

CHAPTER 377

EDUCATION - POSTSECONDARY

HOUSE BILL 21-1330

BY REPRESENTATIVE(S) McCluskie and Ricks, Amabile, Bacon, Bernett, Bird, Boesenecker, Cutter, Exum, Gray, Herod, Hooton, Jackson, Jodeh, Kipp, McLachlan, Michaelson Jenet, Snyder, Titone, Valdez A., Young;
also SENATOR(S) Zenzinger and Kirkmeyer, Bridges, Buckner, Danielson, Fenberg, Ginal, Lundeen, Moreno, Pettersen, Priola, Rankin, Simpson, Sonnenberg, Story, Woodward, Garcia.

AN ACT

CONCERNING MEASURES TO SUPPORT STUDENT SUCCESS IN OBTAINING POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

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

SECTION 1. Legislative declaration. (1) The general assembly finds and declares that:

(a) On March 11, 2021, the federal government enacted the "American Rescue Plan Act of 2021" (ARPA), pursuant to which Colorado will receive \$3,828,761,790 from the federal coronavirus state fiscal recovery fund to be used for certain specified purposes, including "to respond to the public health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) or its negative economic impacts, including assistance to households, small businesses, and nonprofits, or aid to impacted industries such as tourism, travel, and hospitality";

(b) Under the authority granted pursuant to section 602 (f) of ARPA, the secretary of the United States treasury adopted regulations providing further guidance to states regarding the authorized uses of the money allocated to states from the federal coronavirus state fiscal recovery fund to respond to the public health emergency or its negative economic impacts, which include:

(I) Assistance to unemployed workers, including job training for individuals who want and are available for work;

(II) Aid to impacted industries to respond to the negative economic impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency; and

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.

(III) Programs, services, or other assistance for populations disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency, such as programs or services that address or mitigate the impacts of the public health emergency on education;

(c) Traditional and non-traditional students from low-income communities, many of whom are low-wage workers and persons of color, were disproportionately impacted by the public health emergency, experiencing greater job loss and negative economic impacts, which forced many of them to stop attending institutions of higher education without having earned a credential or degree. Programs to incentivize these students to re-enroll to complete a credential or degree, and to assist first-time students from low-income communities to enroll in postsecondary education, are important measures to mitigate the effects of the public health emergency by improving the earnings and economic potential of these students and the communities in which they live and reducing the long-term damage to the economic prospects in low-income neighborhoods that could otherwise result.

(d) Appropriating a portion of the federal money to the Colorado opportunity scholarship initiative to allocate to institutions of higher education for programs that provide direct and indirect support to students to re-enroll and complete postsecondary credentials will:

(I) Incentivize traditional and non-traditional students who may have been forced to withdraw from postsecondary education due to the economic disruption and safety concerns caused by the public health emergency to re-enroll in institutions of higher education and complete the credits needed for a postsecondary credential or degree, enabling these student to obtain high-paying jobs and careers; and

(II) Support businesses and industries negatively impacted by the public health emergency in obtaining the qualified employees necessary to rebuild and return to pre-pandemic productivity levels;

(e) A grant program to assist local education providers in partnering with higher education institutions and community-based organizations to help students and families complete the free application for federal student aid and the Colorado application for state financial aid will:

(I) Support students in communities of color and low-income populations that are disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency to enroll in and attend postsecondary institutions and obtain postsecondary credentials and degrees, thereby reducing the long-term effects of the pandemic on earnings and economic potential; and

(II) Help to mitigate the negative impacts on education and business and industry caused by the public health emergency by expanding the workforce with persons who obtain high-quality postsecondary credentials and degrees and enter the workforce as well-trained and qualified employees; and

(f) Programs that seek out nontraditional students who earned enough credits for an associate degree but stopped attending without attaining the degree, and encourage those students to return and to obtain the degree and possibly seek a

higher degree, will mitigate the long-term effects of the public health emergency on earnings and economic potential by providing these students, most of whom are low-income workers who were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, with the credentials and degrees needed to obtain higher paying jobs and improve the economic prospects for themselves and their communities. Increasing the number of persons with credentials and degrees will also strengthen the workforce and support the economic recovery of the business community.

(2) The general assembly therefore declares that the following uses, programs, and initiatives will provide the kind of assistance for which Colorado will receive money from the federal coronavirus state fiscal recovery fund and therefore are appropriate and lawful uses of the money transferred to Colorado pursuant to ARPA:

(a) Allocation of money to public institutions of higher education to implement student assistance plans as described in section 23-3.3-1006, Colorado Revised Statutes;

(b) The student aid applications completion grant program created in section 23-3.3-1007, Colorado Revised Statutes;

(c) Implementation of associate degree completion programs as described in section 23-1-131, Colorado Revised Statutes; and

(d) The Colorado re-engaged initiative created in section 23-1-131.5, Colorado Revised Statutes.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-3.3-1001, **add** (3) as follows:

23-3.3-1001. Legislative declaration - repeal. (3) (a) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FURTHER DECLARES THAT:

(I) THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS CAUSED SIGNIFICANT DISRUPTION TO THE LIVES OF STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES, THE OPERATIONS OF THE PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN COLORADO, AND THE STATE'S WORKFORCE AND ECONOMY;

(II) WHILE THE PANDEMIC HAS AFFECTED THE ENTIRE STATE, IT HAS DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTED LOW-INCOME FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES OF COLOR, EXACERBATING SYSTEMIC ECONOMIC INEQUITIES;

(III) THE CRISIS HAS HAD A DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACT ON FRONT-LINE WORKERS, THOSE WHO EARN LOW WAGES, AND THOSE WHO LACK A POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIAL OR DEGREE; AND

(IV) AN EQUITABLE ECONOMIC RECOVERY FROM THE PANDEMIC DEPENDS ON HAVING ROBUST PATHWAYS FOR WORKERS TO OBTAIN NEW SKILLS, EARN HIGHER WAGES, AND BE PREPARED FOR THE IN-DEMAND CAREERS OF THE FUTURE.

(b) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THEREFORE FINDS THAT IT IS AN APPROPRIATE, NECESSARY, AND LAWFUL USE OF THE MONEY RECEIVED THROUGH THE FEDERAL

"AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021", PUB.L. 117-2, TO APPROPRIATE A PORTION OF SAID MONEY TO THE COLORADO OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP INITIATIVE TO ADDRESS THE SIGNIFICANT DECLINE IN ENROLLMENT IN THE PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION, HIGH RATES OF JOB LOSS, AND CONTINUING UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE OVERALL DISRUPTION TO THE WORKFORCE CAUSED BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, WHICH HAS RESULTED IN SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC HARM TO INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES, BY QUICKLY AND EFFECTIVELY PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS TO RETURN TO THE PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO COMPLETE THEIR POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS AND HELP TO REBUILD AND REVITALIZE THE WORKFORCE OF COLORADO AND BY ASSISTING STUDENTS TO COMPLETE THE FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID AND THE COLORADO APPLICATION FOR STATE FINANCIAL AID.

(c) IT IS THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT INSTITUTIONS USE THE ALLOCATIONS DISTRIBUTED PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-3.3-1006 TO PROVIDE DIRECT AND INDIRECT SUPPORT TO STUDENTS TO RE-ENROLL AND COMPLETE POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS. IT IS FURTHER THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S INTENT THAT THE INSTITUTIONS PROVIDE THIS DIRECT AND INDIRECT STUDENT SUPPORT THROUGH PROGRAMS THAT INCENTIVIZE STUDENTS TO RETURN AND COMPLETE DEGREE AND CREDENTIAL PROGRAMS, ASSIST STUDENTS IN NAVIGATING THEIR OPTIONS FOR HOW TO RETURN AND COMPLETE DEGREES AND CREDENTIALS EFFICIENTLY, ADDRESS EQUITY GAPS IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, PROVIDE TRAINING FOR INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATES AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT FOR TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS AND MEMBERS OF THE WORKFORCE, SUPPORT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FOR SIGNIFICANTLY IMPACTED JOB SECTORS, AND SUPPORT AND IMPROVE OVERALL STUDENT SUCCESS IN COMPLETING POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS AND ENTERING THE WORKFORCE.

(d) THIS SUBSECTION (3) IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026.

