

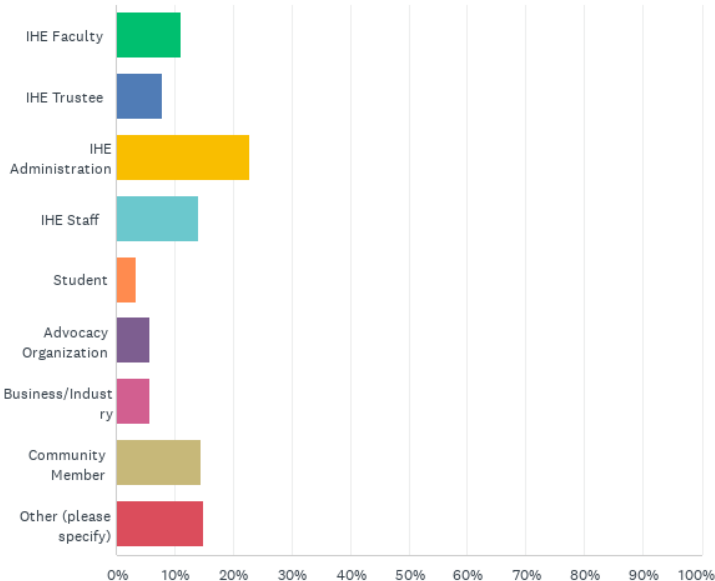
CCHE Survey on the Higher Education Funding Formula

Question 1

Question 1 Text

What kind of organization are you representing?

Question 1 Responses



Question 2

Question 2 Text

If you would like to provide the organization you represent, please provide that here. This is optional and you are not required to provide this information if you wish to remain fully anonymous.

Question 2 Responses

Responses
Adams State
Adams State University
Adams State University
Adams State University
Adams State University
Alliance for Research on Regional Colleges and the University of Denver
Area Technical Colleges
BCG
Canon City High School
CCCS
CDHE
CDHE
CDHE
CDHE employee
Colorado Commission on Higher Ed.
Colorado Department of Higher Education
Colorado Mountain College
Colorado School of Mines
Colorado State University
Colorado State University
Colorado State University
Colorado State University
Colorado State University Fort Collins

Responses

Colorado workforce development council

Community College of Denver

Community of Northern Colorado

Complete College America

CSU

CTN

Delta County School District 50J

Durango 4C Council/Tri-County Head Start

Ednium: The Alumni Collective

front range CC

Front Range Community College

Front Range Community College

Gary Community Ventures

Institutional Research

Jeffco Schools

Joint Budget Committee Staff - note that I do not represent the JBC MEMBERS

Mines

MSU Denver

MSU Denver

MSU Denver

My Brother's and Sister's Keeper Colorado

Northeastern Junior College

Open-Ended Response

Pueblo Community College

Responses
Region 9 EDD of Southwest Colorado
Rocky Mountain Partnership Cradle to Career
Rocky Mountain partnership- Civic influencer
Rural Community Colleges
Self
State of Colorado
The Attainment Network
The Attainment Network
Trinidad State College
University of Colorado Denver Geography and Environmental Sciences Department, Undergraduate Director
University of Northern Colorado
University of Northern Colorado
University of Northern Colorado
University of Northern Colorado
Western Colorado University
Western Colorado University
WSU
Young Invincibles
Young Invincibles

Question 3

Question 3 Text

What should a student expect from attaining a postsecondary credential in Colorado?

Question 3 Responses

Responses
1
<p>- Opportunities to well-paying and sustainable career pathways - Financial assistance or debt-free opportunities - Access to a professional network - Graduating with internships and/or work experience</p>
...
<p>(1) Knowledge, skills and abilities that provide them a competitive advantage in pursuit of their intended profession (2) Economic mobility. An individual who is so loaded with college debt that it takes ten years to get to zero must question the long-term financial value of a college education (See: Declining Enrollment)</p>
a
A better life
A career path to a good paying job
A clear path to a credential of their choice.
A credential of value that translates into increased earning potential. A credential that demonstrates competency in additional skills gained through attainment.
A credential that is recognized and financially valued in the workplace, as well as a credential that the student values as something that has expanded their knowledge, experience, and horizons
A degree and/or credentials that prepare them for the workforce. This should include digital and information literacies, leadership, soft skills, etc. It would be helpful if students were prepared to have the critical thinking skills to not only think on the job, but also to engage in debate respectfully and constructively with those that have different values.
a foundation for lifelong learning and entry into an occupation or profession
A good job and a sense of fulfilment.
A low cost and clear upfront pathway to a degree or certificate that will not put them in debt.
A marketable certificate or degree.
A postsecondary student in Colorado needs to be a valuable and flexible asset to employers in a dynamic and quickly changing workplace and world. Critical thinking, problem solving and the ability to effectively communicate should be key attributes possessed by graduates entering the workforce.

Responses

Motivated graduates should be equipped to pursue expanded earning potential, career advancement, career mobility and meaningful, engaging work experience.

A quality education that is affordable and accessible.

A quality education; to not be strapped with debt; the ability to improve their future economically, socially, and personally

A rich learning experience and social mobility

A solid foundational preparation in history and strategic planning, a bit of financial literacy, critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration. A demonstrated awareness of how systems and people operate most effectively. Time management wouldn't hurt. Basically, the arts and sciences foundation that gets such bad press but that everyone notices when it is missing.

A strong financial future, a unique skill set that sets them apart from the other career candidates.

A student attaining a postsecondary credential in Colorado should expect to be prepared for meaningful, high-demand career opportunities that align with their skills and labor market needs. Postsecondary programs should provide access to career-connected learning and evidence-based pathways, enabling students to complete their education cost-efficiently, transition seamlessly into quality jobs, and achieve economic mobility while meeting the state's talent pipeline priorities.

A student earning a postsecondary credential in Colorado should leave in a better position than when they started. They should gain the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in their chosen career and be prepared to earn a sustainable income with opportunities to grow. It's also important that they're not left with more debt than they can reasonably afford to pay back with the education they've received. At the end of the day, pursuing a credential should set them up for success and improve their overall well-being.

A student in a state that meaningfully invests in postsecondary education and centers the voices of students and families should expect an education system guided by integrity and equity. This system ensures diverse and ongoing opportunities for students to actively engage in their learning journey. Postsecondary institutions would serve as places of growth and inquiry, fostering environments for open dialogue, experimentation, and critical thinking. Such an approach underscores the promise of education as a transformative tool for personal and collective advancement, prioritizing the needs and perspectives of students and their communities.

A student should expect from attaining a post secondary credential in Colorado, that they are prepared and capable of entering a professional field. They should also have idea about what is out there, for example graduate schools or programs.

A student should expect how to do there Fasfa/Casfa applications. General scholarships. How to register for classes. What credits will transfer over. And learn how to make connections with staff.

A student should expect to attain a credential that assists in obtaining gainful employment and making a living wage in Colorado, as well as developing critical thinking skills. Students should expect

Responses

regular access to financial aid and wrap around assistance as they work on their credential. They should also expect access to internship and career services while obtaining their credential and after graduating.

A student should expect to attain the degree without putting themselves or loved ones into material poverty, and finish with a credential that allows them to enter a job market previously inaccessible.

A student should expect to be prepared to enter the workforce in Colorado at a level appropriate for the skills and knowledge developed through the credential, or be competitive and prepared for enrollment and success in additional education programs such as a masters program or professional degree program in a graduate school setting.

A student who completes a credential should expect employability and social mobility.

A substantially increased opportunity to gain employment that is above a living wage.

Ability to attain employment in the field in which they studied

ability to competitive in workforce

Access and affordability, and a credential that provides preparation and experience in support of personally meaningful career paths, social mobility, civic engagement, critical thinking and leadership skills = opportunities for self-actualization, personal fulfillment, societal contributions, financial rewards.

Affordability and a stable tuition environment (rather than consistent increases)

Affordability, excellence in the academic discipline (professors who know their discipline AND who can teach and advise), and career assistance

Affordability. Relevant, useful knowledge/skills that will transfer to a career that pays a living wage. Convenience and flexibility - e.g., night and weekend classes with a shorter path to completion whenever possible.

All students, regardless of their background, should expect to obtain a quality job aligned to their education and training that pays enough money to not only survive but to thrive in their community. Interwoven into their credential attainment goals should be critical thinking skills and essential skills that serve them in their quality of life and community.

An education that hopefully lands them a desired job at a decent salary.

An opportunity to be employed in higher paying fields with a reasonable ROI for the educational investment

An ROI that includes family living wage employment; stackability of their credential into further education and skills training; transferability of their credits through a seamless and transparent

Responses

process (at least within Colorado's public institutions); the ability to articulate the value of their credential and the essential skills that they earned along with the technical skills and knowledge; that employers will value the credential along with the skills and the experiences that make up the credential.

Applicable knowledge for employment and employability in their field or applicable field.

As an asset student just starting out at MSU Denver, I feel like getting a degree should mean I actually have a shot at building a good life. It should help me get a decent job, earn good money, and do something meaningful with my life while giving back to my community. At the end of the day, getting my degree should show that I'm capable and that I deserve the same opportunities as anyone else. It's about breaking down walls and showing what students like me can bring to the table.

asd

Attaining a postsecondary credential should result in a meaningful benefit for a student in terms of their economic potential via increased employment opportunities, enhanced wages, and expanded pathways for development, and the individual value and increased civic engagement gained from being a life long learner.

Be prepared to successfully transfer to a four year university or to enter the workforce. Be employed at a good wage/salary.

clarity on the knowledge, skills, and abilities they have garnered through that credential, integrated WBL experiences and connection to their chosen industry

Completion should (nearly guarantee) livable wage (\$50K within 5 yrs of completion) employment prospects without crushing debt. In places where market value is weak but social value is high---public policy intervention required to create livable income / total compensation stability.

Comprehensive support services for successful academic program completion; Little to no college debt; Robust opportunities to obtain gainful employment.

Critical thinking and job skills

Critical thinking skills, a general education and the tools needed to secure a job in their field.

Critical thinking, communication, and problem solving - as well as concepts, knowledge and skills needed in their field. They should be very attractive to an employer.

d

Depends on what their intent is

Economic mobility, opportunity, robust education, preparation for success post-graduation, subject matter expertise beyond K-12.

Responses

Economic mobility. A student should expect to be able to be employed in a good paying job after graduation that sets them up for a career.

Either sitting ability to compete for a job or otherwise be prepared for the kinds of postsecondary goals sought after.

Employable once they have a degree in hand. It should not be difficult for someone with a higher ed degree to find a job.

Empowerment to meet personal aspirations around economic mobility and ongoing education.

Enabling the student to meet their career (via certificate or degree), further education (through transfer), or lifelong learning goals

Excellent job opportunities, higher income and quality of life

Good job opportunities upon completion

Greater understanding of the complex world Deep learning in area of career field that allows for hiring at advanced levels Increased income levels in area of expertise

Growth and fulfillment of their goal, whether it was to improve their economic mobility through education and credentials, or to fulfill purpose in their life through learning.

Higher paying job

If you mean an actual degree, a well rounded education that also provides specialization in a particular field of study. It is intended to be the type of education that produces graduates who are able to compete in a varied and fluctuating job market - in addition to well-informed citizens.

Improved employment options and higher pay for a future job

Improved training and increased career opportunities.

In Colorado, post-secondary students should not only anticipate achieving economic mobility and career advancement through higher education but also expect to enhance their critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills. Those progressing beyond technical training to pursue four-year and advanced degrees will benefit from engaging with diverse communities and perspectives—attributes highly valued by employers in a global workforce. Employer surveys highlight a growing demand for individuals who can critically analyze information, apply skills in real-world contexts, and communicate effectively. Additionally, adaptability and ethical conduct are essential traits. Colorado's post-secondary education aims to equip students to meet both current and future employer needs in a dynamic global workplace.

Intellectual growth and increased maturity, progression toward adulthood.

Responses

It depends what type of credential. From the perspective to the ATCs, a student who attends one of our three colleges should graduate debt free with placement into their chosen field where they can be successful.

It should be a crucial landmark to achieving a family sustaining career.

It should enhance a student's career opportunities and earnings potential, and provide them specialized skills for in-demand industries. Hopefully they will also grow their network and experience personal growth.

Job choices and the opportunity for good job as defined by the Georgetown University Center for Education and The Workforce. A job that translates into social and economic mobility.

Job readiness

Knowledge and skills that are relevant and allow for immediate employment in the area of study.

Leaving aside CSU's particular mandate as a land-grant institution, any student should expect to have had the opportunity to learn from dedicated instructors, to have received accurate and reliable advising, and to be ready to participate actively in a democratic society.

Life experience, wisdom, broadened perspectives of the world, self discipline, readiness/skills to assume a chosen occupation or continuation of learning.

Life skills: Emotional intelligence, communication skills, community skills, connection skills, conflict resolution Education: academic study skills (especially if going on to 4 year program), Critical thinking, professional writing, problem solving, work applicable skills.

Livable wage based on mastery of relevant/up to date industry validated course material.

Long-term economic stability, new ideas and perspectives, a reasonable value (return for what they invest)

N/A

Opportunities for a living wage job in their field of study

Opportunity! Knowledge! Self awareness and growth! The ability to support himself/herself.

Personal and professional growth. Some college classes help with learning about careers, but others help strengthen students' knowledge to become well-rounded, mindful citizens who understand history, current events, and how to navigate contexts critically, such as understanding the impacts of AI in everyday life. Breadth and depth are important to creating creative, flexible, and independent citizens for the workforce.

Responses

Postsecondary education in Colorado - and nationwide - should inspire, prepare, train, and develop skills that can be used over a lifetime. We are not making widgets and this not a transaction. Students should expect to be ready for the next step in their career and the tools to put a plan into action.

Preparation for a durable career pathway. Wages within 10 years that pay for the direct costs of earning the credential

Preparation for engaged citizenship, including access to a diverse array of academic programs enabling them to identify their interests and skills in the context of becoming lifelong learners who will likely want or need to change career many times.

Preparation to be marketable for employment in their desired career area. To have the knowledge and tools to acquire their desired job and advance when possible.

Progress toward/in a family-sustaining career.

qualified to get a job

Quality course content delivered by energetic faculty compensated with a salary/credit hour pay commensurate with requirements to be a faculty member.

quality education, career placement into a living wage with advancement opportunities

Quality faculty that care about the academic welfare of its students. A strong curriculum that prepares them for emerging careers of now and the future. A diversity of learning opportunities to help them grow as individuals within a community.

Readiness for a high-demand industry position(s) that pay a living wage or higher.

Receive a quality education that prepares them their next step in education or career.

socio-economic mobility, life-long learning opportunities, and a job

Solid career options, good liveable income from that career

Student should expect to learn soft and hard skills in a major, also expect to get a job in the area related to the major.

Students gain enhanced career opportunities, personal growth, and a stronger connection to civic life. Postsecondary education equips individuals with in-demand skills, fosters critical thinking, and prepares them to contribute meaningfully to their communities and democracy. As leaders like Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln recognized, education strengthens both individuals and the nation, creating a more informed electorate and a resilient economy. An educated population drives innovation and upholds the democratic ideals foundational to our society, ensuring Colorado thrives socially and economically.

Responses

Students should expect a degree that provides value in the marketplace, enabling them to pursue a career that leads to family-sustaining wage and that has continued opportunity for upward mobility.

Students should expect access to faculty and high quality learning materials, support in completing a specific course/certificate/degree and preparation for finding work and applying learning to their job.

Students should expect direct support to connect with employers looking to hire individuals with specific postsecondary credentials. Universities facilitating these intentional connections should have access to additional funding.

Students should expect support in completing a credential that will support them financially and mentally in the future.

Students should expect to gain economic mobility and career opportunities through higher education, and also increase their critical thinking, problem solving and communication abilities. They should also expect to learn from diverse communities, perspectives, and experiences, skills sought by employers in an increasingly global workforce. Students should be able to meet the current and future needs of employers in an ever-changing world and workplace.

Students should expect to have access to career opportunities that will pay family sustaining wages and have continued economic mobility throughout their career. Students should be able to expect attaining a degree at a cost that they can pay back in a reasonable time post-graduation.

Students should expect: professional pathways in their discipline of choice; technical skills to prepare for and contribute to the workforce; and an intellectual experience that teaches and encourages civil discourse, critical thinking, problem solving, and teamwork.

Students should gain not just education but life skills and the ability to transfer those skills to positions that may lie outside their original plan. Students should feel confident that their education has set them up for success post-graduation and lead to many opportunities, both in and outside their field.

Students should have access to postsecondary programs that prepare them for high-demand careers and economic mobility. These programs should provide career-connected learning and efficient pathways to quality jobs, ensuring long-term financial stability and a strong return on investment.

Students who graduate should be prepared to have a successful career and to be engaged citizens. Part of our job is equipping graduates to live a life based on the values they develop while in college

Sufficient funding to enter, stay enrolled, and complete degree.

Support and clear guidance, as a student they should be able to say yes to the student responsibilities, ask questions and get the most out of their school experience.

That s/he has a degree that has prepared her/him for an initial position in their chosen field and the ability to continue Learning that will allow them to grow professionally.

Responses

That the education provided is similar to what would be attained in other states. How that is attained can look different than full-time M-F coursework.

That their institution is accredited, and their degree will be recognized by all as a sign of significant achievement, which will be key in a student obtaining employment.

That they are equipped with the skills to succeed in their career without student debt

That they experience an inclusive campus environment that recognizes their various identities including their racial, gender, class identities. That they experience an education that is affordable due to significant state investments. That they experience an education that is student-centered, not one focused on institutional prestige or researcher aspirations.

The ability to earn a livable wage in Colorado.

The ability to find a good paying job

The broadening of ones perspectives, the practical experience of living independently and skills and knowledge to meet the workforce needs of the state

The highest quality of credentials that are offered efficiently.

The opportunity to exchange their time and talent for money and be able to positively contribute to their chosen community.

The opportunity to gain knowledge of the world, to learn a specific field of study for future employment, to earn a higher wage than those without postsecondary educations, and confidence in their abilities to go into a profession of their choosing.

The student should expect to possess the skills and competencies needed to secure an entry level job in his/her desired career path that pays a living wage within 3 months of program completion.

They should expect a reasonably affordable education that prepares them for entry-level work that requires postsecondary education and that the work they find provides them with a living wage that they could have pursued without a degree OR if their degree left them with substantial debt and limited employment opportunities or job prospects.

They should expect the ability to be ready to enter the workforce with the necessary hard and soft skills for the work place and earn a livable wage of their chosen field.

They should expect to receive job ready and employment skills necessary to succeed in their specific field. They should also have opportunities to develop and grow as a person and as an adult in his society and as a societal member of Colorado and the U.S.

To be able to graduate with little or no debt and ability to obtain a related job.

Responses

To be able to secure a job after graduation with a living wage salary

To be prepared and competitive in the global labor force. It's not sufficient for students to be competitive within Colorado because we know that as an effect of globalization, their peers and competition come from around the world.

to have relevant skills that they can use to gain employment with a living wage

To learn how to think and function well in this constantly changing world.

to min break even

Upward mobility in their career trajectory. Greater earnings potential over their lifetime and impact on generations of their family moving forward. A broadened mindset and ability to interact with others as well as increased ability to problem solve.

v

Workforce skills and career pathways

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xcv

Question 4

Question 4 Text

When thinking about updates to Colorado's outcomes-based funding formula, what are important principles to consider?

Question 4 Responses

Responses
1
<p>- Focus more on students of color, low-income students, first-generation college students, and rural students - Acknowledge the different institutional missions in the state. There are serving institutions such as Colorado Mesa and Adams State that have very different missions than urban-serving institutions like CU Denver. There are also minority-serving institutions that serve different populations than more white institutions. Some institutions have enormous resource bases (CU Boulder, Mines) and could make due with less state support than others (community colleges, regional public universities like Metro, UNC, and Western Colorado). - The funding model should be differentiated by institutional type and students served, as well as location in the state (rural and urban). - Currently, the funding model is focused on students which has benefits but ignores the broader role colleges and universities play in their communities through workforce development, civic engagement, and community development. There should be more incentives and resources to support this aspect of mission.</p>
<p>- Needs-based support and access to wrap-around services for students - Money going directly to students - Emphasis on marginalized populations and first-generation students</p>
...
<p>1. correcting historic and persistent inequities in IHE distributions (i.e. rich schools still getting more than poor schools). STEP 1 is meant to address this, but has not been utilized. 2. Colorado is still at the bottom compared to our competitor states and CO students can attend out of state for less (other states provide discounts with their institutional funds to poach our students) This is starting to show as CO falls behind in national rankings as "best places" to work , run a business, and live (see CNBC ratings etc)</p>
<p>1st to 3rd Term retention percentage, program completion percentages (of both certificate & degree), program-completer pay increases prior to and following program completion and that the cost of the program completed can be covered within the first 1-2 years post completion, and 1st generation and underserved minority student percentages.</p>
a
<p>A holistic learning experience that provides a deep understanding of the humanities and develops curiosity in each student.</p>

Responses

A more educated population in Colorado means a stronger and more skilled workforce, and a stronger economy that benefits everyone. Beyond the economic benefits, education is fundamental to the health of a democracy. As Thomas Jefferson wrote to a friend, "Whenever the people are well-informed, they can be trusted with their own government." Jefferson's belief underscores the vital role education plays in fostering an engaged, knowledgeable citizenry capable of sustaining democratic governance. However, since the Great Recession of 2008, Colorado has significantly reduced funding for higher education, shifting more of the financial burden onto students and their families. This trend has strained institutions, increased student debt, and made postsecondary education less accessible to many. Addressing this imbalance should be a key priority in updating the funding formula. The formula should reflect the understanding that investing in higher education is not merely an economic strategy but a commitment to the state's long-term stability and prosperity. Restoring funding levels to ensure affordability and equitable access for all Coloradans must take precedence to reverse the trend of disinvestment and reaffirm education's foundational role in both the economy and democracy.

A outcome needs to be defined by skills development as related to the qualifications of a job and the development of soft or durable skills. How many students get a job they were trained for?

Ability to attain outcomes can vary with student demographics

Accessibility and outcomes for all prospective students, especially those from historically marginalized groups, and including opportunities and support for non-traditional student engagement. Institutional performance and improvement in strategic metrics, i.e., credentialing and equitable access that mutually support individuals, institutions, and state socio-economic health. Institutions require stability in funding. Volatility is detrimental to the whole: institution, employees, students, state. After stability, targeted incremental funding incentives in support of strategic, mutually-beneficial outcomes should be important factors.

Aligning to state attainment and completion goals as well as goals for career success beyond completion. Are students employed in top jobs? Are their wages more than enough to cover any debt incurred while obtaining a credential? Are they prepared for the workforce? How can the formula encourage programs that achieve high job placement rates and adequate wage outcomes while remaining responsive to evolving labor market demands? And is there a path to making the funding formula more clear and transparent?

alksdjf

Any performance metric that is considered should be well-defined, easily measurable, and consistently calculated among all institutions. Recognizing the distinctiveness and the role each institution plays in the larger landscape should be an important consideration of any funding formula. A one-size-fits-all model will not work well and would have damaging consequences to Colorado's diverse higher ed ecosystem, a strength of our system. When measuring performance, the current model compares progress against ourselves versus against other CO higher ed institutions. This is an important principle to preserve.

Responses

Any performance metric that is used should be easily measurable, well defined and calculated consistently among all institutions. At the same time, institutions in Colorado are unique and diverse and each offers different attributes and aspects to students, which is extremely positive and beneficial for the statewide higher education landscape. Rather than comparing institutions to one another, it's ideal to continue to measure them against their own impact and progress.

Apply to scholarships, grants, and other financial opportunities no matter what.

Are we looking at what the students want and need? What are they utilizing and how impactful are they? Are they an equal part of this conversation along with faculty/staff/administration of institutions? I think it is important to see what the students themselves are saying, both prior to graduation and after graduation.

Balancing equity, effectiveness and alignment with statewide goals. Equity and Access -support for underserved students; incentivizing enrollment, retention, and graduation of underrepresented groups, including low-income, first gen and students of color -Geographic equity: ensuring rural and remote institutions are adequately supported, given the unique challenges they face. -Affordability: minimizing student debt and increasing affordability of complete programs Student-Centered Outcomes -Completion and success focus, including time to degree and options to complete stackable credentials along the way that are aligned with skills -measuring job placement post-graduation Workforce and Economic Alignment -sunsetting programs that are not considered high-quality pathways (i.e. not aligned to demand and ROI for students) -incentivize programs that address workforce needs in CO such as STEM, healthcare and trades -incentivize and encourage partnerships between institutions and local industry Also focus on flexibility, accountability, transparency, data, stakeholder engagement and equitable resource allocation.

