

SENATE COMMITTEE OF REFERENCE REPORT

Chair of Committee

March 27, 2024
Date

Committee on Education.

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

SB24-164 be amended as follows, and as so amended, be referred to the Committee of the Whole with favorable recommendation:

1 Amend printed bill, strike everything below the enacting clause and
2 substitute:

3 **"SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-1-125, **amend**
4 (1) introductory portion; and **add** (1)(h), (1)(i), (1)(j), (1)(k), (1.5), and (6)
5 as follows:

6 **23-1-125. Commission directive - student bill of rights - degree**
7 **requirements - implementation of core courses - competency test -**
8 **prior learning - prior work-related experience - policies - definitions**
9 **- repeal. (1) Student bill of rights.** The general assembly hereby finds
10 that students enrolled in public institutions of higher education shall have
11 the following rights:

12 (h) STUDENTS HAVE A RIGHT TO TRANSPARENCY OF THE COST OF
13 POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAMS, INCLUDING INFORMATION ON
14 FEES, ASSOCIATED EXPENSES, AND FINANCIAL AID IN THE FORM OF
15 SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS, AND LOANS;

16 (i) STUDENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO SEAMLESS TRANSFER OF
17 COURSES IN THE GUARANTEED TRANSFER PATHWAY MATRIX,
18 TRANSPARENCY IN THE PROCESS FOR TRANSFERRING CREDITS, A TIMELY
19 RESPONSE ON APPLICATIONS FOR TRANSFERRING CREDITS, AND
20 TRANSPARENCY IN HOW AND WHY A CREDIT IS ACCEPTED OR REJECTED BY
21 AN INSTITUTION AND HOW AND WHY A CREDIT IS OR IS NOT APPLIED
22 TOWARD DEGREE REQUIREMENTS;

23 (j) STUDENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO APPEAL AN INSTITUTION'S
24 FAILURE TO ACCEPT THE STUDENT'S REQUEST FOR TRANSFER CREDIT; AND

25 (k) STUDENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO KNOW WHAT WORK-RELATED
26 EXPERIENCES OR PRIOR LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES ARE AWARDED
27 POSTSECONDARY ACADEMIC CREDIT AT THE INSTITUTION IN WHICH THE

1 STUDENT IS ENROLLED, PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-5-145.5.

2 (1.5) **Policies.** ON OR BEFORE APRIL 1, 2025, THE COMMISSION
3 SHALL ADOPT POLICIES FOR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION
4 ON HOW TO BEST IMPLEMENT THE RIGHT DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (1)(i)
5 OF THIS SECTION.

6 (6) **Definitions.** AS USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT
7 OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

8 (a) "GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE" MEANS A LOWER-DIVISION
9 COURSE OFFERED BY AN INSTITUTION THAT ANY DEGREE-SEEKING
10 STUDENT ENROLLED AT THE INSTITUTION MUST SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE
11 IN ORDER TO OBTAIN AN ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE OR A BACHELOR'S DEGREE
12 FROM THE INSTITUTION.

13 (b) "GUARANTEED TRANSFER PATHWAY MATRIX" MEANS A GROUP
14 OF GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES OR LOWER-DIVISION COURSES REQUIRED
15 FOR A SPECIFIC PROGRAM AT THE INSTITUTION THAT EVERY STUDENT
16 ENROLLED IN THE SPECIFIC PROGRAM AT THE INSTITUTION MUST
17 SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE IN ORDER TO TRANSFER TO OR FROM AN
18 INSTITUTION AND HAS EQUIVALENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AS THE SAME
19 COURSES OFFERED BY ANOTHER INSTITUTION.

20 (c) "LOWER-DIVISION COURSE" MEANS A COURSE NUMBERED FROM
21 ONE HUNDRED TO TWO HUNDRED NINETY-NINE.

22 (d) "PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION" OR
23 "INSTITUTION" HAS THE SAME MEANING SET FORTH IN SECTION 23-4.5-102.