SECTION 3. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-3.3-1004, **amend** (4)(a)(III)(C) as follows:

23-3.3-1004. Colorado opportunity scholarship initiative advisory board - created - duties - rules. (4) The board shall hold its first meeting on or before November 1, 2014, at a time and place to be designated by the executive director or by the executive director's designee. The board shall meet at least four times each year and shall carry out the following duties:

(a) Promulgate rules for administration of the initiative, including but not limited to the following:

(III) Rules establishing permissible uses of grant and scholarship money from the initiative, which rules must stipulate that:

(C) Any money appropriated to the fund that is not used for the purposes described in subsection (4)(a)(III)(A) of this section, ~~or~~ to pay the direct and indirect costs of administering the initiative as described in section 23-3.3-1005 (4), ~~OR AS OTHERWISE PROVIDED IN SECTIONS 23-3.3-1006 AND 23-3.3-1007,~~ must be used to build a financial corpus capable of providing financial assistance to eligible Colorado students in Colorado who will attend eligible institutions of higher

education within the state. Financial assistance provided pursuant to this subsection (4)(a)(III)(C) may take the form of direct awards, matching incentives to create or increase the number of other scholarships, loans, or any combination thereof.

SECTION 4. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-3.3-1005, **add** (6) and (7) as follows:

23-3.3-1005. Colorado opportunity scholarship initiative fund - created - rules - repeal. (6) (a) FOR THE 2021-22 STATE FISCAL YEAR, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHALL APPROPRIATE MONEY FROM THE WORKERS, EMPLOYERS, AND WORKFORCE CENTERS CASH FUND, CREATED IN SECTION 24-75-231, TO THE FUND FOR THE PURPOSES DESCRIBED IN SECTION 23-3.3-1006. IN ADDITION TO THE AMOUNTS DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTIONS (4) AND (7) OF THIS SECTION, THE DEPARTMENT IS AUTHORIZED TO SPEND UP TO FIVE PERCENT OF THE APPROPRIATED AMOUNT TO PAY THE DIRECT AND INDIRECT COSTS OF ADMINISTERING THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE AMOUNT DESCRIBED IN THIS SUBSECTION (6) AS PROVIDED IN SECTION 23-3.3-1006.

(b) THIS SUBSECTION (6) IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026.

(7) (a) FOR THE 2021-22 STATE FISCAL YEAR, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHALL APPROPRIATE FROM THE WORKERS, EMPLOYERS, AND WORKFORCE CENTERS CASH FUND, CREATED IN SECTION 24-75-231, TO THE FUND ONE MILLION FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR THE PURPOSES DESCRIBED IN SECTION 23-3.3-1007. IN ADDITION TO THE AMOUNTS DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTIONS (4) AND (6) OF THIS SECTION, THE DEPARTMENT IS AUTHORIZED TO SPEND FROM THE APPROPRIATED AMOUNT UP TO ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS ANNUALLY FOR THE COSTS INCURRED IN IMPLEMENTING SECTION 23-3.3-1007, WHICH COSTS MAY INCLUDE PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, COLLECTING AND SHARING BEST PRACTICES, AND PROVIDING AN EVALUATION OF THE STUDENT AID APPLICATIONS COMPLETION GRANT PROGRAM IN THE ANNUAL REPORT PREPARED PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-3.3-1004 (4)(c).

(b) THIS SUBSECTION (7) IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026.

SECTION 5. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 23-3.3-1006 and 23-3.3-1007 as follows:

23-3.3-1006. Colorado opportunity scholarship initiative - federal money - institutional allocations - purposes - reporting - rules - definitions - repeal.

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

(a) "ELIGIBLE STUDENT" MEANS AN UNDERGRADUATE, IN-STATE STUDENT WHO:

(I) EARNED SOME POSTSECONDARY CREDITS FROM A PUBLIC OR PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION BUT DID NOT COMPLETE A CREDENTIAL BEFORE DECIDING NOT TO ENROLL FOR TWO OR MORE CONSECUTIVE SEMESTERS; OR

(II) WAS ADMITTED TO A PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AS A FIRST-TIME STUDENT FOR THE 2019-20 OR 2020-21 ACADEMIC YEAR BUT DID NOT ENROLL AT ANY INSTITUTION FOR THE 2020-21 ACADEMIC YEAR.

(b) "PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION" OR "INSTITUTION" MEANS A STATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IDENTIFIED IN SECTION 23-18-102 (10)(a), A LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGE, OR AN AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE.

(c) "STUDENT ASSISTANCE PLAN" OR "PLAN" MEANS THE PROPOSAL THAT A PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION DEVELOPS AS PART OF ITS APPLICATION TO THE INITIATIVE TO DESCRIBE HOW THE INSTITUTION WILL SPEND THE AMOUNT ALLOCATED TO THE INSTITUTION PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION TO ASSIST ELIGIBLE STUDENTS IN ENROLLING, PERSISTING, AND COMPLETING IN ALIGNMENT WITH THE INITIATIVE'S COMMUNITY PARTNER PROGRAM MODEL.

(2) AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE AFTER THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS SECTION, THE BOARD SHALL PUBLISH A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS THAT ALLOCATES THE MONEY APPROPRIATED TO THE FUND PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-3.3-1005 (6) TO THE PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (3) OF THIS SECTION. EACH INSTITUTION, MAY RECEIVE UP TO ONE HUNDRED PERCENT OF ITS ALLOCATION OVER TWO ACADEMIC YEARS BEGINNING IN THE 2021-22 ACADEMIC YEAR BY SUBMITTING A STUDENT ASSISTANCE PLAN TO THE BOARD AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (4) OF THIS SECTION TO USE THE MONEY TO SUPPORT ELIGIBLE STUDENTS DIRECTLY THROUGH SCHOLARSHIPS, FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE COST OF ATTENDANCE, AND OTHER DIRECT STUDENT FINANCIAL INCENTIVES OR ASSISTANCE. THE PLAN MUST ALSO INCLUDE INDIRECT SUPPORT FOR ELIGIBLE STUDENTS THROUGH STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES. THE GOAL OF EACH INSTITUTION'S STUDENT ASSISTANCE PLAN MUST BE TO INCREASE ELIGIBLE STUDENT ENROLLMENT, PERSISTENCE, AND COMPLETION AND, FOR INSTITUTIONS OTHER THAN AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGES, REDUCE STUDENT DEBT.

(3) (a) THE BOARD SHALL ALLOCATE THE MONEY APPROPRIATED TO THE FUND PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-3.3-1005 (6) TO EACH PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AS FOLLOWS:

(I) FIFTY PERCENT BASED ON EACH INSTITUTION'S HEADCOUNT ENROLLMENT FOR THE 2019-20 ACADEMIC YEAR OF UNDERGRADUATE, IN-STATE STUDENTS WHOSE EXPECTED FAMILY CONTRIBUTION DID NOT EXCEED TWO HUNDRED FIFTY PERCENT OF THE MAXIMUM PELL-ELIGIBLE EXPECTED FAMILY CONTRIBUTION FOR A FEDERAL PELL GRANT AND ON OTHER CRITERIA ADOPTED BY RULE AS DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (3)(b) OF THIS SECTION; AND

(II) FIFTY PERCENT BASED ON EACH INSTITUTION'S FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT ENROLLMENT FOR THE 2019-20 ACADEMIC YEAR OF UNDERGRADUATE, IN-STATE STUDENTS WHOSE EXPECTED FAMILY CONTRIBUTION DID NOT EXCEED TWO HUNDRED FIFTY PERCENT OF THE MAXIMUM PELL-ELIGIBLE EXPECTED FAMILY CONTRIBUTION FOR A FEDERAL PELL GRANT AND ON OTHER CRITERIA ADOPTED BY RULE AS DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (3)(b) OF THIS SECTION.

(b) THE BOARD SHALL ADOPT RULES THAT IDENTIFY ADDITIONAL CRITERIA FOR ALLOCATING THE MONEY APPROPRIATED TO THE FUND PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-3.3-1005 (6), WHICH CRITERIA TAKE INTO ACCOUNT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION, INCLUDING LOCATION IN A RURAL AREA OF THE STATE, TOTAL HEADCOUNT ENROLLMENT, AND CHARACTERISTICS UNIQUE TO AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGES.

(c) THE BOARD SHALL DISTRIBUTE ALL OR A PORTION OF AN INSTITUTION'S ALLOCATION AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE AFTER THE BOARD APPROVES THE INSTITUTION'S STUDENT ASSISTANCE PLAN AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (5) OF THIS SECTION.