Balancing targeting funding to meet statewide goals with year-to-year funding stability that allow institution to make long-term investments to improve quality, service delivery and student outcomes

Besides increasing access to short-term credentials, I think it is valuable to support first-gen, low income and racial/ethnic minority youth in Colorado seeking 4-year and professional degrees in areas where low-income and minority folks are underrepresented.

Responses

Broadly: (a) The General Assembly must have the flexibility it needs to adjust funding in ways that make sense. We often need to balance the budget in higher ed, and the model must be able to handle both increases and decreases in state funding, as well as addressing the needs of individual institutions/systems in a straightforward manner. We might need to take a cut and still protect more vulnerable institutions. (b) The model needs to have mechanisms for taking into account the huge differences among the institutions, including in non-state funding sources available. It currently does this through a base-plus structure, which I think is OK--at least I haven't yet seen an approach that works better. (c) I appreciate having a model that reflects state goals, even if the related financial impacts are limited. I think it helps institutions focus on these goals. Additional specifics/observations: 1) The model is largely a base+ model with a nod to performance. Institutions value this, and I think this general approach is OK, given: (a) the enormous range in the types of institutions that we are attempting to fund through this model (liberal arts colleges with about 2K students to multi-institution systems with tens of thousands of students) ; (b) past experience, in which attempts to fund using performance metrics related to enrollment and credentials generally drove funds to our largest/most financially successful institutions (e.g., CU) and we then engaged in complex back-end adjustments to avoid this pattern. 2) What we continue to lack--but is VERY difficult to get to--is a solid analysis of what a "correct" level of funding should be for institutions, taking into account both their state support AND tuition & fee revenue. This is the type of analysis that could lead to thoughtful base adjustments through what is currently called "step 1" of the model. Some kind of analysis of what constitutes a reasonable minimum level of funding will be particularly helpful if we have to cut higher education funding and want to ensure more vulnerable institutions remain viable. 3) I think the model could use additional flexibility/ some capacity for separate analysis related to the "specialty education programs" (i.e., school of medicine, vet school, ag services and forestry programs), local district colleges, and area technical colleges. At present, statute states that they must receive at least as much increase--and no greater decrease--than funding for the rest of the model. I think it should be possible to increase less or decrease more without a statutory change, as long as this is supported by some kind of analysis. Institutions may oppose this, but I really don't think this part of the current structure makes sense.

Campus demographics, Breakdown of SES, economies of scale, access to federal research dollars, rurality

Colorado is 48th in state funding for higher education and is a minority investor in public institutions. Research suggests that the amount of state funding matters more than the method of state funding, in terms of improving student outcomes. We are very limited in our ability to drive institutional change because institutions see state funding as minimal and subject to significantly reduce at any time. Given that, a formula cannot do much to incentivize change (per research). It is more about signaling state priorities and showing that there is some form of accountability for institutions.

Come 2031, Colorado will rank 2nd in the U.S. among all 50 states in need for jobs that require postsecondary education - 73 percent for an optimal economy. How do you fund that? That question of volume around an attainment imperative is more important than anything else.

Responses

Consider the types of students the institution serves - give some attention to those serving underrepresented and minoritized populations, especially those functioning in isolated, rural locations - they have a huge impact on the regions they serve and often serve Colorado's poorest populations.

Consistency to institutes of higher education so that they can build and sustain effective educational pathways, which will result in reliable opportunities for students and families in the state.

Currently, our state funded institutions do a fantastic job supporting students but are stretched very thin. It is very important that we provide high quality educational opportunities to our local students/citizens at a reasonable price.

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dfg

Direct feedback from faculty and staff working with minoritized/underserved students is essential. Although standard funding should be available for all institutions to sustain their operations, additional investment should be available to all institutions prioritizing Colorado's Higher Ed strategic plan and delivering results. Universities need to have more accountability.

Do students with disabilities and their intersectionality (e.g., race, age, class, etc.) have equal access and opportunity to obtain apply the benefits of a college education? Are their flexible opportunities for students with disabilities to successfully complete an academic program at their pace? How is college progress affected by academic and financial aid suspensions for students with disabilities who endure disability-related set backs? Are students with disabilities receiving funding to support technology, learning, and accessibility needs?

DOE challenges from upcoming admin

Employed within 3 months and earning a living wage salary.

Ensuring equity by considering the diverse needs of students, including those from underserved populations, remains important. Incentivizing student success, such as graduation rates, will help keep it aligned with the state's economic priorities. And yet for complex institutions to be able to operate with consistency, there needs to be many elements of stability built in.

Ensuring underserved populations are well-served and there is recognition that small, rural institutions face additional needs because fixed costs are higher; the formula should provide "bonuses" for smaller universities operating in isolated, rural locations (recognizing the higher costs of operating such institutions). The current formula, because of the addition or the rural funding, does all of these things.

entry to workforce & starting salary (livable)

Responses

Equitable access to education, sustainable funding sources, high-quality education and research, improved student outcomes, institutional autonomy and accountability, technology and infrastructure investment, holistic support systems, and transparent and fair allocation.

Equitable access wherever they may be in their lifelong learning journey. Success is not measured based solely on initial or lifelong income.

equity

Equity - ensuring historically underserved students are experiencing successful outcomes, credential completion, connection to jobs in their industry area

Equity in funding (do students who need the most support receive it?); are investments being made to better student outcomes?; are we adequately investing in traditionally marginalized students?

Equity in the ability to attain the outcomes. Funding should be provided to level the playing field in achieving outcomes. However, it's also important that all people working towards those outcomes are incentivized to do so.

equity of outcomes among race and ethnicities.

Fairness, reasonable expectation (financially speaking and in regard to return on investment), accessibility and inclusiveness.

First gen does not get the true attention as it should; it costs more to educate FG than those who have come from "advantaged" backgrounds; rural is not rural (Durango is NOT rural Colorado) and to include them in this category is not helpful to the other institutions located in truly rural/ag based environments.

For our rural CO institution, it is critical to have a formula that takes into account our smaller size, and a formula that allows us to compare progress against ourselves.

Funding for higher education is vital towards the economic future of the State of Colorado. With brain drain already taking place and the potential of further brain drain due to the immigration policies of the incoming administration, it is imperative to keep funding higher education to grow our own and attract people to live in our state. Higher education access is also a vital component of a healthy society, especially for those that are first-generation, low-income, or from an underserved population.

Funding for schools that have fewer resources overall including outside of state funding (for example, no endowments or consistently large private donations, or less access to grant funding due to not being a research institution) should be considered, especially for those schools that enroll more students with more specialized needs (first-generation students, low-income students, students with disabilities, English language learners, students requiring more academic support etc.). Rural schools which face unique resource constraints, not just in the classroom but in hiring and retaining staff and faculty, should also be given particular consideration.

Responses

graduation rates

Higher ed institutions need long-term funding commitments to plan ahead instead of scrambling year to year.

Higher ed should not be reduced to trade school. An undergraduate degree, in particular, should educate the whole person while still providing specific skill sets. This goes for underrepresented populations as well - they should not be pushed into certificate programs while wealthier students enjoy a broader education.

Higher education is a major driver of economic success both personally and for the state as a whole

Higher level of support to community colleges.

How are the institutions improving students ability to seek employment and which schools are graduating students who plan to stay in Colorado and contribute towards CO workforce

How regulations on admissions impact the ability of institutions to attract students who are the best fit for their campus. Also, the fact that even with low tuition, COF funding, etc. many students must work 20+ hours per week to afford higher education. For this reason, a too heavy emphasis on 4- and 6-year graduation rates negatively impacts institutions who primarily serve low SES demographic groups and the students who attend those institutions. Some of those students are better served by moving more slowly through their coursework so they can balance work and school and be successful at both.

If it isn't broken, don't fix it. The formula is a distribution tool. The current formula is working and I have not heard or seen any evidence supporting any compelling need to substantively change it or for adopting a new one.

If you don't maintain the foundation, the house will fall.

Improving access, retention, completion for low income and minority students - preparing the local Colorado workforce Transparency and simplicity

In my opinion, when updating Colorado's outcomes-based funding formula, it's important to focus on fairness, equity, and impact. The formula should prioritize improving access and success for all students, especially those from underserved communities, and ensure funding aligns with measurable outcomes like graduation rates, job placement, and earnings. It's also critical to reward institutions that effectively close equity gaps and prepare students for high-demand fields, while ensuring transparency and accountability in how funds are distributed. Ultimately, the formula should drive results that benefit students and strengthen Colorado's workforce and economy.

Income 5 years post graduation Satisfaction with current career choice Relevancy of HE degree to current job

Responses

Institutions that are currently seeing strong retention and graduation rates should hold onto stable funding to keep doing what they're already doing well.

It costs much more to educate students at small universities.

It is not just attracting students but also program completion...on time and affordable!

It's more than numbers. We have to think about lives affected and the impact on families and their ability to live reasonably comfortably in Colorado. Our state doesn't do enough for low-income families, first gen or students of color.

job placement, time to degree, debt after graduation

Keep it simple. The fact that multiple errors in the model went undetected for more than a year is a strong indication that it would be beneficial to simplify it.

Learner outcomes, the things that matter most to primary customer---are not included today. Debt, employment, livable wage income; these are top student priorities (per nat'l freshman survey) not represented in formula.

Liberal arts is important too.

Little by little, the support for 4-year institutions has lessened, and the focus is on CC and certificate programs. Interestingly, there's been such a shift given how highly educated the citizens of the state of Colorado are (though not educated in Colorado). Outcomes funding should also consider the composition of the 4-year institution, the advancement capacity to support low-income and middle-income students fully, etc. Institutions with a larger financially needy student composition and limited scholarship capacity can be negatively impacted. Time-to-degree incentives also seem to conflict with transfer student activity and students unsure what they want to pursue as a degree. Sometimes, students change directions or programs as part of their transfer. These students will take longer to graduate. There should be allowances for students who change majors. Or those students should be excluded from calculations...

Low-income populations often have lower grades, often due to systematic lack of resources. Performance based models punish low-income people by removing the very resources they need to bring up their grades.

Maintain retention & completion focus but add focus on job placement in jobs that lead to family-sustaining wages. Institutions should be able to see what degree programs are doing a better job at launching young people's futures. There should also continue to be a focus on first generation and historically marginalized populations.

Metrics should be well-defined, easily measurable and consistently calculated.

Most higher education students may have a job but it is low income or moms trying to get back to the work force.

Responses

N/A

NA

Not all areas(rural) have access to the same level of resources and opportunities. There is limited capacity for detailed reporting. Hybrid access should be the norm.

Not all successful outcomes are measured by transfer or degree completion.

Not all universities serve the same kind of students, so outcomes will inherently vary.

Outcome don't increase the revenue pie. More dollars are needed at institutions to reduce the tuition burden on students.

Outcome shit include metrics beyond retention and graduation rates. It should also include measures of satisfaction and opportunities that students have been able to engage with while in education.

Outcome-based funding is short-sighted in realizing that students start at different points due to systemic racial discrimination and inequities and outcome-based k12 education advancing students unprepared for higher education. Prioritize funding based on equity (first-generation student, students of color, and students with disability) and educating Colorado students over out-of-state students.

Outcomes disaggregated by student experiences such as ethnicity, race, gender identity, economic status, interests, age, and physical abilities. All students need to be able to succeed yet not all students need the same support and opportunities.

Outcomes measured are relevant and related to the student's success upon leaving the program.

Outcomes must be reasonable and recognize that without adequate funding additional (heightened) outcomes are challenging to accomplish. There is a cost to every new update.

Outcomes that are examined should include Employability, Employment in an appropriate level occupation for the degree earned, and acceptance into graduate programs. A principle of support offered outside of the classroom to acheive desired outcomes should also be considered.

Performance metrics should be clearly defined, easily measurable, and uniformly applied across all institutions. Each institution and governing board serve distinct missions and student populations. It is crucial to acknowledge these differences and measure progress against similar institutions or internal benchmarks, rather than comparing across Colorado's diverse higher education landscape with varying roles and missions.

Post secondary education has moved to skills-based, employer-connected, lifelong learning. The outcomes measured should relate to success in delivering skills that demonstrably affect the learner's lifelong employment situation.

Responses

Presently and specifically regarding the retention and graduation rates, transfer students are excluded from the metrics. With the passage of SB24-164 I would expect that we will see an increase of students transferring between IHEs (separate from those transferring from a 2 to 4 year, which is presently captured in "Resident Credential Completion"). Making additional considerations for the goal to, "Increase the rate of participation of low-income and currently underrepresented minority students;" who might make up an outsized proportion of the (presently excluded) transfer student group, I feel finding a way to incorporate these students into these metrics may be worth exploring—with admitted complexities regarding how to award funding (ie, split between GBs, "last-in/attended", etc).

Prioritizing access and affordability and creating funding formulas that do not result in consistent increases in tuition

Privileging outcomes over outputs. Incentivizing and rewarding behavioral changes that lead to outcomes. Aligning higher education within a broader conversation about producing successful citizens.

Programs/degrees should be considered—those that align with students finding a job once they graduate.

Providing funding adequate for student and institutional success. Considering such factors as types of students served, institutional mission, institution size and location, and other attributes.

Providing funding for equal pay for faculty across the system such that students can expect quality content delivered by energetic faculty regardless of the community college where enrolled.

Quality of learningm

Region - some regions offer greater opportunities for achieving economic outcomes faster than others, and in greater numbers. Flexibility - recognizing that skills builders who may not complete a recognized credential still benefit from education, and their growth should be recognized. Student Opportunity - ability of an institution to serve all learners including first generation and those who need support for education.

Reputation of institution/quality of education, degree applicability to actual jobs. I would say graduation rate, but that might encourage grade inflation.

Resources that are available

School attitude and administration. also advisors and people who are supportive of the students endeavors.

Schools that serve students with higher needs—like first-gen, low-income, or undocumented students—should get more funding to provide the resources and programs that help us thrive.

Responses

Some students and universities face greater challenges than others, making it more difficult to achieve the outcomes.

Specific and achievable goals based on recent research.

Stable societies require hope and opportunity. I respectfully ask the state to re-calculate the base funding required to (1) pay all faculty and staff a living wage and (2) cap the debt an individual student takes away so that a reasonably frugal individual can pay it off within five years. Please think about base funding for supporting the student experience and academic degrees that offer reasonable potential of a financial stability for the job-seeking CSU graduate. Not degrees that set your post-college job opportunities at \$35K per year with \$25K of college debt plus Fannie Mae interest. Then, apply the outcome-based funding formula as incentive funding, which looks as reasonable as the next formula that will come along. It is not an exciting approach, but more exciting than these dire financial outcome of state IHEs educating young people into decades of debt, tenancy, and economic stagnation. (see: Piketty)

Student's return on investment.

Take into consideration the CTE element of institutions providing industry-based credentials.

Teaching out programs/degrees that do not have a strong occupational outlook. Preparing for the Prison Education Programming--the legislation and higher education preparations are not in sync with the level of interest, nor is the FAFSA application process streamlined for this student population. The processes will fail without better support from the State of Colorado.

that each institution is funded based on these outcomes and not special deals.

that funding is tied with ability to qualify for a job. funding should go to credentials just not degrees.

that we are woefully short of funding to start with. Investment vs outcomes (investment per outcome metric).

The ATCs are not included in the outcomes based formula. We have suggested that to change.

The core minimum costs should be covered, at a minimum, for each institution which will provide stability. Any funding available, after that has been achieved, should be outcomes based with graduation rates, transfer rates, completion rates (certificates, etc.), retention rates as factors.

The cost to the student and the income forecast based on their career options.

The current funding formula rewards majors, although majors do not always cost more. What this means is that Colorado's outcomes-based funding formula cannot put downward pressure on costs. It does not reward careful stewardship of resources, because it does not take into account how much it actually costs to produce a major in any particular department.

Responses

The demographic shift of the state leading to a strain on the labor market. Delivery of a skilled labor pool is of critical importance to the economic development of the state. Also, it has to make financial sense to be self-sustaining. The value proposition has to be there for the employee and the employer equally.

The formula should recognize and reward progress of IHEs in delivering for Colorado students. While stability of funding is important we must ensure that the system matches the goals of the state higher education system and we are truly recognizing and rewarding advancements in delivering that system to Colorado students.

The formula should somehow recognize the mission of the institution and what challenges that institution may face in educating their target student population.

The funding formula should reflect what we value in higher education. The outcomes that a student is receiving such as return on investment or economic mobility. Also who are we serving, what type of students are enrolled.

The need of Colorado's students and families. Everyone should be able to afford to go to college.

The outcomes-based funding formula in Colorado should focus on equity by prioritizing resources for programs that deliver strong job placement, wages, and retention outcomes aligned with high-demand industries. Institutions serving low-income and minority students need adequate support and accountability to meet state goals for workforce readiness and economic mobility. Transparency to the greatest extent is crucial.

The performance of IHE should guide the formula distribution. However, there are institutions that performance is not the main driving factor. As such, there may be different tiers that are needed.

The recent JBC briefing shows the per-student funding at institutions that are most likely to serve Colorado's students of color and low-income students. This means that the students who need the most support are attending institutions with the fewest resources. I think it's important to make sure that these institutions get the support they need, but they also need to be held accountable for achieving outcomes. Additionally, the model should encourage institutions to invest in students.

Thinking about the students that the institutions support, for example the financial aid needed to support low income students or first generation students who might not have support at home.

Tie to specific outcomes, stack accomplishments, layers of learning for efficiency and systems thinking. Balance of rote with independent project and problem-based learning.

Time to completion, types of degrees earned and in which fields, benefit (career and financial) after graduation, and mental and physical health benefits.

Responses

Too many regulations raising the cost of administrative functions. Leave this between schools, local areas, and accreditors. Legislators are not experts on producing high quality degrees. Get rid of low enrollment programs like you used to. Why are we sinking tax dollars into programs that require multiple faculty and have virtually zero demand? Revisit this standard - you have a policy you don't enforce.

Transparency to the student and learner (so they know what jobs/wages to expect upon credential attainment); Quality data underlying the formula; An Asset-based mentality to leveraging outcomes data (not approaching from a punitive perspective, but rather seeking to align and enrich programming that isn't seen as meeting thresholds)

Transparency, supporting historically underserved student populations, affordability, and driving student success. One key element is also making sure that the funding going through the model is substantive enough to be meaningful for institutions in terms of driving incentives and behaviors. This also helps with affordability.

Updates must incorporate what is best for students, not administrations/institutions. Those principles should be pretty simple to identify.

v

Wages Industry alignment

We are a diverse ecosystem, offering Coloradoans a wide variety of options for post-secondary education. Any performance based funding model should recognize the distinct roles and missions of our public institutions. Our progress should not be measured against institutions who are not like us or do not serve the same type of students. Also metrics of performance should be well-defined, easily measured, and consistently calculated by each institution.

We may want to consider the mission and vision of institutions such as a four-year university, two-year university, or technical college. Also, we want to consider specific features of an institution after taking into account of student and community demographics.

well defined, measurable, consistent. All institutions are different and play different roles. Rural institutions are attractive to rural students and those that want a smaller university experience. Performance measurement should be against similar institutions as well the specifics related to that institution.

What are the outcomes desired? Are we funding based on the number of students an institute successfully matriculates? Are we basing funding on student success post-graduation? Are we basing that funding on outcomes that are out of the control of the institutions? Are we basing the funding on the type of students we serve (first-generation, low-income, non-traditional, Hispanic serving, Asian-Pacific American Serving, Native American Serving, veterans)? Are we basing the funding on ranking amongst other similar institutions? Are we basing funding on innovative programs? Is outcome-based funding the right formula, or should we make a change so that we balance funding and tuition among all state institutions.

Responses

When updating Colorado's outcomes-based funding formula, it is essential to prioritize learners by focusing on equitable outcomes, directing resources to underserved populations, and aligning funding with high-demand industries. The formula should incentivize programs that deliver strong job placement, retention, and wage outcomes, and adapt to shifting labor market needs. Transparency and clarity in the funding model are crucial to foster informed decisions among stakeholders and drive meaningful behavior change.

When updating Colorado's outcomes-based funding formula, it is essential to recognize education as both an economic and intellectual imperative. The formula must meaningfully invest in post-secondary education by prioritizing equity and directing resources to institutions that support learners who face the greatest barriers to success. Education is a powerful driver of economic mobility and community prosperity, enabling individuals to fully realize their potential through the arts, sciences, and humanities while contributing to a stronger, more inclusive workforce. To achieve this, the funding formula should be guided by principles of equity, ensuring resources are front-loaded to support institutions serving historically underserved and underrepresented populations. By fostering access, participation, and success for all learners, especially those with the greatest need, the formula can advance Colorado's goals of economic vitality and intellectual innovation. This approach not only upholds the dignity of all students but also strengthens communities and positions Colorado as a leader in leveraging education for both individual and societal growth.

x

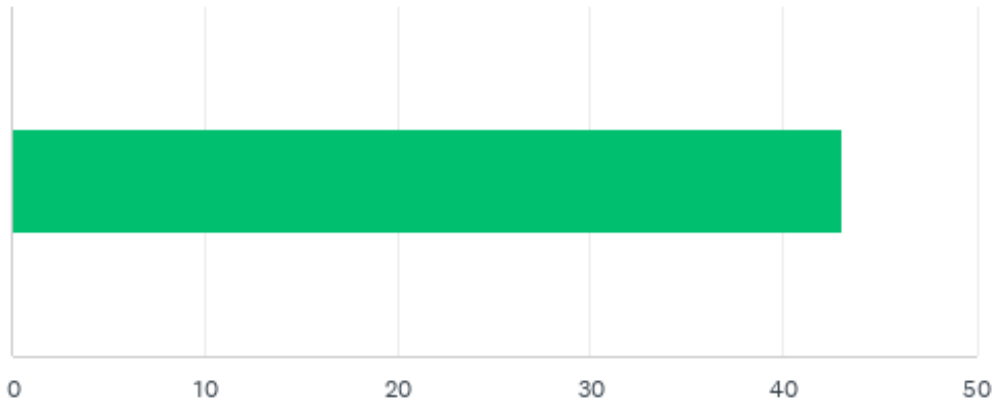
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Question 5

Question 5 Text

To what extent should the funding formula prioritize stability and predictability of funding versus performance and recognition funding? The bar below shows an equal distribution between stability and recognition. Move the center dot to distribute the priority of their inclusion in the formula.

Question 5 Responses



For this question, respondents moved a slider left or right to balance stability versus performance funding. On this scale, a score of 0 would be all stability funding, 50 would be an equal balance between stability and performance, and 100 would be all performance funding. An average of 43 indicates a small preference towards stability funding.

Question 6

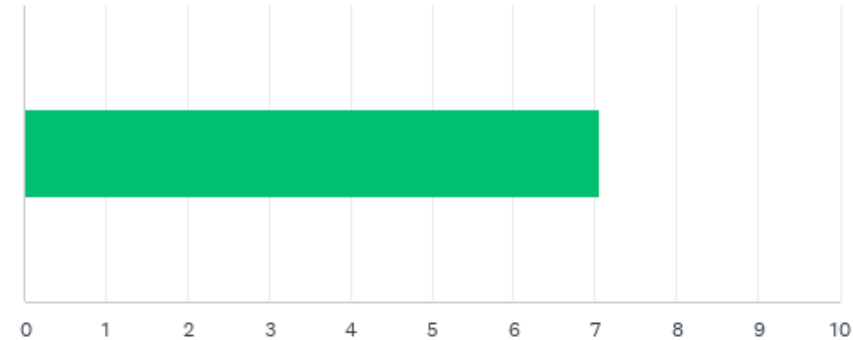
Question 6 Text

On a scale of 1-10, how strongly do you support the goals stated in the funding formula declaration put forth by the CO legislature, where a 1 indicates no support and a 10 indicates full support?

23-18-301. Legislative declaration. (1) The general assembly finds and declares that: (c) Colorado currently ranks third highly in the United States in the percentage of its citizens between the ages of twenty-five and sixty-four with a college degree, largely due to the migration of college-educated adults from other states and countries; (f) In particular, it is critical that the rate of postsecondary participation by low-income Coloradans and minorities, who are currently underrepresented, be increased at Colorado's institutions of higher education; and (f.5) As part of an affordable higher education, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education should ensure that institutions provide realistic opportunities for students to shorten their time to degree, when appropriate, while also recognizing the challenges that some students face as they work or take care of and support their families while striving to avoid accumulating student debt; and (g) Colorado's limited state resources must be used in a way that provides incentives for state institutions of higher education to achieve the policy goals adopted by the general assembly and identified in the Colorado commission on higher education's master plan. (2) The general

assembly further finds and declares that: (b) These goals can be accomplished by the general assembly establishing performance funding metrics that are consistent, and predictable, but that may be amended as appropriate to reflect the changing goals of the state and the institution and focused on performance.

Question 6 Responses



The average response to this question, on a scale of 1 to 10, was a 7.

Question 7

Question 7 Text

Based on the goals outlined in the legislative declaration, are there any updates, additions, or removals you would make?