24 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-1-108.5, **amend**
25 (1), (2)(c), (3)(a), (3)(b), (3)(c), (4), and (5); **repeal** (2)(b) and (2)(d); and
26 **add** (2)(e), (2)(f), (2)(g), (3)(d.5), (3)(d.7), (6.5), and (8) as follows:

27 **23-1-108.5. Duties and powers of the commission with regard**
28 **to common course numbering system - council of higher education**
29 **representatives - rules - legislative declaration - definitions - repeal.**
30 (1) The general assembly ~~hereby~~ finds that, for many students, the ability
31 to transfer among all ~~state-supported institutions of~~ higher education
32 INSTITUTIONS is critical to their success in achieving a degree. The
33 general assembly further finds that it is necessary for the state to have
34 sound transfer policies that provide the broadest and simplest mechanisms
35 feasible while protecting the academic quality of the institutions of higher
36 education and their undergraduate degree programs. The general
37 assembly finds, therefore, that it is in the best interests of the state for the
38 commission to oversee the adoption of ~~a statewide articulation matrix~~
39 ~~system of course numbering for general education courses~~ THE
40 GUARANTEED TRANSFER PATHWAY MATRIX, ~~that~~ WHICH includes all
41 ~~state-supported institutions of~~ higher education INSTITUTIONS and ~~that~~
42 will ensure that the quality of ~~and requirements that pertain to general~~
43 ~~education courses~~ THE GUARANTEED TRANSFER PATHWAY MATRIX

1 COURSES are comparable and transferable systemwide.

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

3 (b) ~~"Course numbering system" means the statewide articulation~~
4 ~~matrix system of common course numbering for general education~~
5 ~~courses adopted by the commission pursuant to paragraph (c) of~~
6 ~~subsection (3) of this section.~~

7 (c) ~~"General education courses COURSE" means the group of~~
8 ~~courses offered by an institution of higher education that every student~~
9 ~~enrolled in the institution must successfully complete to attain an~~
10 ~~associate's or bachelor's degree~~ A LOWER-DIVISION COURSE OFFERED BY
11 AN INSTITUTION THAT ANY DEGREE-SEEKING STUDENT ENROLLED AT THE
12 INSTITUTION MUST SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE IN ORDER TO OBTAIN AN
13 ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE OR A BACHELOR'S DEGREE FROM THE INSTITUTION.

14 (d) ~~"Higher education institution" means a state-supported~~
15 ~~institution of higher education.~~

16 (e) "GUARANTEED TRANSFER PATHWAY MATRIX" MEANS A GROUP
17 OF GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES OR LOWER-DIVISION COURSES REQUIRED
18 FOR A SPECIFIC PROGRAM AT THE INSTITUTION THAT EVERY STUDENT
19 ENROLLED IN THE SPECIFIC PROGRAM AT THE INSTITUTION MUST
20 SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE IN ORDER TO TRANSFER TO OR FROM AN
21 INSTITUTION AND THAT HAS EQUIVALENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AS THE
22 SAME COURSES OFFERED BY ANOTHER INSTITUTION.

23 (f) "HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION" OR "INSTITUTION" MEANS
24 A PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AS DEFINED IN SECTION
25 23-4.5-102.

26 (g) "LOWER-DIVISION COURSE" MEANS A COURSE NUMBERED FROM
27 ONE HUNDRED TO TWO HUNDRED NINETY-NINE.

28 (d.5) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 31, 2024, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL
29 ADD ADDITIONAL REPRESENTATIVES AS NECESSARY TO THE COUNCIL TO
30 ENSURE EQUAL REPRESENTATION OF INSTITUTIONS ON THE COUNCIL.

