration on the merits, the Committee recommends the following:

SB26-068 be amended as follows, and as so amended, be referred to the Committee on Appropriations with favorable recommendation:

- 1 Amend printed bill, strike everything below the enacting clause and
2 substitute:
- 3 **"SECTION 1. Legislative declaration.** (1) The general
4 assembly finds and declares that:
- 5 (a) The Colorado Measures of Academic Success assessments
6 place an undue burden on students and educators across the state;
- 7 (b) According to the department of education, each student in
8 grades 3 through 8 spends up to eleven hours each year completing these
9 statewide assessments;
- 10 (c) The amount of time required to administer statewide
11 assessments does not include additional instructional time lost to test
12 preparation, educator training, make-up testing, or modified school
13 schedules, which disrupt multiple weeks of academic instruction for
14 students and staff;
- 15 (d) Statewide assessments are administered to satisfy federal
16 requirements. Federal law permits flexibility in the state's assessments to
17 meet those requirements.
- 18 (e) Colorado administers more statewide testing than is required
19 under federal law;
- 20 (f) Statewide assessments are summative in nature and intended
21 to produce comparable data for accountability, but the delayed return of
22 results limits the ability of educators to use that data to inform instruction
23 for the tested students;
- 24 (g) In addition to statewide assessments, students in Colorado
25 complete multiple other locally administered assessments;
- 26 (h) Locally administered assessments typically return results
27 quicker and provide educators with timely data that can be used to
28 support instruction and student mastery of the assessed subjects;

1 (i) Reducing statewide assessments would return meaningful
2 instructional time to students and educators and allow greater reliance on
3 timely, actionable assessment data already collected by local education
4 providers;

5 (j) Furthermore, reducing the length of statewide assessments
6 provides a cost savings to the state, which spends approximately \$20
7 million annually to develop and administer statewide assessments; and

8 (k) It is necessary to convene a working group to develop
9 recommendations to reduce the amount of time required for statewide
10 assessments used to satisfy federal requirements.

11 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add 22-7-1006.2** as
12 follows:

13 **22-7-1006.2. State assessments modifications - working group**
14 **- report - definitions - repeal.**

15 (1) AS USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE
16 REQUIRES:

17 (a) "DEPARTMENT" MEANS THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
18 CREATED AND EXISTING PURSUANT TO SECTION 24-1-115.

19 (b) "RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT" MEANS A SCHOOL DISTRICT IN
20 COLORADO THAT THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINES IS RURAL BASED ON THE
21 GEOGRAPHIC SIZE OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT AND THE DISTANCE OF THE
22 SCHOOL DISTRICT FROM THE NEAREST LARGE URBANIZED AREA.

23 (c) "SMALL RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT" MEANS A RURAL SCHOOL
24 DISTRICT THAT ENROLLS FEWER THAN ONE THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED
25 STUDENTS IN KINDERGARTEN THROUGH TWELFTH GRADE.

26 (d) "WORKING GROUP" MEANS THE STATE ASSESSMENTS
27 MODIFICATIONS WORKING GROUP CREATED AND EXISTING PURSUANT TO
28 SUBSECTION (2) OF THIS SECTION.

29 (2) (a) THERE IS CREATED THE STATE ASSESSMENTS
30 MODIFICATIONS WORKING GROUP.

31 (b) THE WORKING GROUP IS:

32 (I) THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS, APPOINTED BY THE CHAIR OF THE
33 SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE, OR ANY SUCCESSOR COMMITTEE:

34 (A) TWO INDIVIDUALS, EACH OF WHOM IS EITHER A TEACHER
35 EMPLOYED BY OR AN EMPLOYEE OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT, APPOINTED WITH
36 THE ADVICE OF A STATEWIDE ASSOCIATION THAT REPRESENTS
37 EDUCATORS;

38 (B) A RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR, APPOINTED WITH
39 THE ADVICE OF A STATEWIDE ASSOCIATION THAT REPRESENTS RURAL
40 SCHOOLS;

41 (C) A SUPERINTENDENT, EMPLOYED BY A SCHOOL DISTRICT THAT
42 IS NOT A RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OR SMALL RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT,
43 APPOINTED WITH THE ADVICE OF A STATEWIDE ASSOCIATION THAT