Question 7 Responses

Responses
1
111
- Identifying and addressing internal and external barriers that low-income Coloradans currently face in obtaining a post-secondary credential. - Working to provide additional funding directed towards low-income students. - Colorado strive to improve the FAFSA completion rate and direct students towards state and federal supports versus private and predatory loans
??

Responses

"These goals can be accomplished by the general assembly establishing performance funding metrics that are consistent, and predictable, but that may be amended as appropriate to reflect the changing goals of the state and the institution and focused on performance." How is performance defined? If the definition of performance was more transparent in this statement, I would have something to work with or support.

Add that IHEs are provided sufficient funding so they may provide cost-of-living salary increases that, at minimum, meet increases in inflation and cost of housing.

address of public universities not accepting transfer from community college (seamless, transparent). new legislation helps, but lacks consequences and accountability. disservice to citizens

Affordability is the biggest reason students report for why they choose not to attend higher education, and the biggest reason students report for why they drop out before completing a credential.

All CO learners should be presented updated information re value transparency at the program level in all institutions to inform enrollment choices, including: out-of-pocket cost, time to completion, completion rates, and 5-yr / 10-yr median wages.

All institutions are NOT the same and should not be treated as such. Our rural schools have a more difficult time raising funds since students and alum tend to be lower income and often first gen. Those are the students who should be a priority.

CCHE could lead with "program completion to workforce readiness" as it may only take a course(s) or a cert program to be ready to take & pass an industry certification exam or other job qualification i.e., Python coding, that would qualify a learner for a good-paying industry position; and with "return-on-investment" data requirements that require institutions to document, analyze and share the cost of a program against the program-completer's pay and employment in the industry of the program completion so that the institutional leadership is truly looking at whether or not the programs their institutions are providing are truly helping to move learners forward in their personal and professional lives.

Clearer incentives that support university partnerships with k12 that cater to first generation students and low income students.

Clearly define rural and not add Durango as a rural region; really look at costs of educating first gen students; if there were adequate base funding for higher education to begin with it would be ok to look at performance metrics but until it is sufficient funding it just does not work

Colorado benefits when more of its citizens are highly educated and able to develop skills and knowledge that provide for vibrant communities and economies. College education can't be only for the wealthy and should be a high priority of state funding. The return on the investment in our citizenry will be great and help to stimulate our economy and enrich the lives of all our citizens.

Responses

Colorado needs to call out the specific challenges undocumented students face, like not being able to access most scholarships or financial aid. Schools should be encouraged to step up and create policies that actually support us, like offering more resources or finding ways to help us afford college. Also, schools should make it easier and more affordable for underrepresented students to get a degree.

Colorado should prioritize financial aid and scholarship opportunities to make HE more accessible to the public, especially underrepresented minorities.

Consider adding "low education" Coloradans to (f), noting that there are a growing number of Coloradans left behind in traditional K12 education that can become productive Colorado citizens with job education and support.

Consider adding mental health and student well-being, expansion of career pathways and workforce development, enhanced focus on adult learners and lifelong education, funding for equity and inclusion initiatives, support for institutions in rural areas, and addressing rising costs of education and student debt. You might refine or clarify performance metrics and accountability, reaffirm support for community colleges and transfer pathways, and more explicit commitment to support non-traditional students.

Consider how to fund towards completion goals themselves. Performance incentives only go so far - adequate funding based on cost-per-graduate calculations is critical to keep colleges out of the Catch-22 of needing money to fund student success but only getting the monies by managing the improvement first.

d

Faculty salaries/credit hour pay is not equal across the community college system making it difficult for rural colleges to attract and keep qualified faculty (full-time, adjunct, and online). The message is that rural community colleges are not as valuable nor important in providing quality higher education to our rural communities for low-income Coloradans, minorities, and first generation college students. This further burdens faculty with a challenge to support their families while striving to deliver quality content and courses.

Responses

From my perspective, the legislative declaration aligns well with important goals like equity, access, and performance-based funding. However, I would suggest a few updates to strengthen its impact:

- Emphasize Equity Across All Metrics:** While the declaration highlights increasing participation for low-income and minority students, it could go further by explicitly tying performance funding to closing equity gaps across all measurable outcomes, including retention, graduation rates, and post-graduation success.
- Incorporate Regional Workforce Needs:** The formula should more explicitly account for how institutions are preparing students for high-demand fields critical to Colorado's economic growth, ensuring alignment between education and workforce needs.
- Add a Focus on Debt-to-Earnings Ratios:** Include a goal to evaluate and incentivize institutions based on their ability to ensure students graduate with manageable debt relative to their earning potential.
- Maintain a Balance of Flexibility and Stability:** While flexibility to adapt to changing goals is important, stability for institutions, particularly those serving higher proportions of underrepresented students, must remain a top priority.

Fund education for Coloradoans!! We are hurting economically, and Colorado taxes should help Coloradoans.

Funding for education in Colorado is among the very lowest in the nation. Perhaps the legislature should address that rather than enacting punitive measures against 4 year schools. Investing more in community colleges - and paying faculty fair wages - would be another approach.

G - it is presumptive to think you can incentivize institutions in a low funding environment. The state has never made serious progress in funding higher education. Until then, we should do our best to provide stable funding over time and provide consistency rather than new hoops.

g) Colorado's limited state resources must be used in a way that provides incentives for state institutions of higher education to achieve the policy goals adopted by the general assembly and identified in the Colorado commission on higher education's master plan. - i take issue with each dollar for education being at risk year after year

Good education is an attraction and contributes greatly to the overall profitability of a state and its economy in several ways. I commend the legislature on its support of these essential structures and processes.

Higher level of support for two year degrees and certificates.

I agree that we need to provide extra support for low-income and minority students. But we should "lift all boats" by finding funding solutions that support all students.

I agree with everything in the legislative declaration. I think for (f) other non-traditional students could be included. For f.5 I agree with that but not sure how that fits with the funding formula. for 2B I think performance metrics makes sense but could be further defined on outcome vs output metrics

I agree with the legislative declaration and insights in it.

Responses

I am in full support of increasing the rate of postsecondary participation by low-income Coloradans and minorities, but the literature does not support performance based funding as a way to increase this. Moreover, Ortagus et al 2023 demonstrates that performance-based funding policies negatively impact minoritized students.

I fully support the legislative declaration. We need to change how higher education is funded in our state. All institutions should be accountable for using state funds to address this legislative declaration. We need to provide opportunities to low-income and minoritized students and ensure these communities are reflected in our institutions (staff, faculty, and administrators) so we are genuinely serving these communities.

I question the goal to lower the time frame to graduate as being more important than the number of students who graduate. While we do not want perpetual students who never graduate, students who work while attending school take longer to graduate BUT this allows them to graduate with less debt AND work experience, which is critical to entering the workforce. The state should be assisting with "earn and learn" programs and rewarding schools who emphasize industry partnerships. Every year our school champions those single parents and working adults who stuck to it even over 6-10 years while working and supporting their families - the state formula would mark them as "failures" when they are exactly who we were founded to serve. The state should also recognize that focusing on "ROI" as defined by salaries on graduation will discourage Coloradans from becoming teachers, health care workers, and social workers. The state should have scholarships or debt relief for Coloradans who plan to pursue careers in these high impact/ high need fields. (i.e. public service debt relief and scholarships). The state also must start to count part time and transfer students - most Coloradans bounce among institutions - even when they succeed, the formula does not count them. Finally, "performance" is relative. As the only legally mandated 4-year "access" institution, MSU Denver serves thousands of students who would not have been admitted to CU, CSU, Mines or elsewhere because they lack the GPA or test scores. They come to MSU Denver less prepared for a variety of reasons - family tragedy, poverty, etc. They need MORE services from the IHE than more privileged and prepared students need, yet there is nothing in the formula that properly addresses this. If we want to lift this population up, we need to invest in them.

I think we rank second these days

I would de-emphasize (f).

I would like to see stronger language tying in-demand jobs to trends within the labor market. I would also like to see language around more specific outcomes-related data such as wages post-graduation.

I would need more information on the impact of the performance funding metrics previously used on a variety of institutions to offer suggestions

I would revise it to set funding reviews in incremental terms to the extent possible. Many activities intended to address performance require multi-year commitments and sustained action.

Responses

I'd strike the entire thing. It's unnecessary. Let competition (the market) do its thing and simply provide funding on a per student basis. The students will shop around and attend the schools they deem to be the best fit for them and their situation. The government should stay out of it.

I'll let others weigh in. I encourage you to also look at the language describing "Step 1" (Ongoing additional funding--very broad) and the other model components, since those have the most direct impact on implementation.

I'm surprised research is not a focal point of the legislative declaration.

If the state wants to increase postsecondary attainment, it should look to the ATCs and the important role they play in CTE. Again, to be excluded from the formula, yet to be turning away interested students at all of our campuses, is evidence of a major disconnect.

In order to receive additional funding from the General Assembly and tax payers, we must PROVE that higher education institutions add value to EACH paying student and to the public at large! We simply cannot prove that now. The students who do not complete their programs is mind boggling.

Increased funding to reduce the need for tuition-based funding.

Increasing funding based on educating Colorado's own students rather than importing out-of-state students and graduates. Second provide increased funding for low-income, first-generation, and historically marginalized students to balance the additional support systems that are needed to provide equitable education outcomes.

Instead of just accepting that Colorado underfunds higher education and forcing institutions to fight over scraps, the Colorado legislature should increase funding and invest in these important institutions. It is frustrating that Colorado ranks at the bottom of the nation in postsecondary funding when we are a wealthy state. This speaks a lot to policymaker priorities and how misaligned they are with the needs of our state for healthy, strong communities and an educated native workforce.

Introduce the concept that credentials are as important as degree. Time to complete post secondary options not just time to degree.

Make 2 year colleges free.

Mention that Colorado ranks in the lowest percentile in state funding

More grants for funding start up businesses.

Most higher education students whom are working don't look for 4 year degrees. At most they will try the 2 year degrees or a technical certificate. I would include the studies on students obtaining applied sciences or certifications.

N/A

Responses

N/A

No

No

no

No

No.

Not opposed to anything in that legislative declaration, but would like to see additional language emphasizing job placement and wage outcomes over just enrollment/participation, as well as the need for institutions to provide reskilling programs for students of all ages.

Performance based models are very unequal and punish the people they are supposedly designed to help by removing funding from under performing schools, rather than providing the funding they desperately need. Different models would better serve low-income Coloradans.

Performance funding metrics and incentives are hard for an institution to plan around-this is concerning. Low income and minority participation should be increased-agree

Performance/outcomes based funding puts institutions serving students of privilege at a distinct advantage and is not equitable for Colorado.

Perhaps it would be helpful to define or expand on the term "affordable."

Post-secondary participation is lower by underrepresented groups, thus funding formulas should prioritize IHEs that serve this population. Performance/outcomes based funding tends to advantage those institutions that serve more privileged students and also advantage the more well resourced institutions (harming institutions that serve more low-income, first generation, and students of color; and under-resourced institutions)

rates of participation are not enough. completion rates among socially, culturally, and economically diverse students should be a factor. If we enroll, we must serve. Consider creating funding to replace any losses from policies spearheaded during the the Trump administration related to potential cuts to MSEIP, NSG, Department of Ag, Title V, Title III, IMLS, etc.

Recent history does not support that funding higher education has been a priority of the current administration. Gains have been marginal. While I applaud this commissions work, I wonder if recommendations - if they require more funding- will actually have a chance vs., for instance, early childhood education?

Recognize that student success will vary by institutional type and diversity of students and that should be factored into the funding metrics.

Responses

Reiterate the purpose of the ATCs in carrying out the Governor's plan, along with additional support for these institutions as a viable stake in this state's ability to offer skill-based education and training.

Remove the black box that maintains stability and does not reward improvement Value transfer explicitly

remove the term minorites and keep underrepresented populations.

See comments above

Shortening a time to degree will not necessarily lead to a better and more educated citizenry. Education is not a business nor a commodity and which to be abbreviated. The purpose of education has growing in developing people cannot always be quantified in numbers, and there should be recognition of this in a funding formula. I do agree with the importance of increasing educational opportunities to all Colorado, and those who come to our state for opportunity.

Shortening time to degree to lessen personal outlay and need for loans ignores the growth of knowledge and the time needed to develop skills and competencies relevant to the present and future. Lessen the assumptions that education is primarily for the first quarter of an individual' life.

Should be an increased focus on affordability and incentives to institutions that do NOT consistently raise tuition prices

Strengthen the language to assure additional funding through the formula for institutions serving greater percentages of at risk, low income, and first generation students.

Students should have access to quality degree offerings that lead to their own economic mobility and that contribute to the economic vibrancy of CO.

The current focus on 'timeliness to degree' appears too narrow for such a broad statement. The declaration should also highlight the significance of providing access to quality degree programs.

The declaration should emphasize the importance of providing access to quality degree programs that promote economic mobility for students and drive economic vitality for the state. The current focus on timeliness to degree feels too narrow and specific for what should be a broader, more inclusive statement.

The declaration should mention that the primary reason people pursue higher education is to improve their employment opportunities and increase their earning potential. It should also state that the business community primarily looks to the state's postsecondary education system as its local talent pool and should therefore expect the students who complete the programs will have the skills and competencies that the business community needs to be successful.

The declaration should mention the importance of access to quality degree offerings that lead to economic mobility for students and economic vibrancy for the state

Responses

The declaration should mention the importance of access to quality degree offerings that lead to economic mobility for students and economic vibrancy for the state. The current 'timeliness to degree' statement seems overly specific for what should be a general declaration.

The declaration should mention the importance of access to quality degree offerings that lead to economic mobility for students and economic vibrancy for the state. The current 'timeliness to degree' statement seems overly specific for what should be a general declaration

The formula could be enhanced by including language that would recognize the challenges rural institutions face and including a bonus or supplement for those institutions that fulfill their mission.

The general assembly should not be establishing funding metrics. Leave that to the experts.

The incentive for state institutions of higher education must be relevant to today's and future job markets. Meaning the incentives must be tied to students finding good jobs.

The included language of "largely due to the migration of college-educated adults" does not add anything meaningful to this declaration because there is nothing further stated about the need to increase overall enrollment of in-state students. If the desire is to see that higher rates of Coloradans overall are able to access a postsecondary degree, then that goal should be clearly stated. Additionally, the use of the word "limited" in clause (g) does not add value and only serves to create and spread a scarcity mindset that will increase the competition between institutions. As a principle, it should be stated that all state resources are used to achieve the policy goals adopted by the general assembly, regardless of whether those resources are limited or robust.

The language in (1)(c) regarding the ranking doesn't make sense and the reference needs to be updated, and the attribution (" . . . largely due . . . ") seems to ignore the great work of credentialing/completions that current IHEs are doing in Colorado. (f) indicates the desire for incentives for participation by minorities, but it doesn't explicitly support incentives for outcomes for such groups, i.e. retention and/or completion. For (f.5) the current model incentivizes 100% and 150% time to completion outcomes, but the concept of "shorten their time to degree" and how that is balanced against the stated qualifier of "challenges that some students face" seems vague and unmeasurable beyond timely completion metrics. In these areas, the clarity and meaning of the declaration could be improved. Generally the stated goals have consensus support.

The legislative declaration does a nice job of prioritizing attainment of Coloradans while prioritizing affordability. It does not explicitly mention historically underserved populations and first generation students which Colorado will need to support to meet its attainment goal.

Responses

The legislative declaration emphasizes increasing postsecondary participation, particularly for underrepresented groups, and improving affordability, which aligns with creating a strong talent pipeline. However, it could be enhanced by emphasizing a clearer connection between postsecondary education and workforce needs through collaboration with industry partners. Adding a focus on work-based learning would help bridge the gap between education and employment, giving students real-world experience. The declaration could also benefit from performance metrics that assess not just graduation rates but also job placement and wage growth post-graduation. An addition reskilling initiatives would support workforce development for both younger and mid-career workers. Recognizing non-traditional education pathways such as certificates, apprenticeships, and online learning would provide students with more flexible, effective options. Incentivizing businesses to invest in workforce training programs would further support Colorado's talent development, especially for underserved populations. The vague language about incentives for institutions should be replaced with measurable, data-driven goals related to student success and workforce outcomes. Defining high-demand fields more clearly based on labor market trends would ensure resources are allocated where they are most needed.

The policy goals should specifically prioritize provision of skills that improve the individuals family-sustaining career circumstance over their lifetimes. State funding should differ dramatically between institutions that clearly deliver these employment-related outcomes and those that don't. The focus should not be on 'resident' students (lifelong learners will sometimes be resident, often not) and less on degree -- even credential -- completion than on learning contributing directly and enduringly to career success.

The term "minority" should also reflect students with disabilities. Minority has historically been a term used only to describe people by race/ethnicity.

there is no mention of the quality of education and the needs of the employer. I am an employer and the differences in quality between an A/B students can be quite wide. They must be ready to compete and unfortunately can falter with relatively minor stress.

There needs to be a recognition of the need to protect and invest in the basic people and physical infrastructure of our colleges and universities.

These metrics must take into consideration the size and location of some institutions. Equity as opposed to equality should be prioritized. Smaller institutions have larger struggles when it comes to some funding priorities. Any metrics must take these differences into consideration - and must not simply be applied across the board based on percentages and ratios.

third highly --> just "third" The current declaration reads that the end goal is to get a degree. Please go further. Please include something like the purpose of public education is to create opportunities for socioeconomic mobility and improved life circumstances for graduates of state institutions. Embedding this in the declaration will help align funding.

Transfer student populations should be highlighted.

Responses

Use the best available research to wrestle with the questions of adequacy and equity in funding. Raw performance funding does not work and is regressive. It's an old model that has been debunked in the empirical research. More recent thinking, models, and research push us towards funding models that address adequacy and advance equity. It also needs to account for the fact that many institutions have local and regional needs they need to meet. In other words, that have a local/regional mission. Those needs can be very urgent and in some ways unique

We are in a globally competitive international marketplace, competing with other countries. Our focus should be on overall quality, rather than reducing and watering down requirements.

While the goals outlined in the legislative declaration are commendable, affordability must be a higher priority. The biggest barrier to higher education for many Coloradans is cost, and we need to rethink how we approach this investment. It is not just about individuals securing their own futures but about society investing in the education of native Coloradans, which strengthens the entire state. The reliance on performance-based funding, as described in sections 1.g and 2.b, is particularly problematic. While it is important to incentivize institutions to align with state policy goals, tying funding exclusively to performance metrics ignores the broader systemic challenges institutions face. Many of the factors affecting outcomes, such as student demographics, economic trends, and regional disparities, are outside institutional control. Penalizing schools for these uncontrollable variables risks deepening inequities and reducing access for the very populations the legislation seeks to support. Furthermore, using performance-based funding as the sole mechanism for achieving policy goals creates inefficiencies and diverts resources away from addressing core issues like affordability and support for low-income and underrepresented students. These funding structures often force institutions to prioritize short-term metrics over long-term investments in infrastructure, faculty, and student services—all of which are essential for sustained improvements in access and success. To meet the critical challenges outlined in the declaration, Colorado must prioritize direct investment in higher education. This includes restoring adequate baseline funding for institutions, reducing reliance on tuition revenue, and providing targeted support for students who cannot afford postsecondary education. Performance metrics, while potentially useful as a complementary tool, cannot replace a robust funding strategy that addresses affordability and systemic inequities. Just as increased literacy enriches communities, a more educated population creates a stronger, more resilient society. In an age where misinformation spreads rapidly, a well-educated public is essential for sustaining democracy and fostering informed, critical thinking. Addressing these challenges requires a renewed commitment to higher standards and meaningful investments in accessible, affordable education for all Coloradans, rather than relying solely on performance-based incentives to guide funding decisions.

Responses

While the legislative declaration emphasizes the need to increase postsecondary participation among low-income and minority Coloradans and incentivizes institutions to shorten time-to-degree, such policies risk reinforcing systemic inequities. By prioritizing efficiency and performance metrics, these strategies may inadvertently track low-income, first-generation, and students of color into shorter, lower-cost educational pathways that often lead to lower-wage careers. This risks preserving four-year and graduate degrees as privileges primarily accessible to wealthier, predominantly white demographics, perpetuating a two-tiered higher education system that fails to serve as a true equalizer. Additionally, focusing on shortening time to degree without addressing the total cost of attendance overlooks the broader financial realities faced by underrepresented students. While reducing time to graduation may appear to reduce student debt on the surface, it does not account for the cumulative financial burdens such as tuition, fees, housing, and other living expenses. Many students, particularly those balancing work and caregiving responsibilities, cannot realistically accelerate their studies without significant financial and structural support. As a result, these policies may perpetuate financial inequities and undermine the stated goal of affordability. A truly equitable approach would require a more nuanced understanding of how funding formulas and performance metrics impact different student demographics. The focus must shift from cost-cutting measures to robust investments in comprehensive support systems—such as financial aid, advising, and flexible learning options—that enable all students, regardless of socioeconomic status, to fully access and succeed in higher education.

Would like it to be updated to include the economic mobility we hope Colorado students earn by completing postsecondary credentials. It should also stress on-time completion

Would want to add the connection to degrees that lead to positive net return for learners. Many leave with high debt, no degree, and enter jobs that are not family sustaining.

xcv

Yes, please change the above to read, "until which time TABOR is eliminated and Colorado is unshackled from restrictions that keep it from utilizing its limited resources"

Your focus is based on highly flawed assumptions. How do you lower time to degrees while K-12 gets away with graduating students who can't read or do math? They graduate students who don't get the content - never go to class and are rescued over winter and summer breaks. And you allow failing low enrollment college programs to steal resources from good programs. Put low enrollment low workforce requirements back in place and force institutions and entitled faculty to do something about them. Nobody wants to do a teacher ed baccalaureate major when you can so much more easily do an alternative program to get licensed. Your words above are nothing more than superficial feel-good words. Do you want to do the work to fix the system, or do you want to appease as many voters as you can?

Question 8

Question 8 Text

Below is a description of the funding steps that comprise the current funding formula. Use the comment box below to share any feedback you may have on the step process and how the steps work together. Responses should focus on the mechanics of the step based funding process rather than specific components of each step.

Step 1: Ongoing Additional Funding

- Funds distributed through Step 1 are added to the performance funding base in future years to accelerate progress toward the Colorado Commission on Higher Education's strategic plan goals, to address funding disparities, or to address other funding priorities not included in performance funding.
- Step 1 metrics have historically been based on one year of data rather than three year/four years comparison used in Step 2.
- In previous years, the following metrics have been used as part of Step 1.
 - First generation (SFTE)
 - First generation (Headcount, per statute)
 - Race/Ethnicity distribution - Headcount calibrated to General Fund
 - Pell distribution - Headcount calibrated to General Fund
 - Race/Ethnicity retention

Step 2: Performance Funding

- The primary tool to distribute funding to institutions. Funds distributed through this allocation model include the prior year's Step 1 funds, existing base funding, and any new funding for common policies, including salary and other mandatory costs.
- Performance metrics included in distribution:
 - Resident student full-time equivalent (FTE)
 - Resident first generation undergraduate student headcount
 - Resident credential completion
 - Resident Pell-eligible student population
 - Resident underrepresented minority student population share
 - Retention rate
 - 100% graduation rate
 - 150% graduation rate

Step 3: Temporary Additional Funding

- Step 3 funds are temporary (one-year) funds allocated to make progress toward strategic plan goals or for any other purpose. These funds are not added to the base and, therefore, are not incorporated into Step 2 in future years. Use the comment box below to share any feedback you may have on the step process and how the steps work together

Question 8 Responses

Responses

-

1) The description of what can be included in "Step 1" funding is intentionally broad, but still leads to quite a lot of debate about how this can be used. I believe "Step 1" should be available for a broad range of uses and would like to see it address--more explicitly--providing funding to ensure that the State continues to offer postsecondary educational opportunities throughout the State (or some similar nod to institutional viability). As noted previously, if we need to cut the budget, I anticipate cutting step 2 funding overall and then restoring funding needed for specific institutions. We need to make sure that this remains an option. 2) As previously noted, I would greatly appreciate additional analysis of what institutions really need, taking all their funding sources into account, and the ability to make thoughtful base adjustments in (current) "Step 1". 3) The "steps" concept continues to confuse everyone. So-called "Step 2" is really "Step 1". Perhaps we can move away from calling things "Steps" and instead rename "Performance Funding" something like "Performance Base Funding" to acknowledge that it incorporates the base.

150% graduation rate? Is that even possible? You cannot have a metric that is more than 100%. Unless tuition is reduced and stabilized among institutions, some goals will be hard to achieve.

appreciate balance of stability/clarity on base funding with opportunities for increased funding based on outcomes

Beautiful. Thank you for considering both long and short term funding priorities.