31 (d.7) ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 2025, AND EVERY OCTOBER 1
32 THEREAFTER, THE COUNCIL SHALL REVIEW THE LIST OF COURSES IN THE
33 GUARANTEED TRANSFER PATHWAY MATRIX AND MAKE
34 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMISSION AS NECESSARY TO MAKE
35 CHANGES AND MAINTAIN ACCURACY. AS PART OF THE REVIEW, THE
36 COUNCIL SHALL IDENTIFY:

37 (I) THE HIGHEST ENROLLMENT AND TRANSFER ACTIVITY FOR
38 COURSES IN THE GUARANTEED TRANSFER PATHWAY MATRIX;

39 (II) COURSES THAT STUDENTS ARE LESS LIKELY TO RECEIVE FULL
40 CREDIT FOR THAT APPLY TOWARD THE STUDENT'S CHOSEN ACADEMIC
41 PROGRAM UPON TRANSFER; AND

42 (III) HOW THE NUMBER OF CREDIT HOURS DIFFERS AMONG
43 INSTITUTIONS AND WHERE MISALIGNMENT OCCURS BETWEEN COURSES IN

1 THE GUARANTEED TRANSFER PATHWAY MATRIX.

2 (3) (a) On or before July 1, 2001, the commission shall convene
3 a council consisting of representatives from each of the higher education
4 governing boards and each of the four-year higher education institutions,
5 a representative sample of the two-year higher education institutions, and
6 a representative of the commission. The commission shall consult with
7 the governing boards when convening representatives from the higher
8 education institutions. By July 1, 2011, the council shall create a process
9 through which it shall seek input from and consult with various higher
10 education student organizations for each articulation agreement and for
11 the review of ~~general education courses and the course numbering system~~
12 ~~as required in paragraph (c) of this subsection~~ (3) COURSES IN THE
13 GUARANTEED TRANSFER PATHWAY MATRIX AS REQUIRED IN SUBSECTION
14 (3)(c) OF THIS SECTION.

15 (b) The council shall recommend to the commission a ~~statewide~~
16 ~~articulation matrix system of common course numbering~~ GUARANTEED
17 TRANSFER PATHWAY MATRIX to which the general education courses for
18 each ~~higher education~~ institution may be mapped.

19 (c) (I) On or before October 1, 2002, the council shall recommend
20 to the commission a list of ~~general education~~ courses to be included in the
21 ~~course numbering system~~ GUARANTEED TRANSFER PATHWAY MATRIX. In
22 identifying ~~said general education~~ THE courses, the council shall review
23 the course descriptions and may request summaries of course syllabi for
24 review, focusing first on lower-division general education courses. The
25 commission shall review the council's recommendations and adopt a
26 ~~statewide articulation matrix system of common course numbering~~
27 GUARANTEED TRANSFER PATHWAY MATRIX for general education courses,
28 including criteria for ~~such~~ THE courses, on or before January 1, 2003.

29 (II) The council shall annually review the list of ~~general education~~
30 courses and the ~~course numbering system~~ GUARANTEED TRANSFER
31 PATHWAY MATRIX, including the criteria, adopted by the commission and
32 recommend ~~such~~ changes as may be necessary to maintain the accuracy
33 and integrity of the ~~course numbering system~~ GUARANTEED TRANSFER
34 PATHWAY MATRIX. The council's annual review ~~shall~~ MUST include
35 consideration of the course descriptions, and the council may request
36 summaries of course syllabi for further review.

37 (4) (a) ~~Following adoption of the course numbering system, each~~
38 ~~higher education institution shall review its course offerings and identify~~
39 ~~those general education courses offered by the institution that correspond~~
40 ~~with the courses included in the course numbering system.~~ The EACH
41 higher education institution shall submit its list of identified courses IN
42 THE GUARANTEED TRANSFER PATHWAY MATRIX, including course
43 descriptions and, upon request of the commission, summaries of course

1 syllabi, for review and approval by the commission on or before March
2 1, 2003, AND ON MARCH 1 OF EACH ODD-NUMBERED YEAR THEREAFTER.

3 (b) Beginning with the fall semester of 2003, each higher
4 education institution shall publish, and update as necessary, a list of
5 course offerings that identifies ~~those general education~~ courses offered by
6 the institution that correspond with the courses included in the ~~course~~
7 ~~numbering system~~ GUARANTEED TRANSFER PATHWAY MATRIX.