1 REPRESENTS SCHOOL EXECUTIVES;
2 (D) A DIRECTOR OF A LOCAL BOARD OF EDUCATION, APPOINTED
3 WITH THE ADVICE OF A STATEWIDE ASSOCIATION THAT REPRESENTS
4 SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARDS OF EDUCATION; AND
5 (E) A CHARTER SCHOOL TEACHER, APPOINTED WITH THE ADVICE
6 OF A STATEWIDE ASSOCIATION THAT ADVOCATES FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS;
7 AND
8 (II) THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS, APPOINTED BY THE CHAIR OF THE
9 HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE, OR ANY SUCCESSOR COMMITTEE:
10 (A) TWO INDIVIDUALS, EACH OF WHOM IS EITHER A TEACHER
11 EMPLOYED BY OR AN EMPLOYEE OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT, APPOINTED WITH
12 THE ADVICE OF A STATEWIDE ASSOCIATION THAT REPRESENTS
13 EDUCATORS;
14 (B) A SMALL RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR,
15 APPOINTED WITH THE ADVICE OF A STATEWIDE ASSOCIATION THAT
16 REPRESENTS RURAL SCHOOLS;
17 (C) A SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR WHO IS EMPLOYED BY A SCHOOL
18 DISTRICT THAT IS NOT A RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OR SMALL RURAL
19 SCHOOL DISTRICT, APPOINTED WITH THE ADVICE OF A STATEWIDE
20 ASSOCIATION THAT REPRESENTS SCHOOL EXECUTIVES;
21 (D) A DIRECTOR OF A LOCAL BOARD OF EDUCATION, APPOINTED
22 WITH THE ADVICE OF A STATEWIDE ASSOCIATION THAT REPRESENTS
23 SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARDS OF EDUCATION; AND
24 (E) A CHARTER SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR, APPOINTED WITH THE
25 ADVICE OF A STATEWIDE ASSOCIATION THAT ADVOCATES FOR CHARTER
26 SCHOOLS.
27 (c) THE APPOINTING AUTHORITIES SHALL MAKE THEIR
28 APPOINTMENTS TO THE WORKING GROUP ON OR BEFORE AUGUST 1, 2026.
29 (d) THE COMMISSIONER SHALL APPOINT AN EMPLOYEE OF THE
30 DEPARTMENT TO SERVE AS A CONSULTANT TO THE WORKING GROUP IN
31 DEVELOPING THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND BEST PRACTICES REQUIRED TO
32 BE MADE PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (4) OF THIS SECTION.
33 (3) THE WORKING GROUP SHALL HOLD ITS FIRST MEETING NO
34 LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 1, 2026. AT THE FIRST MEETING, THE WORKING
35 GROUP SHALL SELECT FROM AMONG ITS MEMBERS A PERSON TO SERVE AS
36 CHAIR OF THE WORKING GROUP. THE WORKING GROUP SHALL MEET AT THE
37 CALL OF THE CHAIR AS OFTEN AS NECESSARY TO COMPLETE ITS DUTIES.
38 THE MEMBERS OF THE WORKING GROUP MAY PARTICIPATE IN MEETINGS
39 ELECTRONICALLY.
40 (4) THE WORKING GROUP SHALL INVESTIGATE OPTIONS AVAILABLE
41 TO THE STATE FOR, AND MAKE FINDINGS RELATED TO, REDUCING THE TIME
42 DEDICATED TO ADMINISTERING STATE ASSESSMENTS IN ENGLISH
43 LANGUAGE ARTS, MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, AND SOCIAL STUDIES IN

1 GRADES THREE THROUGH EIGHT, ADMINISTERED PURSUANT TO SECTION
2 22-7-1006.3 (1), SO THAT:

3 (a) STATE ASSESSMENTS ARE ADMINISTERED TO THE MINIMUM
4 EXTENT REQUIRED TO COMPLY WITH STATE AND FEDERAL LAW, INCLUDING
5 THE FEDERAL "EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT", 20 U.S.C. SEC. 6301 ET
6 SEQ., AND ITS IMPLEMENTING REGULATIONS; AND

7 (b) THE TIME DEDICATED TO STATE ASSESSMENTS IN GRADES
8 THREE THROUGH EIGHT ALIGNS WITH THE TIME SPENT ON STATE
9 ASSESSMENTS IN HIGH SCHOOL, TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE.

10 (5) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1, 2026, THE WORKING GROUP
11 SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE
12 OF REPRESENTATIVES AND THE SENATE, OR ANY SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES,
13 AND TO THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION CONCERNING ITS FINDINGS
14 CONDUCTED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (4) OF THIS SECTION, AND MAKE
15 RECOMMENDATIONS AND BEST PRACTICES CONCERNING THE WORKING
16 GROUP'S FINDINGS DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (4) OF THIS SECTION.

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

18 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-7-1013, **amend**
19 (6) as follows:

20 **22-7-1013. Local education provider - preschool through**
21 **elementary and secondary education standards - adoption - academic**
22 **acceleration - definition.**

23 (6) Each local education provider shall adopt and implement a
24 written policy by which the local education provider will decide whether
25 the students enrolled by the local education provider will use pencil and
26 paper to complete any portion of a state assessment administered pursuant
27 to section 22-7-1006.3 (1)(a) that the students would otherwise complete
28 using a computer. The policy must ensure that the local education
29 provider makes the decision in consultation with parents and, if the local
30 education provider is a school district or board of cooperative services,
31 the public schools that the local education provider operates. The local
32 education provider may decide that the students in one or more of the
33 public schools, or in one or more of the classrooms of the public schools,
34 operated by the local education provider will use pencil and paper to
35 complete the computerized portions of a state assessment. Each year
36 before the start of fall semester classes, the local education provider shall
37 distribute copies of the policy to the parents of students enrolled in the
38 local education provider and post a copy of the policy on the local
39 education provider's website. THE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER SHALL
40 BEAR THE COST OF ADMINISTERING ANY PORTION OF A STATE ASSESSMENT
41 DESCRIBED IN SECTION 22-7-1006.3 (1)(a) THAT IS CONDUCTED BY PENCIL
42 AND PAPER IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER'S
43 POLICY ADOPTED PURSUANT TO THIS SUBSECTION (6) THAT THE STUDENTS

1 WOULD OTHERWISE COMPLETE USING A COMPUTER.

2 **SECTION 4. Safety clause.** The general assembly finds,
3 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate
4 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety or for appropriations for
5 the support and maintenance of the departments of the state and state
6 institutions.".

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