Colorado should reorder the steps to emphasize the importance of performance above all else. Performance funding should be moved to step 1. Additionally, the items in the performance funding step should be revised. The current list emphasizes enrollment. Enrollment is an input, not an outcome. The only metrics used in the performance step should be outcomes such as program completion, employment rate for graduates, and starting salary for graduates within 3 months of program completion.

Consider changing step 1 metric gathering to 2 years instead of 1

Graduation and retention rates do not accurately account for those students upskilling without needing a full program of study. Broaden the definition of "graduation" and "retention" to capture whether the student achieved their learning goal, which might not be a full program.

How about focusing on rewarding healthy programs instead of emaciated ones.

I believe that overall, the idea and use of the steps is appropriate and has served the state well. I do think, like k-12 funding will, it would be important to ensure that there is recognition that rural institutions may need additional support.

Responses

I don't understand all of the abbreviations, but it seems pretty reasonable to me.

I guess my question would be when institutions know what the step 1 metrics for a given year will be, so that they can work toward them. Or whether they are likely to change significantly from one year to the next.

I have some questions about the use of step 1 to include some of the same populations that are included in step 2. If the purpose of including these in step 1 is to more accurately measure faster progress (one year progress vs. 3/4 year change) shouldn't we be considering if the 3/4 year averaging in the step 2 performance metrics should be changed to be more timely? Would also like to discuss whether all step 1 funding should be moved into the base the following year. Or if perhaps we should more consistently be considering step 3 as an opportunity to move funding for current needs and priorities.

I think overall the steps are good and allows funding to be allocated in different ways depending on policy goals and needs. I think step 2 might have too many metrics, diluting the power of each metric to change behavior. The metrics while under "performance" are much more focused on output measures or student counts and something that gets more at outcomes for students could be interesting. I think the way Step 1 rolls into the base the next year can dilute some of the importance there.

I think the steps make sense and it's important that they be followed. If Step 1 is given as ongoing, then it should mean ongoing. One-time and ongoing are completely different things.

I think they have worked reasonably well. However, their starting point did not address adequacy and so there are inequities built in

I would want to see what funding is provided in what steps. It isn't clear if these metrics are being used to add more funding or remove it. This makes me very concerned as a citizen.

In addition to not weighting learner outcomes re credential value, the steps work to nominally redistribute the same pie in a manner which has almost no operational or budgetary impact on higher ed institutions in CO. Any progress made at one institution comes at the expense of the others---fully zero sum.

Responses

In my opinion, the step process provides a solid framework for allocating funding, but there are a few ways it could better align with Colorado's equity goals and strategic priorities: Step 1 - Ongoing Additional Funding: This step is a good way to address disparities and priorities, but relying on just one year of data can lead to swings and inconsistencies. Using a multi-year average, similar to Step 2, would make it more stable and reliable. Step 2 - Performance Funding: This is the core of the formula, and I think it works well. However, we could strengthen its impact by placing more emphasis on equity outcomes, such as retention and graduation rates for underrepresented groups. It's also important to ensure performance metrics don't unintentionally disadvantage smaller or less-resourced institutions. Step 3 - Temporary Additional Funding: The flexibility here is valuable for immediate needs, but the one-year nature of these funds creates uncertainty. In my opinion, these funds should be tied to clear, measurable progress toward strategic goals and allocated transparently.

In step 1, using one year of data to track retention may miss the longer term objective and it may be more accurate to measure retention across multiple years or shift it to step 2.

In step 2, it should be recognized that retention rates are important; however, can be impacted by factors outside of the control of the students or the institution. Retention of first-gen, or underserved populations, can be impacted by societal and economic factors. Decreasing funding due to a low retention rate negatively impacts an already negatively impacted population.

Include funding that reflects the college having a qualified faculty for in-person instruction. Rural college students indicate a preference in-person instruction and only take online courses where required and not offered on campus.

Increase capacity through capital for ATCs.

It is complicated but currently predictable and understandable by those who need to use it. I see no reason to change it. Rather, let's strive to structure our state budget to - in the long term - develop strategies for more funding.

lack of predictable funding has made use of temporary funding necessary, but it is not sustainable.

Many students cannot attend full-time but still need support services just like full-time students. This should be taken into consideration.

More startup business grants.

Most students swirl between and among institutions. There should be a recognition of how institutions support that process for students. A student who is successfully transitioned from one institution to the next with maximum credit transfer and ease of enrollment, etc. is a success for both the originating and receiving institution. That should be recognized.

Move outcomes based funding to Step 1.

Multiple years worth of data should be considered, not just 1 year. Trends should be considered.

Responses

My institution went through and collected performance metrics data, and this data was compiled with other colleges within the same governing board.

n/a

n/a

N/a

N/A

n/a

NA

Na

Need to explicitly make college experiences more available to individuals with underrepresented gender identities and other personal identity markers beyond merely race and ethnicity (such as rural/urban backgrounds, religious or other philosophical affiliations, etc.)

No comment

No comment

No comment.

No comment.

No feedback.

No feedback.

None

None

none

none

None.

Responses

One of the issues with performance funding is that is complicated and difficult for institutional leaders to understand, as this research finds about Colorado:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00221546.2023.2171209>. As much as possible, funding should be standardized and simplified.

please link performance funding to completion outcomes among first gen, race/ethnicity/PELL status. Retention is useful, but completion, not just enrollment, is a better proxy for performance.

Retention and graduation rates very much depend on student resources and preparation. Requiring huge increases in this will result in a general dumbing down of education in Colorado. Instead, reduce the cost of tuition by raising taxes. If Coloradoans want their kids educated, they have to pay for it - just like roads (and even prisons....). The burden should fall on the population as a whole - not individual families.

Rural institutions should have a larger J curve support

Rural students should be given a preference

Step 1 & Step 2 metrics are pretty redundant. Remove metrics from Step 1 & make it discretionary (like what was done in FY25).

Step 1 additional considerations: - Rural students - Those receiving state benefits (CHP+, Medicaid, SNAP) - Student parents -Veterans - Former foster youth Step 2 additional considerations: - Hispanic Serving Institution Step 3 additional considerations: - Healthy Minds and Hunger Free designated campuses

Step 1 funding is more critical to meeting State goals towards degree attainment. Any formula should reward institutions that serve students of color, low-income students, and first generation students.

Step 2 is the vast majority of funding and seems to be decided first, it should really be the first step (this is confusing every time the Department talks about the formula). Step 3 is never really used but is a good concept.

Step 2 should become step 1, step 3 to step 2 and step 1 to step 3. With this change the performance funding tends to be prioritized first. Step 3 as it exist is for one year funding. Step 1 which I propose as step 3 would continue to be base building and feed back into step 2 the new step 1 for the next FY adjusted base.

Step 2 works very well. Step 3 and 1 are too restricted for all types of the universities

Step 3 could be eliminated. The steps as a whole are not the easiest to understand.

The "Step Process" is good. Not incorporating or prioritizing students with disabilities is not good.

Responses

The current funding formula was designed with flexibility in mind, offering policymakers the opportunity to address specific needs and drive desired policy outcomes. It has successfully achieved this goal without becoming overly complex. Overall, the step-based structure of the formula has proven effective in addressing needs and distributing funding based on institutional performance.

The difference in increase in performance-based funding for '23 - '24 across institutions was meaningless -- a range of from 8.8% to 10.4%. Also, performance funding was < 10% of total state funding for any institution. Colorado should follow the lead of states like Texas which are moving aggressively to substantial differentiation based on employment-specific outcomes. Those outcomes need to be measured beyond the first job or job promotion based on the achieved skill -- it's not enough to hire or promote, the progress must endure. I realize this is difficult to measure, but the sooner the state seeks to do so the more likely these institutions are to survive.

The intent of the 3-step formula was to create flexibility and opportunities for policy makers to address needs and drive policy initiatives/outcomes. It has worked quite well in doing this, and it is not overcomplicated.

The intent of the steps is noted. Given the low base of funds, it becomes a bit of a zero sum game for institutions that end up competing against each other for the same pool of funds. Absent an increase in the pool, I'm not convinced that playing with the steps/calculations will result in any meaningful change for institutions.

The state has failed to identify a consistent means to measure the number of first-generation students. This has led some campuses to report false or misleading data that undermine the credibility of the process.

The state should consider not wrapping the Step 1 into the Step 2 base in future years, so as to maintain the ability to use the flexibility of Step 1 even in years when there is limited increases in total funding. The calculation of Step 2 allocations also leads to very little change from year to year, minimizing the impact of the incentive structure.

The step process is a good one. It provides decision makers flexibility to recognize and fund special initiatives, including addressing systemic inequities, (step 1) and address one-time funding needs (step 3). Policy objectives can be accomplished easily through this structure. It should remain in tact.

The step process is fairly confusing to other stakeholders. Is there a way to simplify? Do we need Step 3 if its been unused?

Responses

The Step system as outlined in the model and defined above provides an immense amount of flexibility that is highly adaptable to the stated goals or changes in them. I do not fully agree with the statement related to step 1 that distributions through that step have historically been based on 1 year of data rather than 3 or 4 years. The few examples from recent years have been based more on contextual and strategic needs, rather than specific metrics related to a narrow time period. The data used to support those changes seems to be based on multi-year trending related to the larger landscape of higher-ed in the state, not specific short-term metrics. That use of Step 1 seems appropriate. The idea that it could be or has been based on short-term metrics raises concerns about volatility because it is a base-building step. Short-term, reactive factors may be more appropriately considered in Step 3, which is not base building.

The step-based funding process appears comprehensive, but it is fundamentally tied to performance-based funding, which increasingly seems misaligned with the real challenges facing higher education in Colorado. While the steps attempt to incentivize progress on key metrics, the structure creates inefficiencies, arbitrary hurdles, and additional burdens for institutions, many of which are already underfunded and strained. This distracts from the central issue: a systemic lack of funding for postsecondary education. Concerns with Each Step: 1. Step 1 (Ongoing Additional Funding):

- o Using one year of data instead of a multi-year average introduces volatility and risks overreacting to short-term fluctuations. A rolling average would balance responsiveness with stability.
- o Metrics tied to equity goals are valuable, but the formula does not adequately address the resource needs of institutions serving underrepresented and high-need populations.

2. Step 2 (Performance Funding):

- o As the primary funding mechanism, this step ties critical resources to metrics that often hold institutions accountable for factors beyond their control, such as demographic trends and regional disparities.
- o Institutions serving non-traditional or high-need students face systemic challenges that are not adequately addressed in this step, creating inequities in funding allocation.

3. Step 3 (Temporary Additional Funding):

- o While flexible, temporary funding does not provide the long-term support needed to address systemic issues like affordability and access. Successful initiatives often lack the sustained funding required to achieve meaningful, lasting impact.

Overall Feedback: The step-based process, while detailed, amplifies the shortcomings of performance-based funding. Instead of focusing resources on improving affordability and access for students, it forces institutions to navigate complex funding structures tied to arbitrary and often unrealistic goals. This approach risks penalizing institutions rather than empowering them to meet the needs of their students. A more effective funding strategy would prioritize baseline investment in institutions, direct financial support for students, and targeted funding for equity initiatives. Performance metrics, if used, should play a secondary role in shaping funding allocation, complementing rather than replacing systemic investment. Colorado must prioritize restoring and increasing funding for higher education to ensure that all Coloradans have access to affordable, high-quality education.

There is no inclusion of disabilities of any type that are likely to involve more than does/did first generation,

This has worked very well.

Responses

This model is eloquent because it's primarily based on performance but has a mechanism (step 1) that allows for base-building. The biggest challenge is that the model is complex and the legislators don't understand it well, which means it's easy to lobby around. If you can simplify the first two steps or the way you train or talk about them, it may help. Also, consider removing step three or having more substantive conversations about the right mechanisms for using it. It hasn't been used in the past, I suspect because the legislature prefers to direct funds through a bill that includes reporting and other outcomes rather than put them broadly through a model. I also can't imagine institutions advocating for a "one-time" appropriation.

Unsure what 150% graduation rate means

uouou

Upper and lower bounds have been utilized in some of the metrics for funding. I understand this creates a level of stability for funding, but might improve with trends instead of year to year bounds. Not noted above is the "Role and Mission Adjustment" factor, which has absolutely nothing to do with the Role and Mission of the institution and simply keeps the status quo of funding. Further, some of the metrics (e.g. First Gen) do not have consistent collection methods and therefore the data is meaningless.

v

We appreciate being evaluated on our growth versus having to compete directly with other IHEs, particularly given our unique roles and missions.. Step 1 has been treated as a secondary priority, used only when money is available. This means that we continue to see major inequities in funding across institutions, which Step 1 was designed to address Time to evolve metrics to meet current times

- i. Transfer and part-time students are not included in IPEDS retention and completion data. At MSU Denver, this is 50% of our student population that is fully invisible in our student success data used in the formula
- ii. Workforce-aligned, non-bachelors credentials are a priority for the State and yet are not included in our completion data. As demand for these credentials grows, we'd like to see these data included in our completion calculations

When an institution takes well-prepared students their costs to educate them is not the same as for institutions that take marginal, under-prepared students so there needs to be a recognition for those costs for the institutions that admit and retain under-prepared students and perhaps Step 3 could do this but it has never been funded (or to use Step 1 in this way would help); the formula still leans toward volume of students with over 40% of the formula automatically given to the larger institutions.

Where is funding for Prison Education Programming?

While graduation rates are important, sometimes, the graduate is not well educated if a school is just measured on graduation rates (high schools are good examples). Thus, that should not weigh heavily. There should be job measures -employment in their field.

Responses

Without additional funds these seems to be how it is

Work backwards from the target of getting to 73 percent by 2031 --- what would each institution need to graduate, assuming utmost technical efficiency via driving down cost-per-appropriations. This can be accomplished by implementing the best student success reforms, and by finding shared services efficiencies between and within two- and four-year sectors in both administration and academic offerings.

x

You're making this way too complicated. Let the money follow the student. Divide the budgeted amount by total FTE headcount and allocate the funds to institutions based on each institution's FTE headcount.

zxv

Question 9

Question 9 Text

The following description provides details on the "resident student full-time equivalent (FTE)" performance metric. Please review the metric details and use the comment box below to provide feedback on the value of this metric, the specific metric criteria used to calculate its value, and any comments on the data source used for the calculation.

Resident student full-time equivalent (FTE): The change in the count of full-time equivalent enrollment of resident students.

Specific Metric Criteria:

- Includes resident students only.
- Includes both undergraduate and graduate students.
- Includes the total FTE for all terms.
- FTE is calculated based on headcount divided by credit hours taken.
- FTE generated by cash and auxiliary funded credit-bearing courses are not included.

Data Sources:

- CDHE Aggregate FTE Data Collection
- For the FY24-25 formula, this used fall 2019 through fall 2022

Use the comment box below to share any feedback you may have on the resident student full-time equivalent performance metric.

Question 9 Responses

Responses
Why include graduate students? Yes the state should be providing support for graduate study yet the different profile of graduate students and the varied reasons GS pursue a credential or degree varies widely.
As described above, schools where a lot of students attend part-time are at a disadvantage. They need the same (usually more) supports - advising, financial aid, etc. We must staff a robust admin "backbone" based on our Headcount; yet we are funded based on our FTE
asddfds
Bottom line for all of these--let's make sure that they are easy to obtain/verify, and everyone agrees on their counts. I don't have strong feelings otherwise.
By my read and understanding, it is working as structured and meeting the expectations outlined.
Comment re CCCS specifically: community colleges hugely disadvantaged by FTE model when over 50% of learners are not full time, and increasing number of non-traditional certs and credentials have extraordinary learner value not counted to college performance. This is most scaled point of higher-ed engagement for most disadvantaged learners. As such, community colleges deserve a distinct funding formula aligned with mission and economic outcomes for distinct learner population.
Concern that the data source is lagging by so many years. An IHE could have a drastic swing in enrollment and be getting dollars through this measurement that are not accurate. Also some questions on part time students and how we best capture that enrollment especially post-pandemic when we see less enrollment at full time.
Decisions should be data driven and the data should not be "doctored."
FTE by institution should be considered based upon the relative size of the institution. Any comparison should recognize that smaller institutions may have wider swings based upon factors largely outside of their control.
FTE is in general calculated by a total credit hour divided by 30 (annualized full time equivalent) in two-year public institutions.
FTE is unrealistic & antiquated as more and more students can only attend part-time due to expense, inflation, need to work. need formula for part-time.
FTE shouldn't be a consideration. Completion should drive the funding not enrollment. The prior year completion outcomes should be used as the proxy for FTE.
Good

Responses

Good

Good and appropriate.

Hard to judge. Is there a different algorithm for grad students?

Headcount is more appropriate almost always. There is research as recent as 2024 establishing a causal link between working 20 and 28 hours per week and inability to graduate. More funding needs to go to colleges that support part-time students, either helping them graduate while attending on a part-time basis or by upshifting to full-time attendance by being more affordable.

I agree.

I am not sure if I understand why graduate students are included in this metric.

I support multiple years of data on each of these elements because it helps smooth trends for planning purposes. No additional feedback to share.

I think this is the right approach.

In a world of lifelong skills-based learning, 'resident' is less and less meaningful.

In general, I would limit all data to no more than 3 years (as opposed to 4) so that the data is more relevant to the upcoming funding year.

In my opinion, the resident student full-time equivalent (FTE) performance metric is a solid way to track enrollment trends, but there are a few areas where it could be improved: Value of the Metric: Including both undergraduate and graduate students gives a good overall picture of enrollment, which is important. However, it would be more meaningful if the data also highlighted trends for underrepresented and underserved populations. This would help ensure we're focusing on equity. Specific Metric Criteria: Excluding FTE from cash and auxiliary funded credit-bearing courses might miss some important contributions to access and affordability. Including these courses could provide a more complete understanding of how institutions are supporting resident students. Data Sources and Timeframe: Using fall enrollment data makes sense, but it might not fully reflect the experiences of non-traditional students who take courses outside of fall terms. Looking at data from additional terms could paint a more accurate picture of year-round enrollment.

Increase funding to rural serving institutions. Increase FTE support of two-year institutions

Is a rural factor calculated based on FTE for added for Rural schools?

It is essential to make sure that all IHE's are using the same procedures to calculate this, and that the protocols for determining which programs are cash-funded/auxiliary are comparable.

makes sense to not have FTE generated by cash/aux funds

Responses

Might consider headcount. But there is a difference in the level of service between full-time and part-time. Or might consider two separate measures (Headcount and FTE)

More students are likely to pursue "bite size" educational offerings to advance certain skills. This should be accounted for in the formula. Traditional full time enrollment is probably overweighted. It will take investments to provide appropriate supports for students who may not be full time, but who nonetheless require strong student supports and advising services.

Moving away from FTE should be considered. Some students who have to work to go to school may be unable to attend full-time. Adding a metric for part-time students may be helpful to some institutions, particularly community colleges.

n/a

n/a

N/a

N/A

n/a

NA

NA

Na

No comment

No comment

No comment.

No comment.

No comment.

No comment.

No comments

No feedback

No feedback.

Responses

No issues with the language.

Non-resident students financially the state's deficit in funding higher ed. Non-residents need to somehow be considered in the model.

None

none

None

None

none

None

none

None

None

none- the steps work fine

Not all credit hours cost the same to generate. This means you have a mechanism that does not reward lower costs. Credit hours are not a suitable proxy for costs and treating credit hours as if they were fungible, when they are not, means that you have not put downward pressure on costs.

Not all students can afford to attend full-time, especially first-gen, under-represented student groups, etc. This should somehow be factored into the formula.

OK.

Prison Education students are not calculated into the FTE formula--this should be added into the formulas.

Rural college funding based solely on FTE discriminates against rural faculty. Faculty pay must be equal across the system and be commensurate with degrees required to instruct. Additionally, in many rural communities, community college faculty pay is lower than K12 schools. Additionally, with the new high school diploma program, will this be included in the funding formula? Further, pay discrimination against rural faculty must end.

Responses

Should also add a measure relative FTE from high enrollment courses versus lower enrollment courses since we know the quality of student experience is often better with a higher teacher to student ratio in courses. Many entry level courses (e.g. freshmen biology) have hundreds of students per instructor and ultimately lead to poor learning experiences for many students that ultimately leave college in their first year, thus reducing retention and graduation. If these early courses were smaller, the research shows that students would be more likely to have better experiences in the transition from secondary school to college and thus more likely to graduate in a timely manner.

Should consider on-line students, too.

Should resident students include those on-campus as ideally they have more supports by being on campus.

Student enrollment figures cannot keep growing forever, as we approach the population shift. By awarding growth, you are incentivizing institutions to compete against one another instead of focusing on their own inherent strengths and needs.

Students facing systemic barriers, such as working multiple jobs, serving as caregivers, and navigating other economic challenges, often find it difficult to enroll as full-time students. These obstacles limit their ability to fully participate in traditional academic schedules, reduce access to financial aid tied to full-time status, and create additional pressures that can impede their academic progress.

The "resident student full-time equivalent (FTE)" performance metric provides an important measure of enrollment trends but presents several challenges that undermine its effectiveness and fairness. By focusing exclusively on full-time enrollment, the metric excludes part-time and non-traditional students who make up a significant portion of Colorado's higher education population. These students, often balancing work, family, and education, are central to equity efforts and deserve recognition in institutional assessments. Furthermore, population demographics (minorities as a percentage of the population) inherently limit FTE. Each demographic should be able to attend post-secondary institutions that best align with their career goals across the state. For example, a minority student below the poverty level with an aptitude for engineering should have equal access to Colorado's premier Engineering schools. This metric does not account for these realities, placing institutions and students at an unfair disadvantage. Adding to this, data from fall 2019 through 2022 captures the pandemic's significant disruptions to enrollment patterns. Without incorporating pre-pandemic data, the metric risks skewing evaluations and creating an inaccurate picture of institutional performance. The connection of this metric to performance-based funding raises additional concerns. Tying funding directly to FTE creates pressure for institutions to prioritize full-time enrollment at the expense of supporting part-time and non-traditional learners. This approach may lead to resource misallocation and limit institutions' ability to address the needs of a diverse student population.

The funding formula should be based on headcount rather than FTE, because basing funding on FTE hurts institutions that tend to enroll a lot of part-time students (specifically, regional public universities and community colleges). That being said, I like the focus on resident students.

Responses

the metrics used for this factor are well rounded

The resident student FTE is not equitable for students with disabilities who cannot attend college as a full time (i.e., 12 credit hours or more) student. This is therefore a disability-related barrier toward college success based on the current funding model.

These metrics, 9-16, seem appropriate. Please see my comments below under additional performance metrics.

This implies that the only way to gain further funding is to increase enrollment? Apologies it is not clear how the state has taken into consideration economies of scale / diseconomies of scale around enrollment levels within a finite geographic space.

this is fine.

This is not an outcome or performance metric, it's just funding based on students. If kept, it should either be changed to headcount or be a combination of FTE and headcount to better reflect institutions that serve many part time students.

This makes sense.

This metric currently works well.

This metric intentionally marginalizes non-resident students and the support they need

This would be a metric if we valued overall enrollment but it may be more beneficial to focus on enrollment of certain student groups. I find the inclusion of graduate students in this metric interesting since most discussion revolve around undergraduate students.

Two thumbs up.

v

Valuable to include, as it reflects one of the major cost drivers for institutions and prioritizes residents. Might consider headcount for all residents as well (not just first-gen)

Without additional funds these seems to be how it is

x

yes resident students should be the primary data point for the funding formula (why give institutions more for enrolling out of state when they already get more tuition dollars from those students?); yes FTE is a good metric though institutions with students who struggle to afford college and have to work multiple jobs often cannot attend FT (so these campuses are penalized for having so many PT students)

Responses

ZXV

Question 10

Question 10 Text

The following description provides details on the "resident first-generation undergraduate student headcount" performance metric. Please review the metric details and provide feedback on the value of this metric, the specific metric criteria used to calculate its value, and any comments on the data source used for the calculation.

Resident first-generation undergraduate student headcount: The change in the headcount enrollment of first-generation undergraduate resident students.

Specific Metric Criteria:

- Calculated using fall student enrollment only.
- Includes resident students only (tuition classification = 1).
- Includes undergraduate students only (CDHE does not collect graduate student first-generation status).
- Includes first-generation students only. First-generation status indicates whether an undergraduate student is First Generation as defined in the Higher Education Act of 1965 which is: (A) an individual both of whose parents did not complete a baccalaureate degree; or (B) in the case of any individual who regularly resided with and received support from only one parent, an individual who's only such parent did not complete a baccalaureate degree.

Data Sources:

- SURDS Enrollment File
- For the FY24-25 formula, this used fall 2019 through fall 2022

Use the comment box below to share any feedback you may have on the resident first generation undergraduate student headcount performance metric.

Question 10 Responses

Responses

-

Again, some question on the lagging data included in this measurement. Also a question of why we prioritize enrollment and not retention or matriculation. Seems that we just reward first enrollment with a fall count and don't actually recognize or reward institutions that do a good job of retaining these first-gen students.