8 (5) (a) All credits earned by a student in ~~any general education~~
9 ~~course identified as corresponding with a course included in the course~~
10 ~~numbering system shall be~~ THE GUARANTEED TRANSFER PATHWAY
11 MATRIX ARE automatically transferable AND APPLICABLE among all higher
12 education institutions upon transfer and enrollment of the student. All
13 higher education institutions ~~in Colorado~~ shall participate in the ~~course~~
14 ~~numbering system~~ GUARANTEED TRANSFER PATHWAY MATRIX. The
15 commission shall adopt ~~such~~ policies and guidelines as ~~may be~~ necessary
16 for the implementation of this section. Each INSTITUTION'S governing
17 board shall modify its existing policies as ~~may be~~ necessary to accept the
18 transfer of these credits.

19 (b) ALL COURSES IN THE GUARANTEED TRANSFER PATHWAY
20 MATRIX SYSTEM MUST QUALIFY AS THE SAME COURSE AT THE RECEIVING
21 INSTITUTION, IRRESPECTIVE OF THE TOTAL CREDITS ASSIGNED TO THE
22 COURSE.

23 (c) A RECEIVING INSTITUTION SHALL NOT REQUIRE A TRANSFER
24 STUDENT TO TAKE THE SAME OR SIMILAR COURSES WHO HAS COMPLETED
25 THE REQUIRED COURSE IN THE GUARANTEED TRANSFER PATHWAY MATRIX,
26 REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE STUDENT EARNED AN ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE
27 PRIOR TO TRANSFER.

28 (6.5) (a) NOTWITHSTANDING SECTION 24-1-136 (11)(a)(I),
29 BEGINNING JANUARY 2026, AND EVERY JANUARY THEREAFTER, THE
30 DEPARTMENT SHALL INCLUDE AS PART OF ITS "SMART ACT" HEARING,
31 REQUIRED BY SECTION 2-7-203, A COMPILED REPORT OF INFORMATION
32 RECEIVED FROM EACH HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION THAT INCLUDES:

33 (I) THE NUMBER OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS TRANSFERRING
34 TO THE INSTITUTION AND EACH INSTITUTION THAT A STUDENT IS
35 TRANSFERRING FROM;

36 (II) THE AVERAGE TIME NEEDED TO COMPLETE A BACHELOR'S
37 DEGREE FOR A TRANSFER STUDENT COMPARED TO A NON-TRANSFER
38 STUDENT;

39 (III) THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CREDITS ACCEPTED AND APPLIED
40 RELATED TO GUARANTEED TRANSFER PATHWAY COURSES, GENERAL
41 EDUCATION COURSES, AND OTHER COURSE EQUIVALENTS; AND

42 (IV) THE NUMBER OF CREDITS THAT WERE ACCEPTED AND NOT
43 ACCEPTED, AND THE NUMBER OF CREDITS THAT WERE APPLIED AND WERE

1 NOT APPLIED TO EACH STUDENT'S DEGREE PROGRAM COURSE
2 REQUIREMENTS, DISAGGREGATED BY DEGREE PROGRAM.

3 (b) USING EXISTING STATEWIDE DATA, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL
4 ALSO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION FOR EACH INSTITUTION
5 REGARDING THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF TRANSFER CREDITS EARNED AND THE
6 TOTAL AMOUNT OF CREDITS APPLIED TOWARD DEGREE REQUIREMENTS IN
7 THE REPORT REQUIRED IN SUBSECTION (6.5)(a) OF THIS SECTION:

8 (I) THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF CREDITS ATTEMPTED AND THE
9 NUMBER OF CREDITS EARNED TO OBTAIN A BACHELOR'S DEGREE FOR A
10 TRANSFER STUDENT COMPARED TO A STUDENT WHO DID NOT TRANSFER TO
11 ANOTHER INSTITUTION BEFORE EARNING THE BACHELOR'S DEGREE; AND

12 (II) THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF ACADEMIC TERMS NEEDED TO
13 COMPLETE A BACHELOR'S DEGREE FOR A TRANSFER STUDENT COMPARED
14 TO A STUDENT WHO DID NOT TRANSFER TO ANOTHER INSTITUTION BEFORE
15 EARNING THE BACHELOR'S DEGREE.