(4) (a) TO RECEIVE A DISTRIBUTION OF THE MONEY ALLOCATED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (3) OF THIS SECTION, A PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION MUST SUBMIT TO THE BOARD A STUDENT ASSISTANCE PLAN DESCRIBING THE INSTITUTION'S INTENDED USE OF THE MONEY TO SUPPORT ELIGIBLE STUDENTS. EACH PLAN MUST BE STUDENT-CENTERED AND, AT A MINIMUM, MUST SPECIFY:

(I) THE POPULATION OF ELIGIBLE STUDENTS THAT THE PLAN IS DESIGNED TO SUPPORT, WHICH MAY INCLUDE TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS AND WHICH SHOULD FOCUS ON DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTED STUDENT POPULATIONS;

(II) THE PERCENTAGE OF THE MONEY DISTRIBUTED THROUGH THE PLAN THAT WILL BE DISTRIBUTED DIRECTLY TO ELIGIBLE STUDENTS IN THE FORM OF SCHOLARSHIPS, FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE COST OF ATTENDANCE, AND OTHER DIRECT STUDENT FINANCIAL INCENTIVES OR ASSISTANCE;

(III) IN ALIGNMENT WITH THE INITIATIVE'S COMMUNITY PARTNER PROGRAM MODEL, THE STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES THAT THE INSTITUTION WILL PROVIDE USING THE REMAINING PERCENTAGE OF THE AMOUNT DISTRIBUTED THROUGH THE PLAN;

(IV) THE AMOUNT OF THE INSTITUTION'S REQUESTED DISTRIBUTION AND THE TIMELINE FOR RECEIVING DISTRIBUTIONS OF THE ALLOCATION OVER THE 2021-22 AND 2022-23 ACADEMIC YEARS;

(V) THE SPECIFIC, MEASURABLE GOALS THAT THE INSTITUTION EXPECTS TO ACHIEVE THROUGH THE PLAN, WHICH GOALS MUST INCLUDE INCREASING RETENTION OF THE IDENTIFIED POPULATION OF ELIGIBLE STUDENTS AND MUST BE OTHERWISE ALIGNED WITH INCREASING ENROLLMENT, PERSISTENCE, AND COMPLETION FOR SAID STUDENTS AND, FOR INSTITUTIONS OTHER THAN AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGES, DECREASING STUDENT DEBT FOR SAID STUDENTS; AND

(VI) THE METRICS AND DATA THAT THE INSTITUTION WILL USE TO MEASURE THE DEGREE OF SUCCESS IN MEETING THE GOALS IDENTIFIED IN THE PLAN.

(b) EACH PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL SUBMIT ITS STUDENT ASSISTANCE PLAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH RULES PROMULGATED BY THE BOARD.

(5) (a) THE BOARD SHALL REVIEW EACH STUDENT ASSISTANCE PLAN RECEIVED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (4) OF THIS SECTION. BEFORE APPROVING A STUDENT ASSISTANCE PLAN, THE BOARD AT A MINIMUM MUST CONSIDER:

(I) THE PERCENTAGE OF THE DISTRIBUTION THAT THE PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION WILL SPEND AS DIRECT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO ELIGIBLE STUDENTS VERSUS THE PERCENTAGE THAT THE INSTITUTION WILL SPEND IN PROVIDING STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES, WITH THE INTENT THAT A GREATER

PERCENTAGE IS SPENT AS SCHOLARSHIPS, FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE COST OF ATTENDANCE, AND OTHER DIRECT STUDENT FINANCIAL INCENTIVES;

(II) THE POPULATION OF ELIGIBLE STUDENTS THAT THE PLAN IS DESIGNED TO SUPPORT, INCLUDING WHETHER THE PLAN INCLUDES TRADITIONAL AND NONTRADITIONAL STUDENTS AND THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE PLAN FOCUSES ON DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTED STUDENT POPULATIONS;

(III) THE SPEED AND EFFICIENCY WITH WHICH THE INSTITUTION EXPECTS TO DISTRIBUTE ITS MONEY TO ELIGIBLE STUDENTS; AND

(IV) THE QUALITY OF THE PLAN, INCLUDING THE RIGOR OF PROGRAMMING AND QUALITY OF THE EVALUATION MEASURES, AND THE LIKELIHOOD THAT THE INSTITUTION WILL MEET THE GOALS SPECIFIED IN THE PLAN AND THAT THE PLAN WILL RESULT IN SIGNIFICANT INCREASES IN ELIGIBLE STUDENT ENROLLMENT, PERSISTENCE, AND COMPLETION AND, FOR INSTITUTIONS OTHER THAN AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGES, SIGNIFICANT DECREASES IN STUDENT DEBT.

(b) BEFORE APPROVING A STUDENT ASSISTANCE PLAN, THE BOARD MAY PROVIDE FEEDBACK TO THE SUBMITTING PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION, INCLUDING SUGGESTED CHANGES, AND REQUIRE THE INSTITUTION TO REVISE AND RESUBMIT THE PLAN.

(6) (a) AT THE END OF THE 2021-22 ACADEMIC YEAR, BY A DATE SET BY BOARD RULE, EACH PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE BOARD THAT SPECIFIES:

(I) THE AMOUNT OF THE INSTITUTION'S ALLOCATION THAT THE INSTITUTION SPENT DURING THE 2021-22 ACADEMIC YEAR;

(II) THE SPECIFIC PURPOSES FOR WHICH THE MONEY WAS SPENT, INCLUDING THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE STUDENTS SERVED, THE AMOUNTS DIRECTLY DISTRIBUTED TO ELIGIBLE STUDENTS, AND THE STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES PROVIDED TO ELIGIBLE STUDENTS;

(III) THE DATA IDENTIFIED IN THE INSTITUTION'S STUDENT ASSISTANCE PLAN THAT DEMONSTRATES THE INSTITUTION'S DEGREE OF SUCCESS IN MEETING THE GOALS IDENTIFIED IN THE PLAN;

(IV) ANY OTHER DATA THAT DEMONSTRATES THE INSTITUTION'S PROGRESS TOWARD AND ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS OF ASSISTING ELIGIBLE STUDENTS TO ENROLL, PERSIST, AND COMPLETE POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS AND, FOR INSTITUTIONS OTHER THAN AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGES, DECREASE STUDENT DEBT;

(V) ANY OTHER DATA RELATED TO THE USE OF THE MONEY ALLOCATED TO THE INSTITUTION THAT THE BOARD REQUESTS; AND

(VI) IF ANY PORTION OF THE INSTITUTION'S ALLOCATION REMAINS UNDISTRIBUTED, A REQUEST THAT THE BOARD DISTRIBUTE THE REMAINDER OF THE ALLOCATION AND A DESCRIPTION OF ANY REVISIONS TO THE INSTITUTION'S STUDENT ASSISTANCE PLAN FOR SPENDING THE DISTRIBUTION.

(b) THE BOARD SHALL REVIEW THE REPORTS RECEIVED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (6)(a) OF THIS SECTION AND DETERMINE EACH INSTITUTION'S SUCCESS IN ACHIEVING THE GOALS IDENTIFIED IN THE INSTITUTION'S PLAN. FOR EACH INSTITUTION THAT REQUESTS THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE INSTITUTION'S ALLOCATION, THE BOARD SHALL REVIEW THE INSTITUTION'S STUDENT ASSISTANCE PLAN, INCLUDING ANY REVISIONS. BASED ON THE CRITERIA SPECIFIED IN SUBSECTION (5) OF THIS SECTION, THE BOARD MAY PROVIDE FEEDBACK AND REQUIRE CHANGES TO THE PLAN BEFORE DISTRIBUTING THE MONEY TO THE INSTITUTION FOR THE 2022-23 ACADEMIC YEAR.

(c) AN INSTITUTION THAT IMPLEMENTS A STUDENT ASSISTANCE PLAN DURING THE 2022-23 ACADEMIC YEAR AND THAT CONTINUES TO IMPLEMENT THE PLAN IN SUBSEQUENT ACADEMIC YEARS SHALL SUBMIT TO THE BOARD, BY A DATE SPECIFIED BY BOARD RULE, THE REPORT DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (6)(a) OF THIS SECTION AS IT PERTAINS TO EACH ACADEMIC YEAR IN WHICH THE PLAN CONTINUES TO BE IMPLEMENTED.

(7)(a) BY DECEMBER 1, 2022, AND BY DECEMBER 1 EACH YEAR THEREAFTER SO LONG AS THE BOARD CONTINUES TO RECEIVE REPORTS PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (6) THIS SECTION, THE DIRECTOR SHALL SUBMIT TO THE JOINT BUDGET COMMITTEE AND TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, OR ANY SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES, A REPORT THAT SUMMARIZES THE REPORTS RECEIVED FROM THE PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (6) OF THIS SECTION. THE SUMMARY REPORT MUST INCLUDE, BUT NEED NOT BE LIMITED TO:

(I) THE AMOUNTS ALLOCATED AND DISTRIBUTED TO EACH PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION;

(II) THE AMOUNT EACH INSTITUTION SPENT IN PROVIDING DIRECT STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO ELIGIBLE STUDENTS AND IN PROVIDING SERVICES AND SUPPORT TO ELIGIBLE STUDENTS AND THE TYPES OF DIRECT STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES AND SUPPORT PROVIDED;

(III) THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE STUDENTS WHO RE-ENROLLED IN THE ACADEMIC YEARS IN WHICH EACH INSTITUTION'S STUDENT ASSISTANCE PLAN WAS IMPLEMENTED;

(IV) THE POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS AWARDED TO ELIGIBLE STUDENTS WHO RECEIVED ASSISTANCE THROUGH EACH INSTITUTION'S STUDENT ASSISTANCE PLAN; AND

(V) ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THE BOARD DEEMS USEFUL IN DETERMINING THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE MONEY APPROPRIATED TO THE FUND PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-3.3-1005(6) WAS SUCCESSFULLY SPENT TO INCREASE ELIGIBLE STUDENT ENROLLMENT, PERSISTENCE, AND COMPLETION AND DECREASE STUDENT DEBT.