Responses

Data can be skewed if "first-generation student" is not clearly defined.

First gen is critical to capture in the formula and to have a standardized definition is mandatory; the fourth bullet, item B is really difficult when the other parent has a degree and can have income and postsecondary experiences (the lived experience) to contribute to the student.

First generation is a strong proxy measure for other variables and should be retained.

Good

good

Good and appropriate. First-gen population share improvements could be considered as an alternate to headcount.

Have institutions review

Headcount should not be a metric and should be replaced with a completion outcome for this demographic group.

I appreciate that the formula is trying to account for 1st gen. These students often need more supports than students with college educated parents. 1st gen do not have parents to advise them or get them internships and jobs . WE do that for them. This takes humans and resources. AND - educating Colorado's 1st gen students and launching them into the workforce and society is transformational.

I believe it important to promote higher education for first generation students and am fine with the definition.

I believe that these data sources are biased. The institution I represent was not included based upon the data but membership in the professional organization. Data collection and reporting should be consistent across all higher ed institutions.

I don't know that we need each equity metric to be separate; they could instead be adjustments on other metrics that provide additional weight (i.e. the institution gets a heavier weight when they enroll or complete students in these populations). Having more metrics makes each less impactful.

I have no issues or suggestions regarding this metric.

I would want to see (at least) Summer incorporated into this metric. Many institutions run programs/initiatives incentivizing summer starts- especially for first gen students with an emphasis on acclimating them to the college/campus, ideally increasing retention.

Responses

I'm curious why you only use fall enrollment, I suspect that may negatively impact the community colleges? I am also concerned that we are encouraging first generation enrollment but there is no place where first-generation completion rates are accounted for, or even reported publicly (since these students are not reported through IPEDS). If we are going to encourage enrollment of this population (which is a good thing), we should also be monitoring how this group is being served.

If the purpose of this metric is to make higher ed more accessible, just use the PELL-eligible metric & cancel this one.

In practice, the institutions collect and measure this in different ways and so there is little reliability and validity to the measure itself. The concept is important though.

Incentivize pathway for urban students to attend rural community colleges for degrees and programs presently not offered at the urban community colleges.

Institutions are incentivized to recruit first-gen without accountability for their success. As such, targeted recruitment of vulnerable populations (while well-intended) leads to disproportionate debt / poor outcomes among those who can least afford non-completion or completion of low-value credentials (very poor wage outcomes) which is increasingly common. Research calls this problem 'predatory inclusion.' when learners are worse off as a result of participation.

Is it possible to measure this using unduplicated annual count? First-gen students may be disproportionately more likely to enroll in spring or summer terms.

It is very important to support first generation students. This demonstrates our priority focus.

It's good to reward enrolling first gen students. But if a school doesn't graduate them in 6 years, why would you want to reward schools enrolling them? Start by saying that a school that has a 4-year graduation rate of 60% for first gen students will be rewarded for increasing the number of students.

Multiple enrollment counts would be preferable to have a sense of the completion rate.

n/a

n/a

N/a

N/A

n/a

n/a

N/A.

Responses

NA

Na

No

No additional feedback to share.

No comment

No comment

No comment

No comment.

No comment.

No comment.

No comment.

No comments

No comments.

No feedback

None

None

None

none

none

None

none

None

none

Responses

Reminder that student populations will become less traditional over time with the current shifts in demography.

Retention of these students should also be tracked (into year 2).

Same comment on 'resident' as above.

See above

Should also add measure of the programs and support services provided for the first gen students and not just the number.

Support higher funding for first Generation students.

The "resident first-generation undergraduate student headcount" performance metric reflects an essential focus on equity by highlighting the enrollment of first-generation students, a group that often faces unique barriers in accessing higher education. However, the metric's implementation has limitations that restrict its ability to fully capture the realities of Colorado's postsecondary population. By calculating the metric solely based on fall enrollment, it excludes students who enroll in spring, summer, or other non-traditional terms. Many first-generation students, particularly those balancing work or family responsibilities, pursue their education on flexible schedules that don't align with traditional academic calendars. This narrow scope risks underrepresenting the very group this metric seeks to support. Additionally, the exclusion of undocumented and DACA students from the metric undermines its inclusivity. These students, many of whom are first-generation, face significant financial and systemic barriers yet contribute meaningfully to Colorado's educational and workforce landscapes. Their exclusion leaves an incomplete picture of institutional performance in serving underrepresented populations. The use of data from fall 2019 through fall 2022 remains a concern, as the pandemic significantly disrupted enrollment patterns during this period. Without incorporating pre-pandemic data, the metric risks skewed results that do not reflect long-term trends or institutional efforts. To enhance the metric's effectiveness and equity, it should be expanded to include year-round enrollment, capturing the full range of first-generation students. Undocumented and DACA students should also be included to ensure a comprehensive assessment of institutional support for underrepresented groups. Additionally, pre-pandemic data should be incorporated to provide a more balanced perspective on enrollment trends. While the focus on first-generation students is commendable, tying this metric to performance-based funding creates potential challenges. Institutions serving higher proportions of first-generation students often require additional resources to address their unique needs. Penalizing schools for factors outside their control could exacerbate existing inequities rather than alleviate them. A more holistic approach would combine this metric with increased baseline funding and targeted support for institutions serving diverse and high-need populations. This would ensure that first-generation students receive the support they need while institutions are empowered to meet their goals without being unfairly burdened by structural limitations.

Responses

The definition of first generation student from the Higher Education Act is interesting given a student with parents with AS is a first generation student even though their parents have a college degree. But I think first generation student enrollment is a good thing to incentivize.

The factors driving these metrics are largely beyond the students' control. What supports are institutions providing to help support first generation students?

The metrics used in this area are appropriate. However, the data sources are latent. It would be ideal if data sources were as up to date as possible.

The resident first generation student headcount metric is good.

The resident first-generation undergraduate student headcount metric is an important way to track access for a key group of students, but there are a few ways it could be improved: **Value of the Metric:** First-generation students often face unique barriers, so it's great that this metric highlights their enrollment. To make it even more meaningful, it would help to also track outcomes like retention and graduation rates. This would give a clearer picture of how well institutions are supporting these students throughout their educational journey. **Specific Metric Criteria:** Focusing on fall enrollment provides useful data, but it misses students who start during other terms. Including year-round data would give a more accurate view of who is being served. While it makes sense to focus on undergraduates, finding a way to track graduate-level first-generation students in the future could also be valuable. **Data Sources and Definitions:** The definition of first-generation aligns with federal standards, which makes sense. That said, it's important to make sure institutions are collecting and reporting this data consistently. Regular reviews could help ensure accuracy. This metric is a strong start, and with a few tweaks—like including outcomes and more comprehensive data—it could better reflect how well first-generation students are being supported.

There are inconsistencies in how IHE's determine which students are first-generation. The state should not only define first-generation students but establish a single methodology for how IHE's collect that information.

There is not a consistently agreed upon definition of first generation. Moreover, there are not consistent collection processes across institutions

There's no effective means to gather this data at present. Thus, IHEs are being overly creative in their reporting.

These metrics, 9-16, seem appropriate. Please see my comments below under additional performance metrics.

This focuses on only certain kinds of institutions, not all. But it generally works in the model

This is a good metric.

Responses

This is an excellent metric.

This is important!

This metric currently works well.

use full year. again only using fall is antiquated and reinforces colleges as operating on an agrarian calendar, which is not realistic. higher ed institutions need to operate (offer vibrancy of course work) year round. better enable address (faster) state's workforce needs

Using fall only does not make sense.

Using first generation headcount for fall only is not inclusive. It is also arbitrary assuming that parental attainment of a degree affords some vague elitence that others do not have--a very few college credits may determine if one gets or does not get the 1st Gen. label. It is not a measure, it is a label.

v

we need to include grad students, as graduate completion among first gen students is an additional factor in social and economic mobility for families. should include a completion metric so we are assessing outcomes, not just enrollment.

wgsdfg

Why fall only? If #9 is "all terms", then everything should be for "all terms".

Why not do full year instead of fall only?

with high rates of transfer, may consider impact of increase of spring enrollment

Without additional funds these seems to be how it is

Would like to see Fall and Spring enrollment used for calculations. If incentivizing enrollment of first-generation students, the state should also incentivize credential completion for those students.

x

zxv

Question 11

Question 11 Text

The following description provides details on the "resident credential completion" performance metric. Please review the metric details and provide feedback on the value of this metric, the specific metric criteria used to calculate its value, and any comments on the data source used for the calculation.

Resident credential completion: The change in the sum of resident credential award counts and two to four-year transfers.

Specific Metric Criteria:

- All awards have the same weight. This means that in this count, a transfer = 1, certificate = 1, bachelor's = 1, doctorate = 1, etc.
- Less than one-year certificates are unduplicated, so that if a student earns more than one short-term credential, they are only counted one time. A student may be counted multiple times if they earned more than one award type (e.g. a certificate and an associates, or two bachelor's degrees).
- Double majors are excluded.
- Includes resident students only.
- Credentials earned at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus and veterinary medicine credentials earned at Colorado State University are excluded.
- Qualifying transfers include students who transferred from a Colorado public two-year institution to a four-year institution with at least 18 credits. Transfer students who originated from the two-year programs (reg status = 3, admission status = 3) at Adams State University, the Colorado Community College System, or Colorado Mesa University with 18 credits or greater are counted as a completion.
- When a transfer student from one of these institutions shows up in the Undergraduate Applicant file, CDHE identifies the maximum cumulative credit hours that student earned at their previous institution using the Enrollment file.

Data Sources:

- SURDS Degree, Enrollment, and Undergraduate Applicant Files
- For the FY 24-25 formula, this used academic year 2019-20 through 2022-23

Use the comment box below to share any feedback you may have on the resident credential completion performance metric.

Question 11 Responses

Responses

Again this is volume based and will reach the top of the curve at a certain point. Perhaps this is the state's intent. I would place greater weight on measuring job situations at time of graduation and over the subsequent three years.

Although technically different, Credential completion, 100% & 150% Graduation rates are all attempting to measure an IHE's success in producing graduates. Pick one & cancel the other 2.

appreciate counting numbers of completions - and including transfer students. Workforce-aligned, non-bachelors credentials are a priority for the State and yet are not included in our completion data. As demand for these credentials grows, we'd like to see these data included in our completion calculations

appreciate that includes both credential completion and 2 to 4 year transfer. question of whether there is any difference in the metric for 2yr students who transfer having completed a credential

As the state increasingly emphasizes stackable credentials, it makes sense to revisit whether short term certificates should each be counted.

Completion is a critical metric

Continuing education seems to be a theme here. Why single out Anschutz and veterinary medicine? Other disciplines require continuing education credentials as well. Otherwise, I have no issues.

Could consider applying weights for completions by priority populations (URM, low-income, first-gen)

Count every short term credential.

doctorate should be higher and then bachelors. Certs and transfers lower

good

Good and appropriate.

How is "transfer" an "award"? Students don't receive a credential for simply transferring to a different institution so this seems like a poor metric to me. Credentials should be weighted differently and not a value of 1 for each. How valuable is a certificate in the job market vs. a masters degree? Weight accordingly. Why are CU Anschutz and DVM credentials excluded? A credential earned is a credential earned no matter what it is (MD, DVM, JD, MBA, BS, etc.)

I can see a lot of work went into this--thank you.

Responses

I don't think you should reward degrees at all. They have almost nothing to do with costs. Take the total number of credit hours divided by average time to degree.

I feel like I would need more information regarding some of the specific caveats in this metric (ie the excluded credentials, and more so why the 2 year transfers at Adams, CCCS, and CMU are counted as a completion (does that mean they are excluded from this count, but "possibly" included in the 100%/150% completion metrics?))

I think this makes sense.

I would prefer a mix of credit accumulation and credentials earned because focusing on just degrees earned means that students who take longer to graduate won't count towards an institution's funding. I am glad that this metric considers transfer credits, though.

Institutions that have partnership programs should be provided some level of credit for credential completion if they are the institution in the partnership that does not award the degree. We need to create incentives for cost effective partnership programs.

It seems odd to count certificates as having the same weight as a bachelors or doctorate.

Keep, but rename to 'equitable credential completion' and add additional weights for equity populations (resident pell eligible, resident students of color, resident first gen undergrad). Pell and students of color could be for undergrad and grad. These would be stackable, so a student who meets all three is worth the most. Consider multipliers for institutions with high proportions of enrolled students. Include students of two or more races as a student of color IHE where a student transfers gets to count the completion By its nature, this includes part time, full time, transfer, first time students. It's a good measure that shows how an IHE is contributing to the state's economy.

looks good

Looks good.

n/a

n/a

n/a

N/a

N/A

n/a

n/a

Responses

N/A.

NA

Na

NA

NA

needs to consider six year transfers, again, more and more students attend part-time for more realistic and accurate timeline

No

No additional feedback to share.

No comment

No comment

No comment

No comment.

No comment.

No comment.

No comments

No comments.

No feedback

No feedback

No feedback on this one.

No issues.

no suggestions though good to capture transfer credits

None

Responses

None

none

none

none

None

None

None.

None.

Not entirely clear to me what is being counted. Why, though, is vet med at CSU excluded?

Not sure what this metric is meant to incentivize. There are FTE count metrics and graduation rate metrics. This feels like a duplication to count the number of degrees awarded.

ok

Same comment on resident as above. The mission of state funding should be to provide skills training/learning for all Coloradans in categories that are clearly related to jobs of the future (which OEDIT has defined), whether those learners reside at the institution or learn remotely.

sdfgfg

See above

See above.

Shift the support to two year institutions.

should include a completion metric so we are assessing outcomes, not just enrollment.

Simplify it--this is bean counting at its worst. Counting short term certificates and negating double majors and minors is unfair.

Suggest including Vet Science and Animal Science programs as part of the funding under the governor's program to build the workforce for critical needs areas in rural communities.

Responses

The "resident credential completion" performance metric aims to measure institutional success in producing graduates and facilitating transfers, which are important indicators of educational impact. However, the metric's design has significant limitations that risk penalizing institutions unfairly while failing to account for the diversity of student pathways. One of the most notable issues is the equal weighting of all credentials, from short-term certificates to doctoral degrees. While simplicity is valuable, this approach does not reflect the varying levels of effort, institutional investment, and economic impact associated with different types of credentials. For example, the resources required to support a student through a doctoral program far exceed those for a short-term certificate. Without a tiered weighting system, this metric oversimplifies the complexities of credential attainment. The exclusion of certain credentials, such as those earned at CU Anschutz and CSU's veterinary program, further undermines the metric's comprehensiveness. These specialized degrees play a vital role in addressing Colorado's workforce needs in critical fields, such as healthcare and veterinary medicine, and their omission undervalues the contributions of these programs to the state. Additionally, the criteria for counting transfers—requiring a minimum of 18 credits transferred from a two-year institution—may exclude students who demonstrate significant academic progress through fewer credits. This rigid threshold could distort the metric by failing to capture the full scope of successful transfer activity. The use of data from fall 2019 through spring 2022, a period heavily impacted by the pandemic, remains a concern. Enrollment and completion patterns during this time were atypical, and relying solely on this data risks skewing evaluations of institutional performance. To improve this metric, several adjustments should be made: 1. Implement a tiered weighting system that reflects the varying contributions of different credential types. 2. Include credentials from specialized programs like those at CU Anschutz and CSU's veterinary school to fully capture their impact. 3. Broaden the criteria for counting transfers to include students who have made meaningful academic progress, even with fewer credits. 4. Incorporate pre-pandemic data to provide a more balanced view of trends and reduce the influence of temporary disruptions. While credential completion is an essential measure of institutional success, tying it directly to performance-based funding raises concerns. Institutions serving high-need populations often face greater challenges in supporting students to completion, and penalizing them for systemic issues beyond their control risks exacerbating inequities. A more effective approach would combine this metric with targeted funding for institutions that serve diverse and underrepresented populations, ensuring both equity and accountability are prioritized.

The measure is fine. Across all the measures, we need to make sure that institutions get credit for students that transfer from one to another. The current assumption treats a transfer as a loss to one institution and a gain to another. The gaining gets the graduation credit etc. Bottomline. All institution should be able to take credit for the positive work that happens while a student is part of their campus. In this case, some of our measures (such as graduation rate and credential awarded) are not transitive enough.

Responses

The resident credential completion metric is really important for understanding how well institutions are helping students reach their goals, but there are a few areas where it could be fine-tuned: Value of the Metric: Tracking completions and transfers is critical, but treating all credentials equally—whether it's a certificate, bachelor's, or doctorate—doesn't fully capture their different impacts on the workforce and economy. Adding some kind of weighting system could make this metric more meaningful and aligned with workforce needs. Specific Metric Criteria: Leaving out credentials from CU Anschutz and CSU's veterinary program feels like a gap in the data. Including those would give a fuller picture of completions across the state. Also, while it makes sense to only count short-term certificates once, it might be worth recognizing stackable credentials as progress toward higher awards. Data Sources and Timeframe: Using multiple data sources makes sense, but ensuring they're consistent and accurate is key. The timeframe is helpful for tracking recent trends, but looking at longer-term patterns could provide more insight into how institutions are improving over time.

The resident credential completion performance metric is not equitable for students with disabilities since many community college students do not reach the 18 credit hour transfer as compared to their counterparts.

These metrics, 9-16, seem appropriate. Please see my comments below under additional performance metrics.

This is a well-structured metric providing valuable information

This is far better than a graduation rate measure, which should be avoided.

This metric attempts to be equal, but equal is not necessarily equitable. The decisions seem arbitrary as to what is and is not included. Does not account for economies of scale in credential production

This metric should recognize institutions that have partnership programs between themselves and other Colorado public institutions. In the instance where a student intentionally enters in a program that starts at one institution and receives a degree from another institution, both should receive partial credit in this metric.

This seems reasonable as presented.

Transfer shouldn't have the same weight as actual credential attainment. Incentive community colleges to graduate their students, even if they will transfer, by reverse transferring their credit from the four-year back to the two-year. Too many students transfer and then drop out, having no credential upon which to fallback. Attainment before transfer - or reverse transfer of credit after shifting to the four-year - assures more students earn credentials of economic value.

v

Why shouldn't all institutions get credit for credit hours earned prior to transfer? Did they not do the work?

Responses

With the growth in Concurrent Enrollment, a high school student who goes directly to a Colorado four-year institution with more than 18 CE credits should be considered a transfer from the two-year college since those credits were provided by the two-year college.

Without additional funds this seems to be how it is

Would like to consider how we incentivize the acceptance of transfer credits in a different way. Why would a student have to have a full 18 credits to count as a transfer? Shouldn't transfer at any time be rewarded? Could include that the 2 year institution wouldn't receive until the student had completed 18 credit hours at the 4 year institution to ensure that matriculation to a higher degree attainment is recognized.

x

zxv

Question 12

Question 12 Text

The following description provides details on the "resident Pell-eligible student population share" performance metric. Please review the metric details and provide feedback on the value of this metric, the specific metric criteria used to calculate its value, and any comments on the data source used for the calculation.

Resident Pell-eligible student population share: The change in share of the student population with an Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) at or below the Pell-eligible threshold.

Specific Metric Criteria:

- Calculated using fall student enrollment only.
- Includes undergraduate and graduate students.
- Includes resident students only.
- Pell eligibility is determined using an academic year (9 month) estimated family contribution (EFC).
- Includes students who complete the FAFSA only (CASFA completers are not included).
- Calculation: Pell eligible / total headcount.
- This calculation will be updated to use the student aid index (SAI) for the 2024-25 data collection next year.

Data Sources:

- SURDS Enrollment and Financial Aid files
- For the FY 24-25 formula, this used fall 2019 through fall 2022

Use the comment box below to share any feedback you may have on the resident Pell-eligible student population share performance metric.

Question 12 Responses

Responses
-
Again I wonder if using fall enrollment impacts the Community College System's outcomes. I do think CASFA completers who meet a certain income threshold should be considered if possible.
Again minimizes non-resident pell eligible students who still have needs
Again, how is this reflected in the funding model? Due to the potential changes in Pell funding and the significant decrease in families that completed FAFSA in the previous year, how do these numbers figure with the funding model?
As with first gen students, you should only award the enrollment of Pell recipients if the school is doing a good job of graduating them. Pell recipients shouldn't be a financial trophy for schools that can't graduate them in 4 years.
Can graduate students receive Pell? If not, they should not be counted in the metric. Otherwise, I have no issues.
Can this be calculated for 12-month enrollment, instead of fall? It's good that the formula uses Pell eligibility rather than receipt, given the other Pell requirements.
Consider calculated for Spring enrollment to assess retention .
Each institution have varying levels of Pell.
good
Good and appropriate.
Good measure. Weight it more heavily
Good metrics. The use of fall data makes sense for Pell eligibility.
Good.

Responses

I appreciate the focus on low income students. Many have greater needs (food and housing insecurity) that the IHE tries to address; this requires resources

I don't know that we need each equity metric to be separate; they could instead be adjustments on other metrics that provide additional weight (i.e. the institution gets a heavier weight when they enroll or complete students in these populations). Having more metrics makes each less impactful. Technical change: this metric right now includes graduate students even though they cannot receive Pell grants. Either make that intentional (so it captures low income students in general) or specify that graduate students should be excluded. Explore whether there is a way to include CASFA completers. This metric will change for all IHEs with the FAFSA change to SAI and more Pell eligible students, so prior year comparisons will be more difficult. It should potentially be paused until we have four years of the same data methodology.

I like this metric.

I was Pell when I became independent. How are you counting this? Seems like it could be rigged.

In general, I would limit all data to no more than 3 years (as opposed to 4) so that the data is more relevant to the upcoming funding year.

Looks good.

maintain funding level to Pell as the program is Federal not state driven.

Mixed immigration status families may be more reticent to complete a FAFSA in the present federal context due to reasonable fears of identification of undocumented status resulting in deportation - consider using a state-driven financial index if possible.

Multiple student enrollment counts would be preferable.

n/a

n/a

n/a

N/a

N/A

n/a

n/a

Responses

N/A

NA

Na

NA

NA

No

No additional feedback to share.

No comment

No comment

No comment.

No comment.

No comment.

No comments

No feedback

none

None

None

none

none

none

None

None

None

Responses

None.

Not sure how only measuring change over time will impact this criterion.

OK

OK.

Pell eligibility is critical to assure access and I am glad it is part of the performance metric.

pell eligible student population enrollment is a good thing to incentivize. Interesting that this again includes undergraduate and graduation students when other metrics only include undergraduates. Curious why CASFA completers are not included.

Same comment on resident, and we will see what Trump II does to Pell to determine if this remains relevant.

Same concern about the lagging data and it is only about first time enrollment. Doesn't recognize that an IHE may need additional supports for these students to have them complete. Should we be changing all of these enrollment measures to a completion measure? Is there a way to include CASFA completers in this metric?

sdfgfg

See above

See above comments on 'predatory inclusion.' 90% of all students who default on student loans are Pell-eligible--who either do not complete or complete low-value programs. Without incentives that require completion and program value considerations, lower income students are disproportionately harmed by funding incentives that privilege access over impact.

See above.

should include a completion metric so we are assessing outcomes, not just enrollment.

Some short term credentials don't qualify for Pell.

Student population share is not a relevant metric and should be replaced with a completion outcome for this demographic group.

Responses

The "resident Pell-eligible student population share" metric emphasizes an important equity goal by focusing on low-income students, but its design has significant limitations that undermine its effectiveness. By calculating the metric solely based on fall enrollment, it excludes students who enroll in other terms, particularly non-traditional learners who are more likely to face financial barriers. Additionally, the exclusion of students who complete the Colorado Application for State Financial Aid (CASFA), as well as undocumented and DACA students, fails to reflect the full scope of low-income populations served by institutions. Another issue is the reliance on data from fall 2019 through fall 2022, a period significantly disrupted by the pandemic. These disruptions altered enrollment patterns and may distort evaluations of institutional performance. Without incorporating pre-pandemic data or other contextual adjustments, the metric risks providing an incomplete and potentially misleading picture of progress. Tying this metric to performance-based funding creates additional challenges. Institutions serving high proportions of Pell-eligible students often require more resources to support their unique needs, yet this funding structure may penalize them for systemic challenges beyond their control. Furthermore, the metric calculates the Pell-eligible share as a percentage of total enrollment, which means that institutions increasing enrollment of other populations could inadvertently lower their performance on this metric. To improve the metric:

- Expand Data Collection: Include students from all enrollment terms, as well as CASFA applicants, undocumented, and DACA students, to provide a more accurate representation of low-income populations.
- Account for Context: Incorporate pre-pandemic data to balance the effects of temporary disruptions and reflect long-term trends.
- Avoid Counterproductive Incentives: Redesign the metric to reward institutions for increasing the number of Pell-eligible students served, rather than focusing solely on proportional changes, to align with equity and access goals.

