

HB 1301: Support Protecting a Student's Access to School Records

Rep. Michaelson Jenet, Sens. Holbert and Fields

*The general assembly shall, as soon as practicable, provide for the establishment and maintenance of a thorough and uniform system of free public schools throughout the state, wherein all residents of the state, between the ages of six and twenty-one years, **may be educated gratuitously.***

Colo. Const. Art. IX, Section 2

BACKGROUND

- All kids living in the United States have the right to a free public education. No student should be prevented from receiving their education because of inability to pay.
- Under current law, the transcripts, grades, and diplomas of students who have, for example, lost a library book, can be withheld in an attempt to recover those fees.
- This prevents dropped out students and students from low-income families in particular from being able to reengage in the K-12 system after disengaging, moving, or attempting to enroll in an institution of higher education.
- Between 10,000 – 11,000 students drop out annually, or about 2.5% of Colorado students. Over 95% of the students served at AEC schools are considered at high risk of dropping out. Many students attempting to reengage in the education system are not able to access their student records.
- Records of time in school and credits earned belong to the student.

BILL ACTION

- Currently, local education providers can withhold student's grades, transcripts, and diplomas if the student owes fees or fines for lost or damaged textbooks, library books, or other school property.
- The bill says that the local education provider shall not withhold those records required for enrollment due to unpaid fees or fines.
- Local education providers retain the ability to attempt to recover the fees and fines in other ways. Nothing in the bill limits the authority of a school district to collect debt.

VOTE YES ON HB 1301



DEMOCRATS
 for EDUCATION REFORM