(b) NOTWITHSTANDING THE REQUIREMENT IN SECTION 24-1-136 (11)(a)(I), THE REQUIREMENT TO SUBMIT THE REPORT REQUIRED IN THIS SUBSECTION (7) CONTINUES INDEFINITELY.

(8) THIS SECTION IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026.

23-3.3-1007. Student aid applications completion grant program - created - applications - rules - definitions - repeal. (1) AS USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

(a) "APPLICATION COMPLETION RATE" MEANS THE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN A HIGH SCHOOL OPERATED BY A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER WHO COMPLETE THE STUDENT AID APPLICATIONS IN A SINGLE SCHOOL YEAR.

(b) "GRANT PROGRAM" MEANS THE STUDENT AID APPLICATIONS COMPLETION GRANT PROGRAM CREATED IN THIS SECTION.

(c) "HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION" MEANS A STATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AS DEFINED IN SECTION 23-18-102 (10)(a), A LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGE CREATED PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 71 OF THIS TITLE 23, AN AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE AS DEFINED IN SECTION 23-60-103, OR A PRIVATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AS DEFINED IN SECTION 23-18-102 (9).

(d) "LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER" MEANS A SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZED PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 30 OF TITLE 22, A CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZED BY A SCHOOL DISTRICT PURSUANT TO PART 1 OF ARTICLE 30.5 OF TITLE 22, A CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZED BY THE STATE CHARTER SCHOOL INSTITUTE PURSUANT TO PART 5 OF ARTICLE 30.5 OF TITLE 22, OR A BOARD OF COOPERATIVE SERVICES CREATED PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 5 OF TITLE 22 THAT OPERATES A HIGH SCHOOL.

(e) "STUDENT AID APPLICATIONS" MEANS THE FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID AND THE COLORADO APPLICATION FOR STUDENT FINANCIAL AID.

(2) (a) THERE IS CREATED IN THE INITIATIVE THE STUDENT AID APPLICATIONS COMPLETION GRANT PROGRAM TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS IN IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED BY THE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER WHO COMPLETE THE STUDENT AID APPLICATIONS BEFORE GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL. TO BE ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE GRANT PROGRAM, A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER MUST REQUIRE STUDENTS TO COMPLETE THE STUDENT AID APPLICATIONS BEFORE GRADUATION UNLESS THE REQUIREMENT IS WAIVED UNDER CONDITIONS DESCRIBED BY THE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER.

(b) A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER THAT SEEKS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE GRANT PROGRAM MUST SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO THE BOARD IN ACCORDANCE WITH TIMELINES AND PROCEDURES SPECIFIED IN RULES OF THE BOARD. AT A MINIMUM, THE APPLICATION MUST INCLUDE:

(I) THE STUDENT AID APPLICATION COMPLETION RATE FOR HIGH SCHOOLS OPERATED BY THE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING THE APPLICATION;

(II) THE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER'S GOAL FOR INCREASING THE STUDENT AID APPLICATION COMPLETION RATE;

(III) THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER MAY WAIVE THE REQUIREMENT THAT A STUDENT COMPLETE THE STUDENT AID APPLICATIONS BEFORE GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL;

(IV) WHETHER THE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER IS PARTNERING OR INTENDS TO PARTNER WITH A COMMUNITY-BASED NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION OR AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO SUPPORT STUDENTS IN COMPLETING THE STUDENT AID APPLICATIONS; AND

(V) HOW THE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER INTENDS TO USE THE MONEY RECEIVED THROUGH THE GRANT PROGRAM TO INCREASE THE STUDENT AID APPLICATION COMPLETION RATE, WHICH MAY INCLUDE:

(A) STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING STUDENT AND FAMILY AWARENESS OF THE STUDENT AID APPLICATIONS AND THE BENEFITS OF COMPLETING THEM AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF FAILING TO COMPLETE THEM;

(B) STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING STUDENT AND FAMILY AWARENESS OF THE OPTIONS FOR AND COSTS OF POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT AND A VARIETY OF CREDENTIAL AND DEGREE PROGRAMS AND HOW THESE RELATE TO COMPLETION OF THE STUDENT AID APPLICATIONS;

(C) HIRING ADDITIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELORS TO ASSIST STUDENTS IN COMPLETING THE STUDENT AID APPLICATIONS; AND

(D) STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO APPLY TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION BY ENCOURAGING STUDENTS TO COMPLETE ADMISSION APPLICATIONS IN CONNECTION WITH COMPLETING THE STUDENT AID APPLICATIONS.

(c) THE BOARD SHALL REVIEW THE APPLICATIONS RECEIVED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION AND, SUBJECT TO AVAILABLE APPROPRIATIONS, AWARD THE GRANTS FROM MONEY APPROPRIATED TO THE FUND PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-3.3-1005 (7). IN AWARDING GRANTS, THE BOARD SHALL PRIORITIZE APPLICANTS THAT PARTNER WITH ONE OR MORE COMMUNITY-BASED NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS OR INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN SUPPORTING STUDENT COMPLETION OF STUDENT AID APPLICATIONS. BEFORE AWARDING GRANTS, THE BOARD SHALL CONSULT WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

(3) (a) ON OR BEFORE AUGUST 1 IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF A SCHOOL YEAR IN WHICH A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER RECEIVES A GRANT THROUGH THE GRANT PROGRAM, THE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER SHALL SUBMIT TO THE BOARD A REPORT SPECIFYING HOW THE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER USED THE GRANT MONEY TO INCREASE THE STUDENT AID APPLICATION COMPLETION RATE AND WHETHER AND TO WHAT DEGREE THE STUDENT AID APPLICATION COMPLETION RATE INCREASED ABOVE THE COMPLETION RATE FOR THE PRECEDING SCHOOL YEAR.

(b) ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 1, 2022, AND ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 1 FOR EACH YEAR IN WHICH A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER SUBMITS A REPORT PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (3)(a) OF THIS SECTION, THE BOARD SHALL INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL REPORT PREPARED PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-3.3-1004 (4)(c) A REPORT THAT SUMMARIZES THE REPORTS RECEIVED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (3)(a) OF THIS

SECTION. THE BOARD MAY INCLUDE IN THE SUMMARY REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING CONTINUATION OF AND CHANGES TO THE GRANT PROGRAM.

(4) THIS SECTION IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026.

SECTION 6. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add 23-1-131.5** as follows:

23-1-131.5. Commission directive - Colorado re-engaged (CORE) initiative - four-year institutions - associate degrees - report - definitions. (1) AS USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

(a) "COLORADO RE-ENGAGED INITIATIVE" OR "CORE INITIATIVE" MEANS THE INITIATIVE CREATED IN THIS SECTION TO AUTHORIZE INSTITUTIONS TO AWARD ASSOCIATE DEGREES TO ELIGIBLE STUDENTS.

(b) "ELIGIBLE STUDENT" MEANS AN UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT WHO MEETS THE CRITERIA SPECIFIED IN SUBSECTION (5) OF THIS SECTION.

(c) "INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION" OR "INSTITUTION" MEANS A LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGE OPERATING PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 71 OF THIS TITLE 23 OR A STATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AS DEFINED IN SECTION 23-18-102 (10)(a), BUT NOT INCLUDING AN INSTITUTION GOVERNED BY THE STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION.

(2) THERE IS CREATED IN THE DEPARTMENT THE COLORADO RE-ENGAGED, OR CORE, INITIATIVE TO AUTHORIZE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO AWARD ASSOCIATE DEGREES, NOTWITHSTANDING AN INSTITUTION'S ROLE AND MISSION, TO ELIGIBLE STUDENTS WHO ENROLL IN BACCALAUREATE DEGREE PROGRAMS AND EARN AT LEAST SEVENTY CREDIT HOURS IN THE PROGRAMS, BUT WITHDRAW FROM THE INSTITUTIONS BEFORE ATTAINING THE BACCALAUREATE DEGREE. THE GOAL OF AWARDED AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE THROUGH THE CORE INITIATIVE IS TO INCREASE A STUDENT'S EARNING POTENTIAL BY GRANTING THE STUDENT A DEGREE, MAKING IT MORE LIKELY THE STUDENT WILL RE-ENROLL AND COMPLETE A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE OR HIGHER.