While this metric has value in emphasizing the importance of supporting low-income students, it requires significant revisions to ensure fairness, effectiveness, and alignment with Colorado's broader higher education goals. Without these adjustments, it risks creating inequities and failing to advance true access and affordability.

The resident Pell-eligible student population share metric is such an important way to measure how well institutions are supporting students who need the most help financially, but there's definitely room to make it better:

- Value of the Metric: This metric does a great job of highlighting access, but just looking at the percentage of Pell-eligible students doesn't show the full picture. It would be so much more meaningful if it also tracked things like retention and graduation rates to see how well these students are actually being supported to succeed.
- Specific Metric Criteria: Using fall enrollment data makes sense, but it misses a big part of the picture—like non-traditional students who might enroll during other terms. Including year-round data would make it more accurate. And not including CASFA completers feels like a gap. If we're serious about equity, we need to account for undocumented and DACA students who are an important part of our student community.
- Data Sources and Transition to SAI: Moving to the Student Aid Index (SAI) is a good step and should make things clearer when measuring financial need. We just need to make sure the transition is smooth and doesn't cause any hiccups in the data.

The resident Pell-eligible student population share performance metric is not equitable for students with disabilities as it concerns EFC. This is because many parents of students with disabilities pay higher costs than parents of students without disabilities to support disability-related needs.

Responses

The state needs to do a much better job attracting students who come from lower income families and making college affordable for them.

These metrics, 9-16, seem appropriate. Please see my comments below under additional performance metrics.

This is a good metric.

This metric currently works well.

This should remain a priority as Pell, by design, indicates students who need our focus and support.

v

valuable metric

Where presented, include adjustments for students who begin college with an enrollment in the spring semester.

With the recent mess with FAFSA it should not be used until reliability has been established--why are CASFA not considered?

Without additional funds these seems to be how it is

would consider inclusion of CASFA in the future and expanding to at least 150% Pell eligible with a preference of 250% Pell in alignment w/ COSI

Would like to see fall and spring enrollment

Would love to see CASFA included in this.

x

year round, not just fall, use 12 month eligibility to encourage faster completion

Yes, must use Pell in formula

Yes, Pell-eligible students should be considered.

zxv

Question 13

Question 13 Text

The following description provides details on the "resident underrepresented minority student population share" performance metric. Please review the metric details and provide feedback on the value of this metric, the specific metric criteria used to calculate its value, and any comments on the data source used for the calculation.

Resident underrepresented minority student population share: The change in share of underrepresented minority (URM) students as a percentage of total fall resident headcount.

Specific Metric Criteria:

- Calculated using fall student enrollment only.
- Includes undergraduate and graduate students.
- Includes resident students only.
- Includes students with the following race/ethnicities: Black, Hispanic, Native American. A student who identifies as multiracial may select one or more discrete racial/ethnic categories and would be counted in this metric if at least one of those categories is listed above.
- Includes U.S. Citizens only (excludes if race/ethnicity = U.S. Non Resident).
- Calculation: URM headcount / total headcount.

Data Sources:

- SURDS Enrollment File
- For the FY 24-25 formula, this used fall 2019 through fall 2022

Use the comment box below to share any feedback you may have on the resident underrepresented minority student population share performance metric.

Question 13 Responses

Responses
-
Add: AAPI as a race/ethnicity
Adding Asian-Pacific Americans as an ethnicity. If tuition is not stabilized across institutions, than some institutions with lower-tuition could have an advantage to students in these categories, as well as income categories.

Responses

As the state knows well, Colorado is a purple population. Please do not fault a campus for being geographically placed in a location where 'resident underrepresented minority students' are threatened, or at minimum made to feel they are not part of the main community - and word gets around. Who wants to go to school in a community where your social groups are demeaned? The campuses should not be financially penalized for the behavior within the county.

Assure college applications can match this criteria - involve admissions officers in the discussion.

Colorado has much work to do to support underrepresented communities. We should maintain this area of focus and expand it if possible.

Consider, please, adding a count of non-resident in the future.

curious why Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander not included

Despite the tricky political environment, if the state of CO wants to close equity gaps, there needs to remain a focus on URM's.

Diversity should be expanded to include Asian components, and international diversity.

Does DHE have these data on all public institutions?

Encourage use of 12-month enrollment, not fall enrollment.

fails to include native Hawaiian & Pacific Islander students, many who nationally are enrolled in college without completing at least an associate degree and for whom only 1 in 5 have completed a BA/BS.

Fall and Spring?

good

Good and appropriate.

Good measure. Weight it more heavily

I agree with these measures

I don't know that we need each equity metric to be separate; they could instead be adjustments on other metrics that provide additional weight (i.e. the institution gets a heavier weight when they enroll or complete students in these populations). Having more metrics makes each less impactful. Include Hawaiian and pacific islander students.

I like this metric.

Responses

I think this is a good enrollment population to incentivize.

If you are not a US Citizen you cannot be an underrepresented minority?

In general, I would limit all data to no more than 3 years (as opposed to 4) so that the data is more relevant to the upcoming funding year.

Include rural as a underrepresented status.

It would be helpful to look at rural versus urban student populations here as well.

lagging data source concern.

Looks good.

May more opportunities for minority groups. Moreover, immigrant's.

Multiple student enrollment counts would be preferable.

Must be updated to reflect federal changes in how race/ethnicity data s collected.

n/a

n/a

n/a

N/a

N/A

n/a

NA

Na

NA

No additional feedback to share.

No comment

No comment

Responses

No comment.

No comment.

No comment.

No comment. Support this metric.

No comments

No feedback

No feedback on the performance metric per say, but will be curious to see how the changes to the race/ethnicity demographic questions will effect this metric. Given how this is calculated, the changes to the Hispanic/Multiracial counts probably won't change anything, but the addition of the MENA category (with the assumption it is included here) would.

None

None

none

none

none

None

None

None

OK

Other than three race/ethnic groups, do we want consider other underrepresented racial groups such as multi-racial or Asian?

Same comment as previous question

Same on resident.

sdffgsfg

Responses

See above

See prior comments. Without incentives for learner outcomes/ value, vulnerable populations shoulder disproportionate risk as a result of current funding design.

see the more recent Census classification for race and ethnicity. These categories above are insufficient for the realities of my neighbors--likelyP yours too.

should consider other characters beyond race and ethnicity

should include a completion metric so we are assessing outcomes, not just enrollment.

Some students may be uncomfortable self-reporting this statistic. That should be considered, if not always able to be tracked or reported.

Student population share is not a relevant metric and should be replaced with a completion outcome for this demographic group.

Responses

The "resident underrepresented minority (URM) student population share" performance metric aims to highlight progress in increasing equity, focusing on the enrollment of historically underrepresented groups. While this is a commendable goal, the metric's design raises significant concerns about its fairness and its ability to effectively drive meaningful improvements. One key issue is the reliance on fall enrollment data, which excludes non-traditional and part-time students who enroll in other terms. Many URM students face systemic barriers that require flexible enrollment options, and the metric's narrow scope fails to account for these students, resulting in an incomplete picture of institutional efforts to support equity. Additionally, the exclusion of undocumented and DACA students is problematic. These students, many of whom belong to underrepresented groups, often face significant financial and systemic barriers to higher education. By omitting them, the metric does not fully reflect the challenges or successes of institutions in addressing equity. Moreover, tying funding to this metric creates an unwinnable situation in that it often takes institutional investment to support a positive change in URM students. Those investments do not guarantee success in this metric and come at the opportunity cost of other essential investments toward student success. By focusing on change in headcount, the metric is opened to statistical variability that is beyond anyone's control. Further, there is a theoretical limit to how many URM students could be admitted to any given institution because of the natural demographics of how many such individuals exist in the state. To improve this metric: 1. Include Non-Traditional Students: Broaden the data collection to encompass year-round enrollment, capturing part-time and non-traditional students. 2. Incorporate Undocumented and DACA Students: By including these groups, you can reflect the full diversity of Colorado's underrepresented populations. 3. Adjust for Demographic Variability: Weight the metric to account for geographic and demographic constraints for HIS populations served, ensuring institutions are not penalized for factors beyond their control. 4. Focus on Root Issues: Remove this metric in favor of direct investments in affordability and targeted support for URM students to address systemic barriers to access and success. While the metric's intent is laudable, its current design risks creating inequities rather than addressing them. A more holistic approach would ensure that institutions are rewarded for their efforts to support URM students while acknowledging the structural challenges they face. By combining this metric with adequate baseline funding and investments in affordability, Colorado can better achieve its equity goals and create a stronger, more inclusive higher education system.

The resident underrepresented minority student population share performance metric is not equitable for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities often endure similar educational disparities faced by underrepresented minority groups but at a higher impact due to comorbidities and intersectionality.

These metrics, 9-16, seem appropriate. Please see my comments below under additional performance metrics.

This is important as this population is growing

This looks good

This metric currently works well.

Responses

Tracking how well institutions are serving students from historically underrepresented groups is critical, and the resident underrepresented minority (URM) student population share metric is a key part of that. However, there's room to make it even stronger and more reflective of how these students are being supported: Value of the Metric: It's great that this metric focuses on enrollment, but that only tells part of the story. To really understand how well these students are being supported, it should also track outcomes like retention, graduation rates, and success after graduation. Specific Metric Criteria: Using fall enrollment data gives a snapshot, but it doesn't capture non-traditional students who enroll in other terms. Including year-round enrollment would give a clearer picture. Also, excluding non-U.S. residents seems like a missed opportunity. It's worth thinking about how to better reflect the full diversity of the student population. Data Sources: Relying on the SURDS Enrollment File makes sense, but it's important to make sure institutions are consistent in how they report data, especially when it comes to students who identify as multiracial.

Underrepresented minorities should be a priority.

v

varying amount per university

What about Asian/Pacific Islander students?

Why are Asian students not included in the minority population? Disaggregating different Asian American communities would show that many are underrepresented. How is this impacted by the recent Supreme Court ruling?

Why does this only include specific race/ethnicities? Many students identify along cultural lines rather than ethnic lines. Why are international students not included? Funding needs to be equal regardless of race/ethnicity.

Why not Asians? What about MENA or islanders? This seems racist.

Why the fall term only? If #9 is for "all terms", then all measurements should be for all terms. Why aren't Asian and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander included?

Without additional funds these seems to be how it is

x

Yes, need this to see accountability for State's strategic goals for higher education

You should include students who grew up in foster care.

zxv

Question 14

Question 14 Text

The following description provides details on the "retention rate" performance metric. Please review the metric details and provide feedback on the value of this metric, the specific metric criteria used to calculate its value, and any comments on the data source used for the calculation.

Retention rate: The change in first-to-second year undergraduate retention rate within each institution.

Specific Metric Criteria:

- Includes first-time full-time (FTFT) students only. Part time and transfer students are excluded.
- Does not include graduate students.
- Does not include students who transferred from one institution to another.
- Includes both resident and nonresident students.
- IPEDS variables used for the most recent year: Full time adjusted fall 2022 cohort; students from the full-time adjusted fall 2022 cohort enrolled in fall 2023.
- All four-year institution data comes from IPEDS. Some community college data also comes from IPEDS. However, for community colleges that offer baccalaureate degrees, the data in IPEDS is inaccurate (the survey asks for bachelor's retention only). For these seven institutions, CDHE calculates the same metrics using SURDS data and following the IPEDS methodology.
- CDHE calculates the retention rate for a given year by dividing the number of students still enrolled by the number of students in the original cohort.
- Calculation: enrolled students from FTFT cohort / FTFT cohort.
- Students are excluded from the starting cohort for the following reasons: death or total and permanent disability; service in the armed forces; service with a foreign aid service of the federal government, such as the Peace Corps; or service on official church missions.

Data Sources:

- IPEDS Fall Enrollment Survey (provisional release) and the SURDS Enrollment File
- For FY24-25, this used Fall 2018 to Fall 2019 through Fall 2021 to Fall 2022.

Use the comment box below to share any feedback you may have on the retention rate performance metric.

Question 14 Responses

Responses
'Retention' is less and less relevant in a skills-based/lifelong learning world. Folks will dip in and dip out throughout their lifetimes/careers, to skill up to improve their life and career prospects.
A somewhat regressive measure. Those institutions that serve high numbers of students who have and are facing structural barriers will not perform as well
Are concurrent students who transfer credits included in the calculations?
Because many students cannot afford to attend college full time. This is especially true of first gen and URM students, so if the state wants to retain them part time students should be included.
Fine.
For institutions that already have a high retention rate, focusing only on change discounts good work that is already going on.
FTFT students is a small portion of students. Why not include part-time students?
Good and appropriate.
Good.
Have the institutions review this
Having additional metrics to capture retention rate is really important. I believe they are expressed and captured well as noticed in the sheer number of metrics illustrated.
How are students on a temporary leave of absence reflected in this calculation?
How would including part time and transfer students impact this metric?
I question including out-of-state students in the metric. They have different challenges than our in-state students with success (being far from family and that support network contributes to success, but is not always something an institution can control).
I would want to see how using the FTFT Cohort biases the results. With the new data system and new process I hope the team can explore how including transfer students and/or part-time students would impact this measure. I don't know what is right, but I do think its worth exploring.

Responses

If retention rates are going to be part of the metric, then schools should be provided with the resources to do this. As a teacher with 30 years of experience, I can tell you that many students are admitted who are not prepared (emotionally, intellectually, etc.) for college. Bending over backwards (institutionally) to retain these students is a waste of resources. On the other hand, see my comment above regarding financial aid. Many students quit because of financial pressures, and that is something that can be rectified. Also, we all need more resources for mental health. It is an absolute crisis in this population.

In general, I would limit all data to no more than 3 years (as opposed to 4) so that the data is more relevant to the upcoming funding year.

Institutions that have partnership programs should be provided some level of credit for retention if they are the institution in the partnership that does not award the degree. We need to create incentives for cost effective partnership programs.

Interesting that this includes non-resident students when other metrics do not. I think this is something good to incentivize though.

Keep collecting more data in regards to

Keep, this is the quickest outcome measure an IHE can influence to improve since it's just one year from when a student enrolls. Stop using IPEDS for any IHE, it should all come from SURDS so each institution has the same data source. Explore ways to include part time and transfer students in retention metric.

Lagging data source. Why are part time and transfer students excluded. Is there a way to capture retention here? Should we prioritize first-gen, minority students here perhaps with additional weight and remove the other measurements about first time enrollment?

Looks good.

n/a

n/a

n/a

N/a

N/A

n/a

na

Responses

NA

NA

Na

NA

No

No additional feedback to share.

No comment

No comment

No comment.

No comment.

No feedback.

No suggestions

none

none

None

None

none

none

none

None

None

None.

ok

Responses

OK.

Part time students should be included in the metric--they are as dedicated as full time students yet often are integrating work, family, and more to seek and attain an education.

Part-time and transfer students ought to be included IF it takes more than one semester to complete the degree program. Further, provide funding for community colleges with students who successfully complete an Associates Degree the transfer to a four-year school to continue to complete a Bachelor's Degree.

Partnership programs like ours with CU Engineering have been disadvantaged as when the students matriculate into the CU program it negatively impacts our retention rates.

Please include part-time students in this metric as well. Failing to do so ignores the heavy lifting that regional public universities and community colleges do in expanding opportunity to this population.

Retention is important but so is return and completion. This is reasonable but getting students back after a gap is also a laudable goal for us.

Retention rates and program completion rates should be at the center of performance measures

retention rates are critical towards completion

Retention rates are leading indicators and not outcomes. They should not be considered a performance metric. Only completion should be used.

Retention rates may not always be appropriate measures. They may be impacted by factors outside of the institution or students control. They can also skew against institutions meaning to serve underrepresented populations.

Retention rates should be supported.

sdfgsdfgsdfg

See above

Seems reasonable.

short-sighted as focuses only on full-time, doesn't include swirling students (students attending multiple institutions at same time; usually p/t.

Should IHE's offering 2 years degrees include retention rates for 2 year and 4 year?

Support this metric.

Responses

The "retention rate" performance metric, which measures first-to-second-year undergraduate retention for first-time full-time (FTFT) students, provides valuable insight into institutional effectiveness and student success. However, the design of the metric introduces significant limitations that reduce its fairness and relevance. One major issue is the exclusion of part-time and transfer students. These groups represent a growing portion of the student population, particularly at community colleges and institutions serving non-traditional learners. By focusing only on FTFT students, the metric fails to account for the realities of diverse student pathways and overlooks the efforts of institutions to support part-time and transfer students. Including nonresident students in the calculation also detracts from the focus on Colorado residents, who should be the primary beneficiaries of state funding. Additionally, the lack of adjustments for institutional context—such as the demographics of the student population or regional challenges—creates inequities. Institutions serving higher proportions of first-generation, low-income, or underrepresented students often face greater obstacles in achieving high retention rates, and this metric does not account for these factors. Again, the use of 2018-2022 data, which includes years significantly impacted by the pandemic, is problematic. Enrollment and retention patterns during this time were atypical, and relying solely on this data risks misrepresenting long-term institutional trends and performance. To address these limitations, several changes should be made: 1. Broaden the Scope: Include part-time and transfer students to better reflect the diversity of Colorado's postsecondary population. 2. Focus on Resident Students: Adjust the metric to prioritize retention rates for resident students, aligning with state goals to improve educational outcomes for Coloradans. While retention rates are an important measure of student success, tying funding directly to this metric can create additional challenges. Institutions may be forced to divert resources away from other critical areas to meet retention goals, potentially at the expense of affordability or equity initiatives. A more effective approach would use retention as one of several metrics to assess institutional performance, complemented by adequate baseline funding and targeted support for institutions serving diverse student populations. This would ensure that retention is measured fairly while allowing institutions to address broader systemic challenges.

The retention rate metric is a solid way to measure how well institutions are supporting first-time, full-time (FTFT) undergraduate students from their first to second year, but it could be stronger if it included part-time, transfer, and non-traditional students. Right now, we're missing a big part of the picture by leaving them out. Transfer students especially deserve recognition for their progress, even if they leave one institution for another. Addressing these gaps and ensuring consistent data sources across institutions, particularly for community colleges offering bachelor's degrees, would make this metric more comprehensive and useful for understanding overall student success.

The retention rate performance metric is not equitable for students with disabilities since many students are not able to attend college as a full-time (12 credit hours or more) student.

These metrics, 9-16, seem appropriate. Please see my comments below under additional performance metrics.

This could be helpful

Responses

This deeply disadvantages community colleges who need and deserve a funding formula better designed for their learners and desired outcomes.

this metric is not as useful as completion. It will not count transfers or how institutions serve returning students. All of thgis should be considered in performance funding. ALSO

This metric should recognize institutions that have partnership programs between themselves and other Colorado public institutions. In the instance where a student intentionally enters in a program that starts at one institution and receives a degree from another institution, both should receive partial credit in this metric.

Transfer students need to be included in this metric. Retention of under-represented minority students (even better would be all students of color), Pell-eligible students, and first-generation students should also be added.

v

We need need better measures. Is there a way to reset after a student leaves for a while? Need something to capture the restart after a period time away. We cannot assume that a student who started and left and came back 4 years later is just picking up. Often there is a restart as if they are FTFT.

Why are part-time students excluded from this count? Many students will have a need to balance work and school in a manner that requires part time enrollment, and institutions should be applauded for retaining those students who on a part-time path.

With the growing emphasis on workforce training and education, part time students should be included as many will be working and going to college at the same time.

Without additional funds these seems to be how it is

Wondering why only FTFTF are included here. We need to get students over the finish line, not just to year 2. Though that may be the biggest of the hurdles.

Would like to consider a discussion about including part-time and transfer students if data allows

Would prefer to include part-time and transfer students.

x

zxv

Question 15

Question 15 Text

The following description provides details on the "100% graduation rate" performance metric. Please review the metric details and provide feedback on the value of this metric, the specific metric criteria used to calculate its value, and any comments on the data source used for the calculation.

100% graduation rate: The change in first-to-second year undergraduate retention rate within each institution.

Specific Metric Criteria:

- Includes first-time full-time (FTFT) students only. Part time and transfer students are excluded.
- Does not include graduate students.
- Does not include students who transferred from one institution to another.
- Includes both resident and nonresident students.
- IPEDS variables used for the most recent year: Full time adjusted fall 2022 cohort; students from the full-time adjusted fall 2022 cohort enrolled in fall 2023.
- All four-year institution data comes from IPEDS. Some community college data also comes from IPEDS. However, for community colleges that offer baccalaureate degrees, the data in IPEDS is inaccurate (the survey asks for bachelor's retention only). For these seven institutions, CDHE calculates the same metrics using SURDS data and following the IPEDS methodology.
- CDHE calculates the 100% graduation rate for a given year by dividing the number of students who have completed their degree or credential by the number of students in the original cohort.
- Calculation: graduated students from FTFT cohort / FTFT cohort.
- Students are excluded from the starting cohort for the following reasons: death or total and permanent disability; service in the armed forces; service with a foreign aid service of the federal government, such as the Peace Corps; or service on official church missions.

Data Sources:

- IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey (provisional release) and the SURDS Enrollment and Degree Files
- For the FY24-25 model, this used cohorts from Fall 2013 to Fall 2016 for four-year institutions, and Fall 2016 to Fall 2019 for two-year institutions, measuring students who graduated in 100% time by spring 2022.

Use the comment box below to share any feedback you may have on the 100% graduation rate performance metric.

Question 15 Responses

Responses
100% graduation is like 0% homelessness - very laudable, but realistic? Achievable? I would focus on moving achievable benchmarks and growth term over term. This seems much more realistic.
100% graduation rate (4-years) does not match the student's journey. Are we better to graduate students in 4-years with a degree they are not interested in or in 5 or 6 years with the degree they want?
A regressive measure. Those institutions that serve high numbers of students who have and are facing structural barriers will not perform as well
Although technically different, Credential completion, 100% & 150% Graduation rates are all attempting to measure an IHE's success in producing graduates. Pick one & cancel the other 2.
Do not like the 100% graduation rate metric or 150 metric
Does this include certificate programs? If so, should this be "completion"?
Excluding part-time non-resident students misses the entire lifelong skills-based learning phenomenon.
First to second year retention is crucial---this is the second greatest point of pipeline leakage in CO. However, measure as designed maligns community colleges that have specific program design for non-FTE, non-credit, and lots of transfer. Let's get them a distinct formula that rewards instead of penalizes their intended learner outcomes.
For institutions that already have a high graduation rate, focusing only on change discounts good work that is already going on.
FTFT is not useful as a metric for those serving a high number of part time students, and we are seeing a huge increase in part time students, particularly among those students with family and work obligations in addition to higher education. These students often require additional wrap-around services to support completion, and thus institutions serving a high number of part time students could use additional funding for supporting this important population, particularly as enrollment and survival depends on how well we can reach and serve this market
FTFTF are less than 40% of MSU Denver's students. Seems like this metric leaves a lot out. Part time and transfer students are WHO WE SERVE.
Good
Good and appropriate.
Good, better than 150.

Responses

Graduation rate is critical and valued.

Have institutions review

How does the pandemic impact this particular cohort? Is a different calculation necessary for the current cycle due to upheaval from the pandemic?

How would including part time and transfer students impact this metric?

I agree with these metrics

I am fine with the metric.

I don't see when the graduation rate is calculated for a given cohort -- after 4 years?, after 6 years?, after 10 years?

I don't understand this one. Are you looking for the number of students who completed their bachelors degree in 4 years? How are you measuring certificates?

I think this is a good metric to incentivize performance on. This likely is something that cannot be fixed in the data but would be interesting to understand what impacts the rate year - is it mostly full time first time students that transfer or become part time after the first year and that slows them down, is it major changes, is it confusion navigating degree requirements, other factors, a combination.

I think this is a laughable goal - unless admissions standards are increased (which would lower access - not a good thing), but even then increasing retention by 100% is not feasible.

including transfer students would better capture the reality for student experience and emphasize support for these students

Institutions that have partnership programs should be provided some level of credit for graduation rates if they are the institution in the partnership that does not award the degree. We need to create incentives for cost effective partnership programs.

It doesn't make sense to reward change if a school is doing a good job.

Responses

Keep this metric, but consider some changes: IHE where a student starts gets to count the completion – if a student transfers but stays within 100% time that is a sign that the IHE prepared them well to transfer successfully. Could also give partial credit to the IHE where the student completes. This would incentivize receiving IHEs to graduate their transfer students on time. However, so much is out of the receiving IHE's control with what students come in with and if they may already be off track. Also, could incentivize IHEs not to accept transfer students who are at risk of not graduating on time (not sure this is a real issue). Full time students only is correct here - it wouldn't make sense to include part time students. This metric should be changed to exclude nonresident students. The data source should be changed to SURDS so all institutions have the same data source; and by changing to SURDS, nonresidents can be excluded. Nonresident student tuition is set such that they are fully covering the cost to educate those students; the state should only subsidize resident students.