16 (8) (a) THE DEPARTMENT HAS EXCLUSIVE AUTHORITY TO BRING
17 AN ENFORCEMENT ACTION ON BEHALF OF THE STATE AGAINST AN
18 INSTITUTION FOR A VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION.

19 (b) PRIOR TO AN ENFORCEMENT ACTION PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION
20 (8)(a) OF THIS SECTION, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ISSUE A NOTICE OF
21 VIOLATION TO THE INSTITUTION AND EXPLAIN HOW THE INSTITUTION MAY
22 REMEDY THE VIOLATION, IF POSSIBLE. IF THE INSTITUTION FAILS TO
23 REMEDY THE VIOLATION WITHIN THREE MONTHS AFTER RECEIPT OF THE
24 NOTICE OF VIOLATION, THE DEPARTMENT MAY BRING AN ENFORCEMENT
25 ACTION AGAINST THE INSTITUTION.

26 (c) THE DEPARTMENT HAS THE AUTHORITY TO OVERTURN A
27 COURSE TRANSFER DECISION MADE BY AN INSTITUTION THAT IS IN
28 VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION.

29 (d) A STUDENT ENROLLED AT AN INSTITUTION MAY APPEAL AN
30 INSTITUTION'S DECISION REGARDING THE DENIAL OF CREDIT FOR COURSES
31 IN THE GUARANTEED TRANSFER PATHWAY MATRIX THAT THE STUDENT
32 SEEKS TO TRANSFER THROUGH AN APPEALS PROCESS ESTABLISHED BY THE
33 DEPARTMENT.

34 (e) THE DEPARTMENT MAY PROMULGATE RULES AS NECESSARY TO
35 IMPLEMENT THIS SUBSECTION (8).

36 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add 23-5-150** as
37 follows:

38 **23-5-150. Transfer credit review process and nontransferable**
39 **credit - notice - definition.** (1) AN INSTITUTION SHALL PROVIDE A
40 STUDENT SEEKING TO TRANSFER CREDIT FROM THE INSTITUTION WITH A
41 DETERMINATION REGARDING THE ACCEPTANCE OR DENIAL OF THE
42 STUDENT'S REQUEST AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION FOR TRANSFER
43 CREDIT WITHIN THIRTY DAYS AFTER THE DATE THE STUDENT SUBMITS A

1 REQUEST FOR TRANSFER CREDIT.

2 (2) AN INSTITUTION SHALL PUBLISH THE INSTITUTION'S PROCESS
3 AND TIMELINE FOR REVIEWING AND MAKING A DECISION REGARDING
4 TRANSFER CREDIT REQUESTS ON THE INSTITUTION'S WEBSITE. THE
5 INSTITUTION SHALL UPDATE ITS WEBSITE WITHIN THIRTY DAYS AFTER
6 MAKING A CHANGE TO ITS PROCESS AND TIMELINE FOR REVIEWING AND
7 ISSUING DECISIONS REGARDING TRANSFER CREDIT REQUESTS.

8 (3) AS USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE
9 REQUIRES, "INSTITUTION" MEANS A "PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER
10 EDUCATION" AS DEFINED IN SECTION 23-4.5-102.

11 **SECTION 4.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-70-103, **amend**
12 (3) as follows:

13 **23-70-103. Responsibility of governing boards of constituent**
14 **institutions.** (3) The respective governing boards of the constituent
15 institutions shall ~~provide~~ ENSURE that credits earned at each of the
16 constituent institutions ~~shall be~~ ARE transferable between institutions
17 ~~insofar as they meet the degree and grade requirements of the student's~~
18 ~~chosen program of studies at one of the constituent institutions as~~
19 ~~determined by the degree-granting institution~~ AS REQUIRED BY SECTION
20 23-1-108.5.

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

** ** ** ** **