



Higher Education Legislative Agenda

Mission Critical & Responding to COVID-19

Revising the Higher Education Funding Formula | This proposal revises the funding allocation formula, which is the mechanism that DHE uses to distribute state investment to Colorado's public institutions of higher education. This revision will make the formula more **performance and equity based**, with alignment to the *Colorado Rises* master plan for higher education.

- Drafted as a Joint Budget Committee bill.

Amending the Dependent Tuition Assistance Program (DTAP) | DTAP is an **entitlement program** for the dependents of deceased or permanently disabled national guardsmen, law enforcement officers, or firefighters to **receive full tuition and base room** and board at a public in-state institution of higher education, and a comparable tuition benefit at an out-of-state or private institution. The Department received guidance from the Attorney General (AG) that existing statute [23-3.3-201] **does not specify** that a public safety officer applying for DTAP must have served within Colorado or have been a Colorado resident. DHE seeks to clarify this in statute.

- Bill title pulled, working on drafting with Senators Fields and Gardner and Representatives Exum and McLachlan.

Financial Aid Flexibility for Institutions | As institutions of higher education face **new costs for online learning** and **possible budget cuts**, it will be more important than ever that students **receive robust financial aid packages to offset the cost of tuition**. Colorado's higher education community has requested flexibility in their financial aid delivery, which will require a temporary removal of the **10% cap of financial aid disbursement** from one-line item to another, for FY20-21.

- Can accomplish via Long Bill footnote.

Waiving Testing Admissions Requirement for 4-Year Institutions | School districts across the state have moved to online learning in response to the Coronavirus. This pandemic has also caused CollegeBoard and the ACT to stop administering national standardized testing. Colorado's public 4-year institutions have asked for the **temporary waiver of the requirement to collect national standardized test scores from students until spring 2021** – to ensure the ability to admit students who could not complete the SAT/ACT during this pandemic.

- Senator Story and Representative McLachlan have indicated their desire to sponsor.

Advancing the Use of Low-Cost Textbooks on College Campuses | In a time of **remote, online learning and the rising cost of a college degree**, this proposal requires each public institution of higher education to **adopt and implement policy** that allows faculty to **consider the use of open educational resources (OER)**. This will provide a pathway for faculty and students to advocate for free textbooks on their campus. The proposal also requires the Department to collect certain data around what courses use OER in Colorado.

- Bill has not been introduced. Sponsored by Senators Lundeen and Bridges.

HB20-1002—College Credit for Work Experience | This bill requires the Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) and institutions of higher education to create a plan to evaluate and produce a statewide path to award college credit to students for prior work experience. This will provide the ability for **returning students**, displaced by COVID-19, to **bring their prior work experience** to their institution of choice and receive college credit that is transferable statewide. This important strategy lowers cost and time to completion for students.

- Will amend to eliminate fiscal note and rely on gifts, grants and donations for implementation efforts. Is in the House on 2nd reading.