Looks good.

Mentioned previously, and sensitive to the complexity, but excluding transfer students ****may**** be particularly penalizing IHEs with a larger transfer student population- something I think we would want to reward (ie if a student transfers from one institution to another it implies they felt, for any number of reasons, unable to complete at the original IHE, a second IHE getting that student across the finish line shouldn't be overlooked- arguably more important in the case of 150% grad time). Additionally, I believe transfer student populations may also be more likely to include URM & low-income students.

n/a

N/A

n/a

n/a

n/a

N/a

N/A

n/a

NA

NA

Na

Responses

NA

No

No additional feedback to share.

No comment

No comment

No comment.

No comment.

No comment.

No comments

none

None

None

none

none

none

None

None

Part-time and transfer students ought to be included for graduation IF it takes more than one semester to complete the degree program. Further, provide funding for community colleges with students who successfully complete/graduate with an Associates Degree the transfer to a four-year school to continue to complete a Bachelor's Degree.

Partnership programs like ours with CU Engineering have been disadvantaged as when the students matriculate into the CU program it negatively impacts our graduation rates

Please consider a mix of credit accumulation and credential accumulation. Use headcount and part-time students, for the reasons I've given elsewhere in my responses.

Responses

Prefer not to use grad rate metrics, which can be gamed by becoming more selective.

Remove the requirement that we use IPEDS data. Does not allow for consideration of degrees that are shared between institutions - Western/CU engineering example. Would like to consider why we include nonresident students in this calculation - isn't the goal of state funding the completion of resident students? Are certain institutions buoyed by nonresident rates in graduation calculation? Would like to understand how part time and transfer student on-time completion could be included in this metric.

sdfgdg

See above

See above

See above.

short-sighted & antiquated as focuses only on full-time & is dependent upon IPEDs, which is not the best measure. but understand desire for "one size fits all."

Should IHE's that offer 2 year degrees also report on 2-year graduation rates?

Should support automatic reverse transfer for two-year institution students transferring to 4 year universities.

Similar to above, part time students should be included.

Responses

The "100% graduation rate" performance metric is deeply flawed because it sets an unrealistic and unattainable standard for institutions. Achieving a 100% graduation rate is impossible due to the diverse circumstances students face, such as financial hardships, varying learning speeds, health issues, and family obligations—factors largely outside the control of institutions. This metric unfairly penalizes institutions for these uncontrollable variables, potentially increasing costs for students as institutions are forced to divert resources toward meeting an impractical benchmark. By excluding part-time and transfer students, the metric also fails to account for the realities of today's student population. Non-traditional students, who often balance education with work and family responsibilities, represent a growing portion of higher education enrollments. Their exclusion means the metric does not accurately reflect the success of institutions in serving these students, particularly those from underrepresented groups. Additionally, using this metric as a basis for performance funding creates counterproductive incentives. Institutions may be discouraged from enrolling students with higher risk factors for non-completion, such as first-generation or low-income students, to avoid negatively impacting their performance metrics. This undermines equity and access, two of the stated priorities of the legislative declaration. To improve this measure: 1. Replace the 100% Graduation Metric: Focus on more achievable and meaningful benchmarks, such as the 150% graduation rate, which better reflects the realities of student progress. 2. Include Non-Traditional Students: Broaden the scope to include part-time and transfer students, ensuring a more comprehensive assessment of institutional success. 3. Emphasize Equity Over Perfection: Recognize that diverse student needs require flexible pathways to success, and prioritize funding strategies that directly support these pathways rather than penalizing institutions for systemic challenges. While it is important to track graduation rates, tying funding to an unattainable 100% benchmark distracts from the real issues facing higher education in Colorado, such as affordability and equitable access. A more realistic and inclusive approach would better support institutions and students alike, ensuring that resources are allocated effectively to meet the state's educational and equity goals.

The 100% graduation rate metric is helpful for tracking how quickly first-time, full-time (FTFT) students complete their programs, but it feels pretty limited. It leaves out part-time, transfer, and non-traditional students, which doesn't give the full picture of how students are reaching their goals. Including these groups would make it a lot more representative and meaningful. For community colleges with bachelor's programs, using SURDS to fill in gaps is a decent workaround, but it'd be better to have a consistent approach across all institutions. Also, not everyone finishes in the 100% timeframe, especially students who are working or supporting families. Looking at a broader range of timeframes could show a more realistic view of success. This metric gets at an important part of student success, but it could be much stronger by including more types of students and ensuring the data is consistent and fair.

The 100% graduation rate performance metric is not equitable for students with disabilities because students with disabilities often take longer to graduate than their counterparts due to being enrolled as a part-time (11 credit hours or less) student.

These metrics, 9-16, seem appropriate. Please see my comments below under additional performance metrics.

These work for the feds. Do they cover everything we need for the state to plan?

Responses

This entire section MUST be removed from the funding formula. Not only do institutions have varying missions and serve different populations of students, making this terrible to use for comparison, IPEDS has prioritized 150% since the *1990s*. This metric is outdated.

this is why we are here - graduate students

This measure should not us FTFT, with the Outcomes measure survey, other cohorts should be integrated, taking into account that different schools serve different populations and therefore will have different enrollment and outcomes mixes.

This metric is only relevant for students who can afford to attend full time.

This metric rewards the campuses that enroll predominantly well-prepared students (Mines, Boulder, Fort Collins) as they have a higher percentage of a chance to complete in four years; it also rewards those institutions that can offer higher financial aid packages and these students can attend school full-time thus can often complete within four years; this metric just rewards the wrong institutions

This metric should recognize institutions that have partnership programs between themselves and other Colorado public institutions. In the instance where a student intentionally enters in a program that starts at one institution and receives a degree from another institution, both should receive partial credit in this metric.

v

Why not include part-time students? Not all students can attend full-time.

Why now include non-resident--maybe a separate metric. How are students who have changed residency classification during their education considered,

Without additional funds these seems to be how it is

Would like to consider a discussion about including part-time and transfer students if data allows

x

zxv

Question 16

Question 16 Text

The following description provides details on the "150% graduation rate" performance metric. Please review the metric details and provide feedback on the value of this metric, the specific metric criteria used to calculate its value, and any comments on the data source used for the calculation.

150% graduation rate: The change in 150% graduation rate for first-time full-time students (FTFT) within each institution.

Specific Metric Criteria:

- Includes first-time full-time (FTFT) students only. Part time and transfer students are excluded.
- Does not include graduate students.
- Does not include students who transferred from one institution to another.
- Includes both resident and nonresident students.
- All four-year institution data comes from IPEDS. Some community college data also comes from IPEDS. However, for community colleges that offer baccalaureate degrees, the data in IPEDS is inaccurate (the survey asks for bachelor's retention only). For these seven institutions, CDHE calculates the same metrics using SURDS data and following the IPEDS methodology.
- Although completion time varies for certificates, they are also reported to IPEDS with two years as on-time completion.
- CDHE calculates the 150% graduation rate for a given year by dividing the number of students who have completed their degree or credential by the number of students in the original cohort.
- Calculation: graduated students from FTFT cohort / FTFT cohort.
- Students are excluded from the starting cohort for the following reasons: death or total and permanent disability; service in the armed forces; service with a foreign aid service of the federal government, such as the Peace Corps; or service on official church missions.

Data Sources:

- IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey (provisional release) and the SURDS Enrollment and Degree Files
- For the FY24-25 model, this used cohorts from Fall 2013 to Fall 2016 for four-year institutions, and Fall 2016 to Fall 2019 for two-year institutions, measuring students who graduated by spring 2022.

Use the comment box below to share any feedback you may have on the 150% graduation rate performance metric.

Question 16 Responses

Responses
150% graduation is critical and valued.
150% rate is a better metric than 100% rate, especially for transfer students.
150% seems appropriate.

Responses

A regressive measure. Those institutions that serve high numbers of students who have and are facing structural barriers will not perform as well

Again, why only FTFT? Doesn't give a full picture of the retention and success work at the institution.

Allow Community Colleges to count their baccalaureate degrees.

Although technically different, Credential completion, 100% & 150% Graduation rates are all attempting to measure an IHE's success in producing graduates. Pick one & cancel the other 2.

As above.

Better than 100%

concern about lagging data source. No ability to include transfer students and part time students (especially with 150% rate)

definitely not a fan

Emphasize 100 more instead. The implicit advertisement for full-time students is 100 percent, not 150.

Explain how this improves funding for community colleges which currently only offer Associates Degrees and workforce certificates?

For institutions that already have a high graduation rate, focusing only on change discounts good work that is already going on.

Good and appropriate.

Good, but need to consider long breaks that should result in a reset.

How does the pandemic impact this particular cohort?

How is 100% graduation rate different from 150% graduation rate?

How would including part time and transfer students impact this metric?

I cannot understand the difference between 100% vs 150% graduation rate.

I don't think this category should exist. It is sufficient to have 100%. 150% makes no sense.

Responses

I think this is also a good one to incentivize good performance on. Striking the balance though between 100% graduation rate and 150% graduation rate is hard though as we want students to graduate as soon as possible so they can start earning but also there are also valid reasons a student might need longer to complete if they have to change to part time to support a family.

I would echo the sentiment of my prior comment. Is there a better way to measure growth and steady forward progress?

Institutions should review

Institutions that have partnership programs should be provided some level of credit for graduation rates if they are the institution in the partnership that does not award the degree. We need to create incentives for cost effective partnership programs.

It doesn't make sense to reward change if a school is doing a good job.

Looks good.

n/a

N/A

n/a

n/a

n/a

N/a

N/A

n/a

NA

NA

Na

No

No additional feedback to share.

No comment

Responses

No comment

No comment.

No comment.

none

None

None

None

none

None

None

None.

Part time students should be included.

Partnership programs like ours with CU Engineering have been disadvantaged as when the students matriculate into the CU program it negatively impacts our graduation rates

Perhaps stop including this; we have the credential completion metric already which counts more than just first time full time students, and removing this metric would put additional emphasis on 100% time graduation while ensuring all students are counted in credential completion. Having two metrics that only measure first time full time students, which could be as small as 5% of a community college student population, does not make sense.

Please include transfer students. Why are they excluded from outcomes measures? Does the success of transfer students not matter to the State?

Prefer not to use grad rate metrics, which can be gamed by becoming more selective.

same as above

SAme as above.

Same as above.

Responses

Same as above. If the legislature wants better graduation rates, lower tuition. But even then, not everyone will graduate (or even close). Again, from my perspective as a faculty member, the burden will fall on us (and other staff) - we cannot stay current with our fields and pedagogy, teach, do research, attend to depressed and/or suicidal students, write 10 page syllabi that are like legal contracts, serve on committees (the number of which is always increasing), supervise graduate students, provide hands on experience to undergrads, attend functions intended to attract and retain students, provide constructive feedback on assignments, etc. etc. all for wages that are below peers in communities where housing prices are sky high.

same as all comments above: short-sighted & antiquated as focuses only on full-time & is dependent upon IPEDs, which is not the best measure. but understand desire for "one size fits all."

Same as comment above

Same comment as for 15.

Same comment left in the 100% grad metric, and sensitive to the complexity, but excluding transfer students ****may**** be particularly penalizing IHEs with a larger transfer student population- something I think we would want to reward (ie if a student transfers from one institution to another it implies they felt, for any number of reasons, unable to complete at the original IHE, a second IHE getting that student across the finish line shouldn't be overlooked- arguably more important in the case of 150% grad time especially if the student had stopped out for some period of time). Additionally, I believe transfer student populations may also be more likely to include URM & low-income students.

same comments as above

See above

see above.

See above.

sfgsfg

Sorry, I do not fully understand the 150% graduation rate and cannot comment on the metrics.

Responses

The "150% graduation rate" performance metric is a meaningful improvement over the unrealistic "100% graduation rate," as it acknowledges that many students require additional time to complete their degrees. However, while it is more attainable, the metric still has significant limitations that undermine its fairness and effectiveness. First, the exclusion of part-time and transfer students limits the scope of the metric. These groups represent a large and growing portion of Colorado's postsecondary population, particularly at community colleges and institutions serving non-traditional learners. By focusing solely on first-time, full-time (FTFT) students, the metric fails to account for the diverse pathways students take toward degree completion, ultimately overlooking the contributions of institutions that support these populations. Additionally, the inclusion of nonresident students in the calculation detracts from the focus on Colorado residents, who should be the primary beneficiaries of state funding. Institutions should be evaluated based on their success in serving the state's residents rather than being measured against outcomes influenced by nonresident enrollment patterns. Institutions serving high-need populations also face systemic challenges that this metric does not adequately address. Low-income, first-generation, and underrepresented students often encounter financial and structural barriers that extend their time to graduation. By not accounting for these challenges, the metric unfairly disadvantages institutions working hard to serve these students, further compounding existing inequities. Another issue lies in the use of data from 2013 to 2022, which includes years impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic caused significant disruptions to enrollment and graduation patterns, skewing the results and potentially misrepresenting long-term trends in institutional effectiveness. Without adjusting for these disruptions or incorporating pre-pandemic data, the metric provides an incomplete and potentially misleading assessment of institutional performance. A more effective approach would address these limitations by broadening the scope of the metric to include part-time and transfer students, providing a more comprehensive view of institutional success. The metric should also focus on resident students to better align with Colorado's investment priorities and account for the demographic and geographic challenges faced by different institutions. Additionally, incorporating pre-pandemic data would create a more balanced perspective, mitigating the distortions caused by temporary disruptions. While the "150% graduation rate" is a step in the right direction, tying funding directly to this metric risks creating inequities and misaligned incentives. Institutions may feel pressured to divert resources away from critical areas such as affordability and equity initiatives to meet performance goals. A more holistic approach would use this metric as one component of a broader strategy, complemented by targeted investments in institutions serving diverse populations. This would ensure that Colorado's higher education system supports all students, regardless of their circumstances, while promoting equity, access, and long-term success.

The 150% graduation rate metric is definitely a step in the right direction since it recognizes that many students take longer than the traditional timeframe to graduate. But it still misses a lot by only focusing on first-time, full-time (FTFT) students. Part-time, transfer, and non-traditional students make up such a big part of the student population, and leaving them out really limits how well this metric reflects what's actually happening. Including those groups would give a much clearer and more complete picture. For community colleges offering bachelor's degrees, using SURDS to fill in the gaps is helpful, but it's not ideal. A consistent approach across all institutions would make this metric more reliable and fair. And while two years might be considered "on-time" for certificates, a lot of students take longer because they're balancing work, family, and other responsibilities. Adjusting for those realities would make this metric more meaningful.

Responses

The 150% graduation rate performance metric is not equitable for students with disabilities because students with disabilities often take longer to graduate than their counterparts due to being enrolled as a part-time (11 credit hours or less) student.

The exclusion of part-time students may be missing the efforts needed to successfully educate and graduate individuals who need to take a slower path. It is also incentivizing institutions to promote the full-time model and ignore other models.

These metrics, 9-16, seem appropriate. Please see my comments below under additional performance metrics.

this is why we are here - graduate students

This metric is only relevant for students who can afford to attend full time.

This metric is particularly important to Adams State given our mission to focus on first generation, under-represented populations.

This metric should recognize institutions that have partnership programs between themselves and other Colorado public institutions. In the instance where a student intentionally enters in a program that starts at one institution and receives a degree from another institution, both should receive partial credit in this metric.

Use headcount and part-time students, for the reasons I've given elsewhere in my responses.

v

we must count part time and transfer students - somehow. It is part time students who take longer - but they may end up with less debt since they earned while they learned instead. Are we punishing them for that very smart choice?

What about looking at credit hour graduation performance in addition? Meaning, the efficiency with which students are accumulating credits (earned and transferred) and graduating?

What purpose does 150% serve that 100% doesn't? Metrics need to be understandable but legislators and others as does the interpretation of each.

Without additional funds these seems to be how it is

x

Yes, no need to use 100% since 150% is the federal data collection definition to use

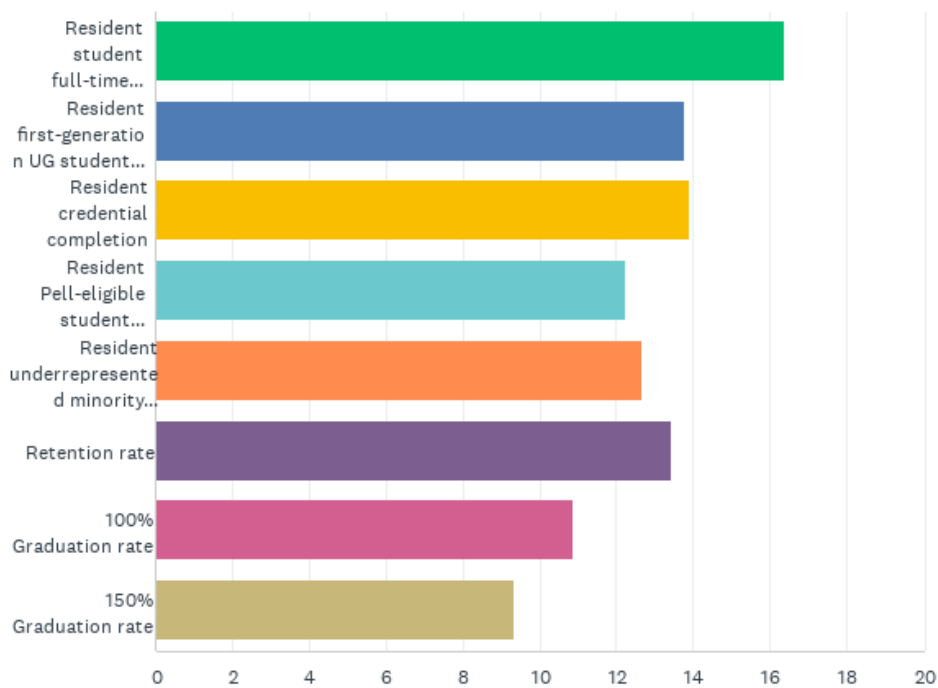
zxv

Question 17

Question 17 Text

To further the goals of Colorado's higher education system, please provide your suggested weighting of the eight metrics included in step 2 performance funding. The total amount should add up to 100. If there are metrics that you think should be removed, you can enter 0 for those metrics.

Question 17 Responses



Question 18

Question 18 Text

Please provide any reasoning you'd like to share on how you weighted the performance metrics in the previous question.

Question 18 Responses

Responses

Added weight for completion and graduation

Although my weighting adds up to 100%, it is my belief that performance metrics should account for no more than about 40% of the total funding provided to institutions. The remaining 60% should consist of baseline funding and direct student support to ensure accessibility, affordability, and equity. Baseline funding refers to stable, predictable financial resources allocated to institutions to cover core operating costs, including faculty salaries, infrastructure, and essential student services. This funding is critical for maintaining institutional stability and ensuring that schools can meet the needs of all students, regardless of demographic or economic shifts. The performance metrics I prioritized emphasize equity and meaningful outcomes over process-oriented or redundant measures. For example, metrics like "credential completion" and "retention rate" overlap significantly with "graduation rate," which provides a more comprehensive view of student success. Streamlining the formula by focusing on the "150% graduation rate" reduces complexity and avoids redundancy while maintaining accountability for timely degree completion. Metrics like "resident first-generation undergraduate student headcount," "resident Pell-eligible student population share," and "resident underrepresented minority student population share" align with the state's stated goals of improving equity and access. Prioritizing these measures ensures that funding is directed toward addressing systemic barriers faced by underserved populations. I excluded metrics such as "FTE," "100% graduation rate," and "retention rate" because they either fail to reflect the realities of non-traditional and part-time students or impose unrealistic expectations on institutions. These metrics risk penalizing schools for factors outside their control, such as demographics, regional disparities, or external economic challenges. Finally, I believe the formula's current complexity, with its three-step funding process, creates inefficiencies and dilutes the focus on core priorities. Simplifying the system to focus on baseline funding and a smaller set of targeted performance metrics would reduce administrative burden and better align funding with the overarching goals of equity, access, and affordability. Institutions should not have to navigate a labyrinth of metrics and temporary funding adjustments to meet their operational needs and serve students effectively.

College courses are already available to all residents who choose to enroll in higher education.

Complete and graduation should be our ultimate goal and be weighted to represent such.

Consistent with my answer in 17 above, Adams State University has the largest population of first generation, under-represented students. These students often require more help at the start of their college experience than along with additional guidance as they advance.

Emphasized the importance of credential completion, retention, and graduation rates.

Focusing on these populations helps with retention and completion rates.

Funding should follow the student.

Funding should incentivise students attending a two-year college at a lower cost, then transferring to 4-year.

Responses

Graduation rates and credential completion are the only things that matter. They are outcomes. Inputs metrics don't belong in a performance formula.

Headcount is a really important metric, given the needs of part-time enrollment populations. The population share metrics are a good way to encourage institutions to diversify. Rate metrics can create incentives for selective institutions to "cream-skim." They could be changed to count metrics (e.g., number of students who graduate within 150%), but they were weighted at 0 here because they shouldn't be used as rates.

Honestly, I think you need to look at the data to make the decision above to understand the consequences.

I believe this is fairly similar to the current % splits. I have increased resident credential completion as this would hopefully encourage more credential offerings. I have decreased pell-eligible student population share as this metric relies so heavily on FAFSA completion, which many students may not fill out.

I do not fully understand the 150% graduation rate metric and weighted it less than the others because of this.

I do not have a good feel for allocating these metrics. Hence the equal weighting.

I don't have strong feelings on how items should be weighted and so have reflected current weights. Thus far, the ability to modify the weights has not been very useful. Adjusting weights usually provides counter-intuitive/unexpected results, since the current calculations measure institutions against themselves. Unless the overall model structure is changed, the key question will be how any initial adjustment to weights affects funding for a given institution.

I ranked Pell eligibility low as there are many uncontrollable factors at the state level regarding that metric.

I think a smaller amount of metrics provides more weight and important to each metric. With that resident student FTE and credential completion felt like things a funding formula did not need to incentivize or incentivized through graduation rates. Instead of incentivizing enrollment in general, incentivizing enrollment of certain populations seems more important. Of those populations I gave first-gen a lower weight do to the definition of first gen student. I also weighted 150% graduation rate lower as we should incentivize on-time completion more.

I think we should drop 150% graduation rate so that one is zero. While I also think we should drop individual metrics for first-gen, pell-eligible, and URM, I did give those a weight because I think they should be included in the headcount/FTE metric, the retention metric, and the credential completion metric as bonuses. Retention rate and credential completion are the metrics I think are most important; retention rate is the fastest check we have on whether students are progressing toward a degree and is something IHEs can address and see reflected in the formula rather quickly (before the formula changes again). Credential completion includes all credentials earned, unlike grad rates which exclude the majority of degree seeking students.

Responses

I weighted the metrics to focus on equity, access, and real outcomes, which are at the heart of Colorado's higher education goals: Resident Credential Completion (20): This is the clearest measure of success—students earning credentials is the end goal, so it deserves the most weight. First-Generation Headcount (15), Pell-Eligible Population (15), and Underrepresented Minority Population (15): These metrics are key to making sure underserved students are prioritized. Giving them significant weight pushes institutions to improve access and support for these groups. Retention Rate (10): Retention is a good early indicator of success, but it's less impactful than completing credentials or improving equity. Full-Time Enrollment (10): Important for understanding capacity, but less tied to outcomes and equity, so it has a smaller weight. 150% Graduation Rate (10) and 100% Graduation Rate (5): The 150% rate is more realistic for most students, especially non-traditional ones, so it gets more weight. The 100% rate, while useful, reflects a narrower slice of students.

I would consider replacing this all with completion-goals-based funding - deriving from what it takes to get to 73 by 31. <https://completecollege.org/resource/endingunfundedmandates/>

I would not change the current weights. I had to complete the boxes to proceed, although I shared rationale for contemplating their priority or emphasis.

Incentives for enrollment / representation but not for results leads to unintended harm. Where possible, all demographic incentive metrics should be changed to read: completion / livable wage employment rate among first gen / minority / pell-eligible.... In addition, FTE equivalent needs accommodation for concurrent enrollees in community colleges

Increasing the weight of URM and Pell share will help move the needle on degree completion for these populations and close attainment gaps.

Most of the weight should be attached to just enrolled students. But there should be smaller "incentive" weights for under-represented groups, retention and graduation.

My weighting reflects the feedback I have given throughout this survey

N/A

n/a

N/a

N/A

NA

Na

Responses

No additional feedback to share.

No comment.

No institution can guarantee a graduation rate of 100% or certain one at 150%. It is just not possible. I can see the number changing to 90%. Minority student representation is a key target population and should receive the highest consideration to encourage institutions to recruit these students.

none

none

None

Not enough technical expertise. priority should be completion.

Our minority populations are the ones having children and will make up a larger portion of population (per State Demographer). If you do not have minorities, then not attractive as option to them.