(3) THE COMMISSION SHALL COLLABORATE WITH THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO DEVELOP AND COORDINATE A PROCESS TO IDENTIFY ELIGIBLE STUDENTS AND AWARD ASSOCIATE DEGREES THROUGH THE CORE INITIATIVE. TO IMPLEMENT THE CORE INITIATIVE, THE ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT IS TO:

(a) PUBLICIZE THE CORE INITIATIVE, INCLUDING THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS THAT A STUDENT MUST MEET TO OBTAIN AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE THROUGH THE CORE INITIATIVE AS DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (5) OF THIS SECTION; AND

(b) WORK WITH THE INSTITUTIONS TO IDENTIFY ELIGIBLE STUDENTS AND NOTIFY THOSE ELIGIBLE STUDENTS OF THEIR ELIGIBILITY TO OBTAIN AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE THROUGH THE CORE INITIATIVE AND THE PROCESS FOR DOING SO.

(4) (a) THE ROLE OF AN INSTITUTION THAT CHOOSES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CORE INITIATIVE IS LIMITED TO:

(I) PROVIDING TO THE DEPARTMENT CONTACT INFORMATION FOR ELIGIBLE STUDENTS, IF AVAILABLE;

(II) DETERMINING WHETHER AN ELIGIBLE STUDENT QUALIFIES FOR AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE BASED ON EARNED CREDITS AND COURSES TAKEN;

(III) ISSUING AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE UPON THE REQUEST OF AN ELIGIBLE STUDENT AND ADVISING THE STUDENT OF OPPORTUNITIES TO RE-ENROLL AT THE INSTITUTION TO COMPLETE THE BACCALAUREATE DEGREE PROGRAM; AND

(IV) SUBMITTING TO THE DEPARTMENT THE INFORMATION DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (6) OF THIS SECTION.

(b) AN INSTITUTION THAT CHOOSES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CORE INITIATIVE MUST OBTAIN APPROVAL FROM THE INSTITUTION'S ACCREDITING AGENCY TO GRANT ASSOCIATE DEGREES THROUGH THE CORE INITIATIVE. AN INSTITUTION MAY AWARD AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE TO AN ELIGIBLE STUDENT THROUGH THE CORE INITIATIVE FOR UP TO TEN ACADEMIC YEARS AFTER THE LAST SEMESTER IN WHICH THE ELIGIBLE STUDENT ENROLLED AT THE INSTITUTION.

(c) AN INSTITUTION THAT CHOOSES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CORE INITIATIVE SHALL NOT ALLOW A STUDENT TO ENROLL IN THE INSTITUTION TO OBTAIN AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE AND SHALL NOT OFFER PROGRAMS THAT ARE DESIGNED TO LEAD TO ASSOCIATE DEGREES; EXCEPT THAT THIS SUBSECTION (4)(c) DOES NOT APPLY TO A LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGE, ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY, FORT LEWIS COLLEGE WITH REGARD TO THE AUTHORITY GRANTED IN SECTION 23-52-101 (2)(a), AND COLORADO MESA UNIVERSITY. THE ASSOCIATE DEGREES ISSUED BY INSTITUTIONS THROUGH THE CORE INITIATIVE SHALL NOT BE CONSIDERED IN DETERMINING AN INSTITUTION'S FUNDING PURSUANT TO PART 3 OF ARTICLE 18 OF THIS TITLE 23.

(5) (a) TO RECEIVE AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE THROUGH THE CORE INITIATIVE, A STUDENT MUST:

(I) NOT HAVE TRANSFERRED TO THE INSTITUTION DIRECTLY FROM AN INSTITUTION GOVERNED BY THE STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION;

(II) NOT HAVE BEEN ENROLLED IN THE INSTITUTION FOR AT LEAST TWO CONSECUTIVE SEMESTERS; AND

(III) HAVE EARNED AT LEAST SEVENTY CREDIT HOURS, WHICH CREDITS MUST INCLUDE COMPLETION OF THE INSTITUTION'S GENERAL EDUCATION CORE COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND COMPLETION OF ALL OTHER COURSES REQUIRED FOR AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE PROGRAM APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION.

(b) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY PROVISION OF THIS SECTION TO THE CONTRARY, A STUDENT WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE THROUGH A PROGRAM AUTHORIZED IN SECTION 23-1-131 IS NOT ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE THROUGH THE CORE INITIATIVE.

(6) EACH INSTITUTION THAT CHOOSES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CORE INITIATIVE

SHALL, BY AUGUST 1, 2022, AND BY AUGUST 1 EACH YEAR THEREAFTER, REPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE STUDENTS TO WHOM THE INSTITUTION AWARDED AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE THROUGH THE CORE INITIATIVE, THE TYPES OF ASSOCIATE DEGREES AWARDED THROUGH THE CORE INITIATIVE, AND THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO RE-ENROLLED IN THE INSTITUTION AFTER RECEIVING AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE THROUGH THE CORE INITIATIVE. THE DEPARTMENT SHALL REVIEW AND COMPILE THE ANNUAL REPORTS AND, BY JANUARY 15, 2025, SUBMIT TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, OR ANY SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES, A REPORT CONCERNING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CORE INITIATIVE, INCLUDING, TO THE EXTENT DISCERNABLE, THE DEGREE TO WHICH STUDENTS WHO RECEIVE ASSOCIATE DEGREES THROUGH THE CORE INITIATIVE RE-ENROLL IN AN INSTITUTION TO COMPLETE A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE. THE DEPARTMENT MAY ALSO INCLUDE IN THE REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGES TO THE CORE INITIATIVE, INCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCENTIVES TO ENCOURAGE INSTITUTIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CORE INITIATIVE.

SECTION 7. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-1-133, **amend** (2)(a) introductory portion, (2)(a)(V), (2)(b) introductory portion, and (2)(b)(I); and **repeal** (1) as follows:

23-1-133. Commission directive - bachelor of science degree in nursing program - Aims community college - approval. (1) (a) ~~The state board for community colleges and occupational education, referred to in this section as the "state board", shall submit to the commission for its approval technical, career, and workforce development bachelor of applied science degree programs to be offered at one or more community colleges within the state system. The commission shall consider the following criteria in determining whether to approve a bachelor of applied science degree program:~~

~~(I) Whether the state board provides data demonstrating workforce and student demand for the degree program;~~

~~(II) The regional and professional accreditation requirements for the degree program, if applicable, and whether the college can satisfy those requirements, as appropriate, at both the institutional and program levels;~~

~~(III) Whether the state board can demonstrate that providing the degree program within the community college system is cost-effective for the student and the community college system;~~

~~(IV) Whether the state board can demonstrate that the degree program is sufficiently distinguishable from:~~

~~(A) An existing degree program at a state four-year institution of higher education that is provided to a student who resides in the community college's geographic service area, as defined by the commission pursuant to section 23-1-109 (2), without the student having to change his or her residence; or~~

~~(B) A degree program that has been successfully offered previously in conjunction with a state four-year institution of higher education, which degree~~

program will be reinstated sooner than the degree program could be offered by the community college; and

~~(V) Whether the bachelor of applied science degree program could be provided through a statewide transfer agreement pursuant to section 23-1-108 (7) with an accredited state four-year institution in the community college's geographic service area or with an accredited state four-year institution of higher education that has a statewide service area, as defined by the commission pursuant to section 23-1-109 (2), that will deliver an existing bachelor of applied science program in the community college's geographic service area sooner than the degree program could be offered by the community college.~~

~~(b) In addition, in determining whether to approve a bachelor of applied science degree program, the commission:~~

~~(I) Shall consider whether the state board has met the criteria set forth in subparagraphs (I) to (IV) of paragraph (a) of this subsection (1) and whether the proposed bachelor of applied science degree program is in the best interests of the state of Colorado;~~

~~(II) Shall consult with the state board and state four-year institutions of higher education concerning whether the collaboration described in subparagraph (V) of paragraph (a) of this subsection (1) is feasible; and~~

~~(III) May consult with any state four-year institution of higher education that shares the same geographic service area, as defined by the commission pursuant to section 23-1-109 (2), concerning the proposed degree program to inform the commission of any anticipated systemwide effects of the new degree program.~~

(2) (a) In determining whether to approve a bachelor of applied science degree program SCIENCE DEGREE IN NURSING PROGRAM AS A COMPLETION DEGREE TO STUDENTS WHO HAVE OR ARE PURSUING AN ASSOCIATE DEGREE IN NURSING for Aims community college pursuant to ~~section 23-71-102~~ SECTION 23-71-102 (1)(b)(II)(B), the commission shall consider the following criteria:

(V) Whether the bachelor of applied science degree program could be provided through a statewide transfer agreement pursuant to section 23-1-108 (7) with an accredited state four-year institution in Aims community college's geographic service area or with an accredited state four-year institution of higher education that has a statewide service area, as defined by the commission pursuant to section 23-1-109 (2), that will deliver an existing bachelor of applied science DEGREE IN NURSING program in Aims community college's geographic service area sooner than the degree program could be offered by Aims community college.