Outcome measures should have a higher weight than others because the mission and goals of institutions are to help students learn skills, graduate, and have a stable life with a stable job.

Outcomes should be given preference over enrollment.

Part-time students should be counted. Let's focus on the students with the greatest need first.

Performance metrics should be student-centered, follow the student, and mitigate college student debt.

Please see comments above. These measures should still be considered but not blindly followed.

Reflect actions not labels,

Removed the headcount considerations for weighting - would prefer to instead see additional weighting in the calculations for these populations in the other metrics included

Retaining and completing credentials are the keys to students achieving their educational goals, thus weighted higher. Since it is state money, resident FTE should be prioritized. Ensuring colleges can serve first generation and PELL students is important. Finally, the graduation rate data is so dated when it becomes measurable that it is of limited value.

See earlier comments

Responses

See my earlier note about needing more in the pooled funding to actually make all of these splits very meaningful. If there were more dollars, I think we need to look at the % of graduates securing livable wage jobs - I would adjust the weights to add this.

Should be based on Colorado residents served

Slight shift toward higher emphasis on First-gen to drive more post-secondary matriculation, and on Retention and graduation rates, which focuses on progress and outcomes more than point-in-time headcount or population share.

Socio-economic status is the biggest indicator of college success. If we are committed to supporting first gen, URM and Pell eligible students we should provide more funding to institutions who enroll those demographics, recognizing that their students face structural disadvantages making it unlikely they can attend full time and earn credentials in 4-6 years.

Stop funding the institutions based on volume/enrollment when those institutions are not working to address the gap in enrollment/retention/graduation of those of color, low income and other students; fund your policies!

Students should not have to be FTFT students in a market where completion times are extended. We could use 200% rates instead. Our populations of FTFT students is shrinking and we serve non-traditional and post-traditional students more frequently, These numbers will skew in favor of the smallest market share.

The current distribution works well.

The emphasis on full time educational attainment is an artifact of the industrial age and should be reconsidered for the contemporary environment.

The first-gen measure is useless right now. If CDHE would provide better rules and enforcement so that all institutions counted the same way, I'd score it a 15. If not, I'd score it a zero

The mission of IHE's is to recruit & graduate students thus enrollment & degree completion at 25%. Closing the gap between URM degree-holders is also very important currently-20%. I feel the purpose of several metrics (1st-gen, 100% & 150% graduation rates) is redundant/already accomplished by other metrics-0%. Retention rate is important but improving retention also improves other metrics-15%. Pell-eligible is also important but less so than other metrics.

The programs that have been created will do a great job of getting students in the door but retention is very important to get to graduation. I reduced the rate on graduation because of retention. Resident FTE is important because I want to keep Colorado students in Colorado.

the state of CO is trying to close the equity gap; so resources need to be applied where that work is happening.

Too much emphasis on specific populations, rather than overall quality.

Responses

v

Weighted toward performance but still valuing the other metrics.

Without additional funds these seems to be how it is

You can ignore my weightings -- I had to provide them to complete this, but given my comments, I would reset the metrics away from 'resident' , 'retention' and 'graduation' as historically defined to reflect the world of lifelong skills-based employer connected family sustaining career-oriented learning.

zxv

Question 19

Question 19 Text

Are there any other performance metrics that you feel should be considered?

Question 19 Responses

Responses

I think we need to look at the % of graduates securing livable wage jobs.

1. Completion rates for Coloradans who pursue skills-based pathways that specifically lead to employment in 'jobs of the future'. 2. Ability to get and retain improved/first time employment directly related to the skill. 3. Wage for the employment affect in #2.

Alignment to in-demand jobs.

An IHE's ability to move students status in regards to social mobility; i.e. move students up from lowest tiers in social mobility index.

Any measure that is used needs to be easy to obtain and verify.

As the SLDS is bolstered and data become available, job placement and wage outcomes should be considered. Until the data are ready, metrics that incentivize academic programs that lead to the most economic mobility for students should be considered.

As the SLDS is implemented, interim metrics like gateway course completion and progress toward degree pathways should be emphasized, with a focus on prioritizing job placement and wage outcomes.

Responses

Change "Underrepresented minority" (URM) to Students of Color (SOC) and include more races/ethnicities. URM is an outdated, tone-deaf term that needs to go away.

collaboration with other institutions and K12 districts/schools

Completion of micro or short term credentials in programming, job placement (by disaggregated groups), Work Based Learning experiences

completion rates by all students, with additional support to institutions with higher, or equal completion rates among racially, ethnically, and economically diverse students.

Credit accumulation Refining credential completion to include IRCs if they aren't already included
Work-based learning for credit

Early momentum metrics such as credit accumulation in the first year, 1st year completion in college level Math and English courses

economic mobility - or inclusion of something regarding ROI, or MVT calculations

Employment and salary within 3 months of graduation/credential completion.

Faculty retention. Without quality faculty, courses and quality content cannot be offered to students for degree programs. Also include a student athlete/student government factor in funding. Students who are engaged in activities (clubs/sports) outside of academics are more likely to complete college and have higher GPA.

Higher support for degrees and certificates in Agriculture, Energy, and the Mechanical Trades.

Responses

I do not believe additional performance metrics should be considered; instead, the focus should shift to addressing systemic state funding issues in higher education, especially considering potential federal funding threats to higher education in the coming presidential term. A look at state funding levels over time highlights the root cause of affordability challenges for students. In FY 2006-07, Colorado allocated approximately \$2.1 billion in total higher education funding, equating to about \$3.28 billion today when adjusted for inflation. However, General Fund appropriations in FY 2023-24 amounted to only \$1.56 billion. In FY 2011-12, state funding covered only 33% of college costs, a significant decline from 68% in FY 2000-01. This reduction led to students and families shouldering approximately two-thirds of educational expenses, effectively doubling their financial burden over this period. This reliance on student-generated revenue has made higher education less accessible, particularly for low-income and underrepresented students, exacerbating existing inequities. Although recent funding increases are a positive step, they are insufficient to reverse the long-term trends of underfunding and disinvestment. Current funding levels stand at just \$1.56 billion, leaving an inflation-adjusted gap of \$1.72 billion from pre-Great Recession levels. To compensate, institutions have increasingly relied on tuition revenue, which grew from \$1.1 billion in 2007 to \$2.6 billion in 2023-24—a \$1.5 billion increase that mirrors the \$1.56 billion reduction in state funding. This direct correlation underscores how the decline in state support has directly shifted the financial burden onto students and families, driving up tuition costs, increasing student debt, and reducing access for low-income and underrepresented students. Without restoring state funding to inflation-adjusted levels, these affordability challenges will persist, further limiting educational opportunities for many Coloradans. While well-intentioned, performance-based funding metrics do not address these systemic challenges. Instead, they distract from the real issue and create additional hurdles for institutions, forcing them to divert resources toward meeting benchmarks rather than investing directly in affordability and student success. Rather than adding more performance metrics, the state should prioritize restoring and increasing baseline funding for higher education. Institutions need predictable, stable funding to operate effectively and to provide accessible, high-quality education for all Coloradans. Additionally, direct investment in students, particularly those from low-income and underrepresented backgrounds, would be a more effective way to achieve the equity and access goals outlined in the legislative declaration. Adding further metrics would only complicate the funding formula and distract from the central issue of affordability. By addressing the root cause—insufficient state investment—Colorado can make higher education more accessible, reduce the financial burden on students, and foster a stronger, more equitable system.

I have mentioned in here the need to track transfer completions in some way, while also acknowledging the complexities that would come with "dividing" up a student's completion count amongst 2+ institutions- awarding the completion to only the final institution also seems unfair and might promote odd program initiatives that could be seen as stealing students from other IHEs. But I still believe that transfer students, *along with non-first time, returning student* completions would be a great addition to these metrics.

I think outcome metrics such as economic mobility, return on investment or similar metrics should also be considered. These are important metrics for how students are actually impacted by their education and get to the goals of higher education.

Responses

I think there are a few other metrics that could add value and give a fuller picture: Debt-to-Earnings Ratio: Tracking whether graduates are earning enough to manage their debt could add insight into affordability and long-term success. Transfer Success Rates: Transfer students are a big part of the system, and tracking how well they're supported—whether they finish their programs or make progress—would recognize their pathways. Post-Graduation Outcomes: Metrics like job placement, earnings, or continuing education rates would show how well institutions are preparing students for life after graduation. Equity in Outcomes: It's not enough to track who's enrolling. Seeing whether underrepresented groups are succeeding at the same rates as others could highlight where more work is needed.

I think we need some kind of measure that aligns to MVT. Can we capture the % of students in positive MVT programs. Our metrics to better align to the MVT outcome. Also reduce the ones above where there is substantial overlap. Also go to rates versus numbers.

I would consider replacing this all with completion-goals-based funding - deriving from what it takes to get to 73 by 31. <https://completercollege.org/resource/endingunfundedmandates/>

Incentives for institutions that do NOT raise tuition each year

Institutions choose one or two metrics related to their specific missions and goals

It is hard to talk about metric and additional funding to achieve them when the base level of funding is so poor in CO; If there were a solid, strong base of funding the option for targeted metrics/behaviors would be nice

It may also be worthwhile considering some leading indicators such as the % of students who complete gateway math or English within one year or the percentage of students who declare and make progress (9 credits) toward a degree pathway. You could also look at including the percent of FTFT students who complete 30 credits in their first year, since we know it is a key indicator of Success. Finally, now that the community college has defined skill-builders you may want to think about how you handle those students differently when you build out cohorts.

Job placement at graduation and financial status within the following three years.

More emphasis on part time students.

n/a

n/a

N/A

n/a

Na

Responses

no

no

No

No - institutions serve different populations.

No, I feel strongly that we should be simplifying the model rather than adding complexity and creating opportunity for additional errors.

No.

No.

No.

No.

No.

No. The existing metrics are thorough, and it is already quite a lengthy list.

No. We should not make it more complicated.

Non-credit enrollment (perhaps in certain high-value programs) is an important cost driver for community colleges that could be included. Credits at completion can help incentivize institutions to set students on efficient pathways to their degrees. Enrollment of transfer students could be considered (or completion by students who transferred in) to ensure 4-year institutions also have incentive to enroll those students. Post-completion outcomes, such as degrees in high-wage fields or completers' median wage.

none

None

Not at this time.

number of programs that support student success

Other student outcomes. Quantitative - upward mobility. Qualitative measures should also be considered; however difficult that may be.

Responses

Post-Graduation Employment and Earnings (or Workforce Readiness), Student Support Services and Resource Utilization, Transfer Student Success, Equity in Credential Completion (Disaggregated by Demographics), Satisfaction and Engagement Metrics, Graduate School Enrollment (for Bachelor's Degree Holders), Institutional Financial Health and Affordability, and Learning Outcomes.

Quality of faculty.

Recognition of part-time students and transfer students should be incorporated in some way. If institutions are not recognized for accepting transfers, then the current behaviors that limit that success will continue.

Resident credential non-completion (i.e., returning students).

rural

Rural factor.

See comments throughout. Schools need to track student livable wage outcomes and completion rates at the program level and clearly communicate those metrics to the public. This may be #1 best solution to debt avoidance for most vulnerable populations.

Service to local communities that institutions provide

Stop-outs and returns after leave. Transfer rates.

The current model does not account for institutions that offer partnership programs. As a result, metrics such as credential completion, retention rates, and graduation rates fail to reflect the vital role these institutions play in helping create successful graduates at partner institutions. This needs to be addressed. Institutions involved in partnership programs should receive partial credit for their contributions at the outset of these collaborations.

The quality of education should somehow be considered in all of this. Not easy to count, but perhaps something legislators should keep in mind?

v

We have advocated for the ATCs to be included in the model. We'd recommend considering enrollment, completion, and placement.

While not necessarily a performance metric, additional support should be provided to rural governing boards as it is generally more expensive to serve students in those areas. These governing boards do not have the same economies of scale as their larger, urban, counterparts.

Responses

Will they really be considered if they do not already exist in some data base? Yes a measure and recognition of disability.

Without additional funds these seems to be how it is

Workforce-aligned, non-bachelors credentials are a priority for the State and yet are not included in our completion data. As demand for these credentials grows, we'd like to see these data included in our completion calculations

Yes - two: 1. Credits to degree: New metric to incentivize seamless transfer and accepting and applying transfer credits CO resident undergraduates only Part time and full time students included Combination of two metrics: one for transfer students and one for first-time students. IHE where a student completed receives the credit; maybe starting IHE gets ¼ credit? Since they are measured against themselves it doesn't really matter. Measurement options: - Average credits to degree - Percentage of students who graduate within 10% of the required credits in their degree (or some other %, give a tiny bit of wiggle room for things like mandatory student success courses at a pre-transfer IHE) - CDHE data note - would likely need to start to collect a variable for this in the degree file – required credits to degree, to compare to total accumulated credits - CDHE data note: Would also need SURDS degree file to have total accumulated credits from all Colorado IHEs, not just accepted credits (this is in progress for 1340 and 164 already). - Data note: Might need to exclude transfers who ever attended a private IHE from the transfer credits to degree metric 2. Combined economic mobility: Percentage of graduating cohort who are Pell eligible multiplied by percentage of Pell eligible students who earn a living wage (using the tier 2 top job wage level criteria, which allows you to support yourself in Colorado) 2 years after graduation Important to do combined metric to reward IHEs that graduate a high proportion of low income students, and to reward IHEs that propel their Pell students to higher salaries. Multiple ways for IHEs with different missions to improve on this metric (enroll more Pell students and keep their grad rates the same, enroll same number of Pell students but improve their grad rates, graduate same number of Pell students but improve their post-graduation wage outcomes) Recommend not 1 year since many students are still job searching, taking time off, completing internships before starting a full time position, etc Recommend not more than 2 years to keep it timely, this is already a very delayed measure which is largely outside of the IHEs control

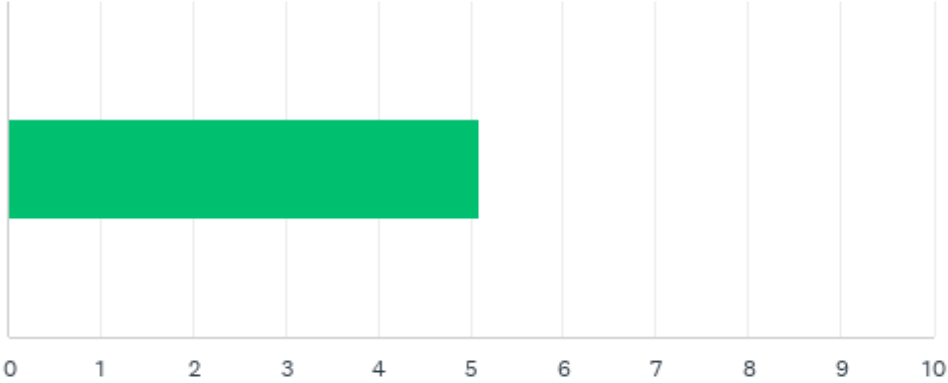
ZXC

Question 20

Question 20 Text

On a scale of 1 to 10, how well do you feel your institution is served by the way funding is distributed through the current formula, where 1 is very poorly served and 10 is very well served.

Question 20 Responses

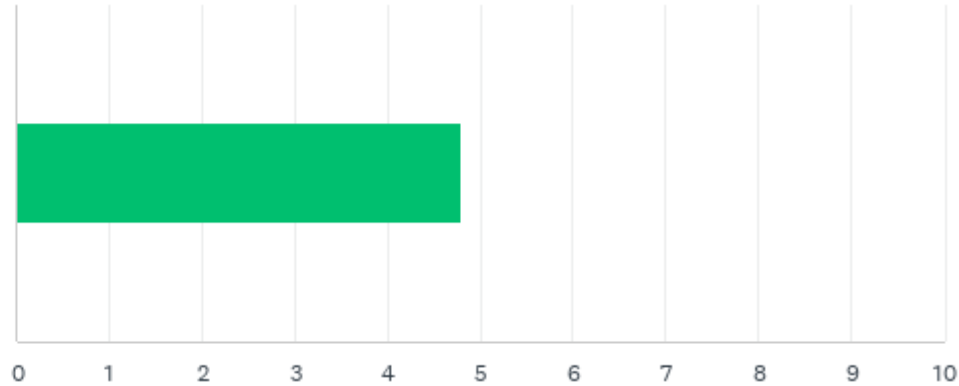


Question 21

Question 21 Text

On a scale of 1 to 10, how well do you feel the current formula meets the goals of the higher education system in Colorado, where 1 is very poorly met and 10 is very well met.

Question 21 Responses



Question 22

Question 22 Text

Is there any other feedback you'd like to share on the current funding formula?

Question 22 Responses

Responses
As Colorado emphasizes value and ROI, the funding formula should align state funding with those objectives - while taking steps to ensure that doing so does not disadvantage certain institutions or populations.
As you can guess by my previous comments, the current model excludes the ATCs, so we aren't served well.
Colorado still ranks very low on national rankings for higher education funding. We need to fund higher education at a higher level.
Consider the demographics of students and need.
Current formula is too focused on the traditional student coming from high school to college. With declining population and propensity to go immediately to college, more emphasis needs to go on non-traditional students and skill builders.
Current formula splits a limited pool of dollars across a lot of institutions and does it in slivered amounts that don't really add up to something that's meaningful in terms of driving behaviors or outcomes. Unless the pool of dollars is increased and it's not a zero sum game, and unless leadership conveys a commitment to access, completion, and placement in livable way jobs, I don't know that playing around the edges with the current formula will yield much.
Funding should follow policy! Currently the formula rewards the bigger institutions and the smaller ones are left to limp by each year; there is not adequate funding for operations and it just seems like the state is moving the deck chairs around on the Titanic and not really supporting institutions that need it most who are serving the population the state says it values/prioritizes.
I am at a private institution, so the performance funding is n/a. But I do think the current formula favoring traditional FTFT students encourages unethical enrollment strategies by encouraging 1) tuition discounting, thus favoring richer institutions, 2) focusing on enrolling first and second-year students, not serving or completing students
I do not think we should change it now, especially with tight budgets and an uncertain federal government.
I don't know what the current funding formula is. If it's based on FTE headcount I'd rate it a 10.

Responses

I don't think that Colorado's model has had as much impact as it could because we just fight about. I'd like to see there be more opportunities for institutions to view their data and workshop it and dig into it to understand what institutional practices they can change to improve it. Right now it's Opaque to the under-resourced institutions so it doesn't result in changes in behavior or agency for those schools.

I give a low score for our tendency to disregard step 1. We need to simply use it over a multi-year period to bring the historically underfunded schools up to average - or above average given the challenges associated with the students we serve and the need for additional resources to provide those services (advising, food and housing insecurity, etc)

I think the current formula misses outcome metrics. I am also not sure how much the current formula incentivize or changes behavior due to the stability of the funding formula and role and mission calculations.

I think we need to capture trends in the funding formula. I know it is about distribution, but shrinking distributions to IHE indicate that they may not be reaching the audience as needed to maintain viability. The funding formula should lead to conversations that may need to shift or be absorbed into larger systems if operating independently is not serving the whole system (all IHE in Colorado)

I would consider replacing this all with completion-goals-based funding - deriving from what it takes to get to 73 by 31. <https://completecollege.org/resource/endingunfundedmandates/>

I would not change it. It is working very well.

If I went to dinner with a friend and my friend covered 10% of the bill and I covered 90%, I would not describe that as my friend taking me to dinner.

In Texas, where formula was overhauled to prioritize / reward learner results / economic success, significant additional dollars were added to formula to bring about operational and political support. Short of additive \$\$, no revision to current formula will lead to new results for the CO economy.

It doesn't actually reward performance.

It seems like there are many scholarships available to Colorado residential students, however it doesn't seem like that amount is equitable across institutions. State funding per student could be higher to support growth in education around the state.

It would be helpful to publish a 'best practices' compendium of how the other 49 states are going after this - -many are much more creative and modern in their approach, and Coloradans should know that.

It's terrible and doesn't address the real issues like entitled faculty not allowing bad performing programs to change and K12 being allowed to push students through with no skills to succeed in college. Fix these first.

Responses

My primary feedback is that the current funding formula, while well-intentioned, places too much emphasis on performance-based metrics and fails to address the systemic issue of insufficient state funding for higher education. As highlighted earlier, the significant decline in inflation-adjusted state funding since FY 2006-07 has shifted the financial burden onto students, driving up tuition costs and limiting access for low-income and underrepresented populations. Rather than complicating the formula with additional metrics, the focus should be on restoring and increasing baseline funding to ensure institutions can meet the needs of all students. A more equitable approach would also prioritize direct financial support for students who face the greatest barriers to accessing postsecondary education. By addressing these systemic challenges, Colorado can build a stronger, more accessible higher education system that aligns with the state's equity and affordability goals.

My response to question 20 should be discarded because I am not at an IHE. There are 50 different states running funding model experiments, we would be wise to see what they have learned and not recreate the wheel. That does not mean we should jump on new metrics other states have just recently added (many workforce metrics fall into this realm); there has not yet been time to see if there are unintended consequences or whether those metrics incent institutional change. We should also keep in mind what institutions can control - most directly, they can control who enrolls. They are more limited in controlling who retains and graduates, since that is primarily driven by student demographics and who the institutions serve. They have, realistically, almost no control over a student's post-graduate wage or job outcomes. Research supports this assertion - there is research showing that state funding levels, the percent of funding that comes from the state vs. other sources, and state control (determined based on governance structure and control over tuition, among other things), has the greatest impact on enrollment, minimal impact on completion, and no impact on workforce outcomes. Research often shows that performance funding makes no difference, particularly in states with low funding. In states where it does make a difference, there are often negative outcomes for underrepresented students and less well resourced institutions. Much of the design of the current formula is meant to prevent that, and we want to be very careful that we don't go backwards in the design of our formula in terms of any negative unintended consequences.

n/a

N/A

n/a

Na

NA

New to the state and not employed by one of your institutions, although I would certainly consider it for the right role.

No

no

Responses

No.

No.

No. I simply do not think it works.

None

None

Not at this time. Thank you!

overall there is little to no incentive for collaboration between institutions as it exacerbates competition with focus on FTE

rural needs consideration

See my comments throughout

Students with disabilities are not only considered as an underrepresented/underserved group in higher education, they are also being underrepresented/underserved by the current funding model. In order to better serve Coloradans with disabilities, the funding model for institutions of higher education needs to recognize that students with disabilities have disability-related needs that require a corresponding fiscal need.

The biggest problem is that the state has so little funding available for higher education!!

The cost of HE is not accessible to many prospective students and focus should be applied to financial aid and scholarships.

The current formal doesnt do anything to guarantee that we are getting a rerun for the states investment into higher education

The current system discriminates against rural community colleges and the ability to attract competitive faculty with the present salaries and incentives.

The formula is effective and agile. It provides stability and predictability, while measuring institutions against their own historical performance, incentivizing improvements toward strategic outcomes over time, and providing sufficient opportunity for the incorporation of changes in the consensus about strategic goals. It's not perfect, but given the complex nuances of the varied factors that must be considered, it may be as close to perfect as we can get.

Responses

The formula should better account for the unique roles of different types of institutions. Community colleges, research universities, and regional schools serve distinct student populations and missions, so adjusting metrics or weights slightly to reflect these differences could make the formula more equitable and effective without overcomplicating it. Stability is also critical. While performance incentives are valuable, institutions—particularly those serving underserved populations—need predictable funding to support long-term planning and investments. Balancing performance-based funding with a stable base allocation is both practical and achievable. Finally, improving transparency in how funds are allocated and metrics are weighted would go a long way. Clearer communication about these decisions would help institutions align with statewide goals and build confidence in the formula's fairness and effectiveness.

The incentives in step 2 result in only a minor shift in funding

The system overall appears to be largely effective.

Think we also need to have a conversation in review of the funding formula on the use/mission calculation. As this is applied after the performance measures in step 2 there is very limited ability to increase funding for high achieving institutions as everything is reweighted to adjust for stability

This is a tricky question to answer b/c CMC is not evaluated through the formula, but rather receives an average of the other IHE's amount. In general, CMC receives far less per student than other institutions, despite our strong performance, and also doesn't participate in COF. However, adding CMC to the formula would likely take away from other institutions, and also potentially put us at odds with our own elected governance, so we have no plans to pursue that.

Two year rural colleges are not receiving enough share of funding.

We are with Young Invincibles, and we are leading a Student Voice Coalition. We would love to meet to discuss the formula more in detail.

We cannot move back to a volume-based model. It will negatively impact the most vulnerable schools.

We need to account for institutional size (costs more to run a small institution) and location (rurality/isolation)

what happen of our views may be influences by shat happens and is messaged internally.

With Colorado being LAST in the nation for state funding for IHE and ATCs funding below that, along with the push for skilled-trades training, more funds should be allocated to IHEs.

Yeah, update the current financial system.

You can't fix the problem by divvying up a decreasing amount of money.

Responses

ZX