(b) In addition, in determining whether to approve a bachelor of applied degree SCIENCE DEGREE IN NURSING program, the commission:

(I) Shall consider whether Aims community college has met the criteria set forth in subparagraphs (I) to (IV) of paragraph (a) of this subsection (2) SUBSECTIONS (2)(a)(I) TO (2)(a)(IV) OF THIS SECTION and whether the proposed bachelor of applied science degree program is in the best interests of the state of Colorado;

SECTION 8. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **amend** 23-60-201 as follows:

23-60-201. State system of community and technical colleges established - local district colleges - role and mission. There is established a state system of community and technical colleges that is under the management and jurisdiction of the state board for community colleges and occupational education. The mission of the community colleges is to serve Colorado residents who reside in their service areas by offering a broad range of general, personal, career, and technical education programs, ~~as well as~~ BACHELOR OF APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE PROGRAMS APPROVED PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-60-211 (4), AND bachelor of science in nursing completion programs that result in the awarding of a bachelor of science in nursing degree to successful candidates pursuant to section 23-60-211 (5). Except as provided in section 23-60-211, each college must be a two-year college. Each community college may offer two-year degree programs with or without academic designation, and, upon approval of the board pursuant to section 23-60-211, may offer technical, career, and workforce development bachelor of applied science degree programs. A community college shall not impose admission requirements upon any student. Admission to a community college does not guarantee enrollment in a specific program that has prerequisites. The objects of the community and technical colleges are to provide educational programs to fill the occupational needs of youth and adults in career and technical fields, two-year transfer educational programs to qualify students for admission to the junior year at other colleges and universities, developmental education courses, workforce development, and a broad range of personal and career education for adults, and technical, career, and workforce development bachelor of applied science degree programs established pursuant to section 23-60-211, that address the needs of the community within each community college service area.

SECTION 9. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-60-211, **amend** (5); and **repeal and reenact, with amendments,** (4) as follows:

23-60-211. Degrees. (4) (a) SUBJECT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 23-1-107, A COMMUNITY COLLEGE THAT IS PART OF THE STATE SYSTEM OF COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES MAY, WITH BOARD APPROVAL, OFFER A BACHELOR OF APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE. A COMMUNITY COLLEGE MAY REQUEST AUTHORITY TO OFFER MORE THAN ONE BACHELOR OF APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE PROGRAM. IN CONSIDERING WHETHER TO APPROVE A REQUEST BY A COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO OFFER A BACHELOR OF APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE, THE BOARD SHALL CONSIDER STUDENT AND WORKFORCE DEMAND, COST EFFECTIVENESS FOR THE STUDENTS, THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM, AND THE STATE, AND ACCREDITATION AND LICENSING REQUIREMENTS.

(b) THE BOARD SHALL NOTIFY THE COLORADO COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION OF EACH BACHELOR OF APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE PROGRAM THAT THE BOARD APPROVES PURSUANT TO THIS SUBSECTION (4).

(5) Subject to the requirements of sections 23-1-113.7 and 23-1-107, ~~and notwithstanding the provisions of section 23-1-133,~~ a community college that is part of the state system of community and technical colleges established and governed by this part 2 may, with board approval, offer a bachelor of science degree in nursing as a completion degree to students who have or are pursuing an associate

degree in nursing. In considering whether to approve a request by a community college to offer a bachelor of science in nursing as a completion degree, the board shall consider student and workforce demand, cost effectiveness for the students, and accreditation and licensing requirements. The board shall provide such information to the Colorado commission on higher education and solicit the commission's input in a joint meeting of the board and the commission. A community college that is seeking board approval shall provide the board with data regarding its current partnerships with existing bachelor of science nursing degree programs and its plans to continue such partnerships. At least ninety days prior to requesting board approval to offer a bachelor of science degree in nursing as a completion degree, the community college seeking such board approval shall provide notice to the Colorado commission on higher education and all state public and nonpublic institutions of higher education.

SECTION 10. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **amend** 23-71-102 as follows:

23-71-102. Definitions. As used in this article 71, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1)(a) "Local district college" means an educational institution that provides not more than two years of training in the arts, sciences, and humanities beyond the twelfth grade of the public high school curriculum or vocational education and that conducts occupational, technical, and community service programs, with no term limitations, and general education, including college transfer programs, with unrestricted admissions.

(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (1)(a) of this section:

(I) Colorado mountain college ~~in addition to its mission~~ IS A DUAL MISSION INSTITUTION, OPERATING as a local district college ~~and may also offer~~ AND OFFERING a limited number of baccalaureate degree programs, as its board of trustees determines appropriate to address the needs of the communities within its service area and ~~that~~ AS are approved by the Colorado commission on higher education. ~~Colorado mountain college should confer with regional education providers to determine the feasibility of cooperative delivery of new bachelor's programs in adjacent localities.~~ COLORADO MOUNTAIN COLLEGE MAY ALSO OFFER BACHELOR OF APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE PROGRAMS THAT ARE APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-71-134.

(II) Aims community college, in addition to its mission as a local district college, may also offer, as its board of trustees determines appropriate to address the needs of the communities within its service area: ~~that are approved by the Colorado commission on higher education pursuant to the criteria set forth in section 23-1-133 (2):~~

(A) Bachelor of applied science degree programs THAT ARE APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-71-134; and

(B) Bachelor of science degree in nursing programs, as a completion degree to students who have or are pursuing an associate degree in nursing, THAT ARE APPROVED BY THE COLORADO COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION PURSUANT TO

SECTION 23-1-133 (2).

SECTION 11. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-71-133, **amend** (3); and **repeal** (1) as follows:

23-71-133. Local district colleges - attorney general to advise - revenue for baccalaureate degree programs. (1) ~~When approving baccalaureate degrees for any local district college pursuant to the authority in section 23-71-102 (1), the Colorado commission on higher education shall make its determination based on the following criteria:~~

~~(a) Whether the local district college can demonstrate workforce and student demand for the baccalaureate degree program by providing data;~~

~~(b) Whether the local district college can demonstrate regional and professional accreditation requirements, when applicable, and compliance with those requirements as deemed appropriate at both the institutional and program levels;~~

~~(c) Whether the local district college can demonstrate that its provision of the baccalaureate degree program is the most cost-effective method of providing the baccalaureate degree program in its service area; and~~

~~(d) Whether the local district college can provide a cost-benefit analysis showing that the additional baccalaureate degree program will not create a negative impact for the local district college or require additional state-appropriated money to operate.~~

(3) In accordance with the budget adopted by the board of trustees pursuant to section 23-71-123 (1), a local district college may use any state-appropriated money it receives, in addition to any other ~~revenues~~ REVENUE of the college, to operate any baccalaureate degree program that the Colorado commission on higher education approves. ~~pursuant to this section.~~

SECTION 12. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 23-71-134 as follows:

23-71-134. Local district colleges - bachelor of applied science degree programs - approval. (1) A LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGE MAY, WITH THE APPROVAL OF ITS BOARD OF TRUSTEES, OFFER A BACHELOR OF APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE. A LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGE MAY REQUEST AUTHORITY TO OFFER MORE THAN ONE BACHELOR OF APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE. IN CONSIDERING WHETHER TO APPROVE A REQUEST TO OFFER A BACHELOR OF APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE, THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES SHALL CONSIDER STUDENT AND WORKFORCE DEMAND, COST EFFECTIVENESS FOR THE STUDENTS, AND ACCREDITATION AND LICENSING REQUIREMENTS.

(2) THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES SHALL NOTIFY THE COLORADO COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION OF EACH BACHELOR OF APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE PROGRAM THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVES PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION.

SECTION 13. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 23-1-138 as follows:

23-1-138. Commission directive - institutional role and mission - service areas - workforce development - study - report - legislative declaration - repeal.

(1) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS THAT, DUE IN PART TO THE CHALLENGES AND PRESSURES CAUSED BY THE GLOBAL COVID-19 PANDEMIC, INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION ARE FACING NEW OPERATIONAL AND ECONOMIC REALITIES DRIVEN BY DECLINING ENROLLMENT, INCREASING DEMAND FOR REMOTE LEARNING OPTIONS, AND THE INCREASING COSTS OF PROVIDING IN-PERSON EDUCATION AND MAINTAINING PHYSICAL CAMPUSES. THESE NEW REALITIES CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO SYSTEMICALLY RE-EXAMINE AND RECONSIDER THE OPERATIONS AND INTERACTIONS OF THE STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND HOW EACH INSTITUTION, INDIVIDUALLY AND IN COOPERATION WITH THE OTHER INSTITUTIONS, MAY MOST EFFECTIVELY MEET THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF COLORADO'S CITIZENS AND COLORADO'S WORKFORCE NEEDS. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS, THEREFORE, THAT IT IS APPROPRIATE TO RE-EXAMINE THE ROLE AND MISSION AND SERVICE AREAS OF THE STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION, LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGES, AND AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGES AND THE ROLE OF THE STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION, LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGES, AND AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGES IN PROVIDING EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.

(2) (a) NO LATER THAN AUGUST 1, 2021, THE COMMISSION SHALL CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO REVIEW THE ROLE AND MISSION AND SERVICE AREA OF EACH STATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION, AS DEFINED IN SECTION 23-18-102(10)(a), THE LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGES CREATED PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 71 OF THIS TITLE 23, AND THE AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGES, AND THE INTERACTION BETWEEN THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION, THE LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGES, THE AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGES, AND THE STATE WORK FORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL IN SUPPORTING AND IMPROVING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT. THE TASK FORCE, AT A MINIMUM, MUST INCLUDE A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE GOVERNING BOARD FOR EACH STATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION, INCLUDING THE STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION; A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR EACH LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGE; A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGES; A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE STATE WORK FORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL CREATED IN SECTION 24-46.3-101; POSTSECONDARY STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES APPOINTED BY THE COMMISSION FROM A VARIETY OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AROUND THE STATE; A REPRESENTATIVE OF A PRIVATE, NONPROFIT INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION; A PERSON EMPLOYED BY A SCHOOL DISTRICT OR A PUBLIC ELEMENTARY OR SECONDARY SCHOOL; A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY; TWO REPRESENTATIVES FROM HIGHER EDUCATION ADVOCACY GROUPS; AND AT LEAST ONE REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE COMMISSION. IN ADDITION, THE TASK FORCE SHALL WORK WITH THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE COMMISSION, CREATED IN SECTION 23-1-103, AND WITH THE EDUCATION LEADERSHIP COUNCIL CONVENED BY EXECUTIVE ORDER B2017-001. A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COMMISSION SHALL SERVE AS THE CHAIR OF THE TASK FORCE. THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PROVIDE STAFF SUPPORT TO THE TASK FORCE.

(b) AT A MINIMUM, THE TASK FORCE SHALL:

(1) REVIEW THE ROLE AND MISSION AND SERVICE AREA OF EACH STATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION, EACH LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGE, AND EACH AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE, INCLUDING ALL INSTRUCTION OFFERED BY WHATEVER MEANS OUTSIDE THE GEOGRAPHIC BOUNDARIES OF A CAMPUS AS DESCRIBED IN

SECTION 23-1-109 (4), TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE AVAILABILITY OF AND ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIAL PROGRAMS IS SUFFICIENT THROUGHOUT THE STATE WITHOUT UNDUE OVERLAP AND TO ENSURE THE MOST EFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES;

(II) REVIEW THE HISTORY, PURPOSE, EFFECT, AND CONTINUING BENEFIT OF SERVICE AREAS AND THE COMMISSION'S POLICY CONCERNING SERVICE AREAS AND, BASED ON THE DEGREE TO WHICH SERVICE AREAS IMPROVE AND ADD VALUE TO THE DELIVERY OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION WITHIN THE STATE AND SUPPORT THE STATE'S POSTSECONDARY ACCESS AND ATTAINMENT GOALS, RECOMMEND WHETHER THE SERVICE AREAS SHOULD CONTINUE AND WHETHER THE SERVICE AREAS SHOULD BE REDRAWN;

(III) EXAMINE WAYS IN WHICH TO LEVERAGE BEST PRACTICES THROUGH DATA AND TECHNOLOGY TO MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT INTERVENTIONS THAT DRIVE STUDENT SUCCESS; CREATE MULTIPLE AND LINKED PATHWAYS TO POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIALS, INCLUDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF INCREMENTAL CREDENTIALS THAT A STUDENT MAY ATTAIN WHILE WORKING TOWARD A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE; AND ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS AND BENEFIT TO STUDENTS, INCLUDING MINIMIZING COSTS AND TIME SPENT IN ATTAINING A CREDENTIAL OR DEGREE;

(IV) EXAMINE STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING STUDENT RETENTION AND COMPLETION AND TO ADDRESS THE CONSEQUENCES STUDENTS EXPERIENCE WHEN THEY INCUR DEBT IN ATTENDING AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION OR LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGE WITHOUT COMPLETING A DEGREE OR OTHER CREDENTIAL;

(V) DEVELOP EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR LEVERAGING FEDERAL HIGHER EDUCATION REFORMS, INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITY OF FUNDING FOR TWO YEARS OF POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT FOR EACH STUDENT, TO RAISE THE COMPLETION RATE FOR TWO-YEAR AND FOUR-YEAR DEGREE PROGRAMS;

(VI) REVIEW THE ROLE OF THE STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION, THE LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGES, THE AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGES, AND THE STATE WORK FORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL IN DESIGNING AND PROMOTING CAREER PATHWAYS AND OTHER WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES. THE GOAL OF THE REVIEW IS TO DETERMINE HOW THE ROLES OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE STATE WORK FORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MAY BE THOUGHTFULLY INTEGRATED TO REDUCE OVERLAP AND FACILITATE GREATER EFFICIENCIES AND ECONOMIES IN PROVIDING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND SKILLS TRAINING FOR TRADITIONAL AND NONTRADITIONAL STUDENTS AND TO SUPPORT AND MEET THE NEEDS OF THE WORKFORCE AND THE PROFESSIONAL, INDUSTRIAL, AND BUSINESS SECTORS IN COLORADO.

(VII) REVIEW POSSIBLE USES OF MONEY TRANSFERRED TO THE WORKERS, EMPLOYERS, AND WORKFORCE CENTERS CASH FUND PURSUANT TO SECTION 24-75-231 (2)(b)(I)(A) FOR PROGRAMS, SERVICES, OR OTHER ASSISTANCE FOR POPULATIONS DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTED BY THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY THAT ADDRESS OR MITIGATE THE IMPACTS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY ON EDUCATIONAL DISPARITIES.

(3) THE TASK FORCE SHALL PREPARE A REPORT OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS DEVELOPED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION, INCLUDING

RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE ROLE AND MISSION AND SERVICE AREA FOR EACH STATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION, THE LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGES, AND THE AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGES; AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE USE OF MONEY TRANSFERRED TO THE WORKERS, EMPLOYERS, AND WORKFORCE CENTERS CASH FUND PURSUANT TO SECTION 24-75-231 (2)(b)(I)(A), AS DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (2)(b)(VII) OF THIS SECTION. NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 15, 2021, THE TASK FORCE SHALL SUBMIT THE REPORT TO THE COMMISSION AND TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, OR ANY SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES, AND SHALL POST THE REPORT ON THE DEPARTMENT'S WEBSITE.

(4) THIS SECTION IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2022.

SECTION 14. In Colorado Revised Statutes, add 23-3.3-105 as follows:

23-3.3-105. Free application for federal student assistance - working group - report - legislative declaration - definition - repeal. (1) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS THAT EACH YEAR, COLORADO STUDENTS FAIL TO CLAIM APPROXIMATELY FIFTY MILLION DOLLARS IN AVAILABLE FEDERAL AND STATE FINANCIAL AID BECAUSE THEY DO NOT COMPLETE THE FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID OR THE COLORADO APPLICATION FOR STATE FINANCIAL AID. MOST FEDERAL STUDENT AID IS DISTRIBUTED THROUGH THE FEDERAL PELL GRANT PROGRAM, WHICH AWARDS INDIVIDUAL STUDENT GRANTS OF UP TO SIX THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED NINETY-FIVE DOLLARS PER YEAR THAT DO NOT HAVE TO BE REPAID. THE PELL GRANTS ARE PAID TO LOW-INCOME STUDENTS, WHO ARE UNLIKELY TO ENROLL IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION IF THEY DO NOT COMPLETE THE STUDENT AID FORMS. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS, THEREFORE, THAT IT IS NECESSARY TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO EXAMINE STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING THE RATE OF COMPLETION OF STUDENT AID FORMS AND THEREBY INCREASE POSTSECONDARY ACCESS, MATRICULATION, AND COMPLETION.

(2) AS USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES, "STUDENT AID APPLICATIONS" MEANS THE FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID AND THE COLORADO APPLICATION FOR STUDENT FINANCIAL AID.

(3)(a) THERE IS CREATED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION A WORKING GROUP TO RECOMMEND MEASURES FOR INCREASING THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO, BEFORE GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL, COMPLETE THE STUDENT AID APPLICATIONS. THE WORKING GROUP CONSISTS OF THIRTEEN MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR AS FOLLOWS:

(I) TWO PERSONS EMPLOYED AS HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS, ONE OF WHOM IS EMPLOYED IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL THAT IS LOCATED WITHIN THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT THAT ENROLLS MORE THAN ONE THOUSAND STUDENTS AND ONE OF WHOM IS EMPLOYED IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL THAT IS LOCATED WITHIN THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT THAT ENROLLS ONE THOUSAND STUDENTS OR FEWER;

(II) A PERSON EMPLOYED AS A SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT;

(III) A PERSON EMPLOYED AS A TEACHER IN A PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL;

(IV) A PERSON EMPLOYED AS A SCHOOL COUNSELOR IN A PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL;

(V) A PERSON WHO IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF AN ENTITY THAT ADVOCATES FOR IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES;

(VI) THREE PERSONS WHO REPRESENT HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS, WHICH MAY INCLUDE STUDENTS WHO ARE ENROLLED AT A STATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND INDIVIDUALS EMPLOYED BY STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL AID; AND

(VII) FOUR PERSONS WHO ARE STUDENT ADVOCATES, REPRESENTATIVES OF SCHOLARSHIP OR OTHER STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAMS, REPRESENTATIVES OF STATEWIDE ASSOCIATIONS THAT REPRESENT PERSONS WORKING IN EDUCATION, OR HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCHERS.

(b) THE GOVERNOR SHALL APPOINT THE MEMBERS OF THE WORKING GROUP BY AUGUST 1, 2021. IN APPOINTING MEMBERS OF THE WORKING GROUP THE GOVERNOR SHALL, TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, APPOINT PERSONS FROM ALL AREAS OF THE STATE WHO ARE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY OF THE STATE.

(c) THE MEMBERS OF THE WORKING GROUP SERVE WITHOUT COMPENSATION BUT MAY RECEIVE REIMBURSEMENT FOR NECESSARY EXPENSES INCURRED IN SERVING ON THE WORKING GROUP.

(d) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE COMMISSION SHALL CONVENE THE FIRST MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP NO LATER THAN AUGUST 15, 2021. AT THE FIRST MEETING, THE MEMBERS OF THE WORKING GROUP SHALL SELECT FROM AMONG THEIR MEMBERS A PERSON TO SERVE AS THE CHAIR OF THE WORKING GROUP. THE CHAIR SHALL CONVENE SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS OF THE WORKING GROUP AS OFTEN AS NECESSARY TO COMPLETE ITS DUTIES PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION. THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SHALL PROVIDE STAFF AND OTHER ASSISTANCE TO THE WORKING GROUP UPON REQUEST.

(4) THE WORKING GROUP SHALL REVIEW BEST PRACTICES WITHIN COLORADO AND IN OTHER STATES AND THE EXISTING RESEARCH CONCERNING POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIAL COMPLETION TO IDENTIFY AND RECOMMEND RESOURCES AND STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING THE RATE OF COMPLETION OF THE STUDENT AID APPLICATIONS. AT A MINIMUM, THE WORKING GROUP SHALL CONSIDER:

(a) HOW TO LEVERAGE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS TO INCREASE THE STUDENT AID APPLICATION COMPLETION RATE;

(b) INCENTIVES AND SCHOOL-BASED SUPPORTS TO ASSIST IN COMPLETING STUDENT AID APPLICATIONS, WHICH MAY INCLUDE REQUIRING COMPLETION OF STUDENT AID APPLICATIONS FOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION; AND

(c) NECESSARY LEGISLATIVE, REGULATORY, OR POLICY CHANGES TO IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES.

(5) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 15, 2022, THE WORKING GROUP SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT OF ITS FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASING

THE COMPLETION RATE FOR STUDENT AID APPLICATIONS TO THE COMMISSION, THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, THE JOINT BUDGET COMMITTEE, AND THE EDUCATION COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, OR ANY SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES.

(6) THIS SECTION IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2022.

SECTION 15. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **amend 23-7-111** as follows:

23-7-111. Tuition classification for persons who move to Colorado for employment. (1) (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this ~~article~~ ARTICLE 7 to the contrary, and subject to the provisions of subsections (2) to (4) of this section, a ~~child~~ MINOR who is a legal resident of the United States and who would otherwise not be classified as an in-state student for tuition purposes under this ~~article~~ ARTICLE 7 may be classified as an in-state student for purposes of tuition at an institution if:

(I) The ~~child's~~ MINOR IS CONSIDERED A DEPENDENT AND THE MINOR'S parent or legal guardian moved his or her family to Colorado for the purpose of accepting a job in the state during the ~~child's~~ MINOR'S senior year of high school;

(II) The ~~child~~ MINOR moved with his or her parent or legal guardian to Colorado during the ~~child's~~ MINOR'S senior year of high school; and

(III) The ~~child~~ MINOR graduated from a Colorado public high school.

(b) Each institution shall develop a policy to verify that a ~~child~~ MINOR meets each of the requirements specified in ~~paragraph (a) of this subsection (1)~~ SUBSECTION (1)(a) OF THIS SECTION.

(2) If a ~~child~~ MINOR is classified as an in-state student pursuant to this section, ~~he or she~~ THE MINOR may be counted as a resident student for any purpose; except that the ~~child shall not be~~ MINOR IS NOT entitled to receive state financial aid.

(3) The governing board of each institution may grant in-state tuition status to a ~~child~~ MINOR classified as an in-state student pursuant to this section.

(4) IF A QUALIFIED PERSON MOVES TO COLORADO FOR PURPOSES OF ACCEPTING A JOB WITH AN EMPLOYER THAT WILL PAY THE QUALIFIED PERSON'S TUITION, AND THE QUALIFIED PERSON DEMONSTRATES INTENT TO ESTABLISH PERMANENT DOMICILE IN THE STATE, THE GOVERNING BOARD OF AN INSTITUTION MAY GRANT IN-STATE TUITION STATUS TO THE QUALIFIED PERSON FOR PURPOSES OF TUITION ONLY.

~~(4)~~(5) If a ~~child~~ MINOR OR A QUALIFIED PERSON is classified as an in-state student pursuant to this section, the ~~child shall not be~~ MINOR OR QUALIFIED PERSON IS NOT entitled to receive a stipend pursuant to article 18 of this ~~title~~ TITLE 23 for the first year the ~~child~~ MINOR OR QUALIFIED PERSON is enrolled at an institution.

SECTION 16. Appropriation. (1) For the 2021-22 state fiscal year, \$49,000,000 is appropriated to the Colorado opportunity scholarship initiative fund

created in section 23-3.3-1005 (1), C.R.S. This appropriation is from the workers, employers, and workforce centers cash fund created in section 24-75-231, C.R.S., and of money the state received from the federal coronavirus state fiscal recovery fund. The department of higher education is responsible for the accounting related to this appropriation. To implement this act, the department may use this appropriation to implement section 23-3.3-1006, C.R.S.

(2) For the 2021-22 state fiscal year, \$1,500,000 is appropriated to the Colorado opportunity scholarship initiative fund created in section 23-3.3-1005 (1), C.R.S. This appropriation is from the workers, employers, and workforce centers cash fund created in section 24-75-231, C.R.S., and of money the state received from the federal coronavirus state fiscal recovery fund. The department of higher education is responsible for the accounting related to this appropriation. To implement this act, the department may use this appropriation to implement the student aid applications completion grant program created in section 23-3.3-1007, C.R.S.

(3) For the 2021-22 state fiscal year, \$1,000,000 is appropriated to the department of higher education. This appropriation is from the workers, employers, and workforce centers cash fund created in section 24-75-231, C.R.S., and of money the state received from the federal coronavirus state fiscal recovery fund, and is based on an assumption that the department will require an additional 1.0 FTE. To implement this act, the department may use this appropriation for the Colorado re-engaged initiative created in section 23-1-131.5, C.R.S., and the associate degree completion program described in section 23-1-131, C.R.S.

SECTION 17. Effective date. This act takes effect upon passage; except that sections 4 and 16 of this act and section 23-1-138 (2)(b)(VI) and (3), C.R.S., enacted in section 13 of this act, take effect only if House Bill 21-1264 is enacted and becomes law, in which case they will take effect on the effective date of this act or one day after the passage of House Bill 21-1264, whichever is later.

SECTION 18. Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety.

Approved: June 29, 2021