



COLORADO

Department of Higher Education

Updated as of 04/19/21

Higher Education Budget & Legislative Agenda

Fiscal Year 2021-22 Budget Requests

In priority order

R1 – State Funding Increase for Public Higher Education | The Department of Higher Education (DHE) requests an increase of \$494 million General Fund to restore operating support for institutions of higher education to the FY19-20 level. **Approved.** In addition, institutions received an overall increase in state funding for operating of 9.6% or \$81.8 million. 4.7% is allocated through Step 2 of the Higher Education Performance Funding Model. The following will go through Step 1 of the formula: \$5.0 million each for two first generation components; 1.3% (\$11.1 million) for underrepresented minority students; 1.4% (\$11.9 million) for Pell students; 1% (\$8.5 million) for retention of underrepresented minorities; and a 1% increase for the area technical colleges and local district colleges. Financial aid was increased by \$18.5 million to need based aid; included in this is a \$1 million increase for COSI’s annual appropriation.

The Governor’s proposed budget makes critical investments in postsecondary education in order to support economic recovery and resilience, advance college access and affordability for students and families, and promote innovation and adaptation to the post-pandemic “new normal.”

R2—Tuition Spending Authority | This request caps resident undergraduate tuition growth to 3% while allowing institutions to request permission through the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHHE) for a greater increase. **Approved,** except the University of Northern Colorado may increase tuition up to 7%. Also, the JBC did not approve the portion of the request requiring institutions to request permission for a greater than 3% increase through the CCHHE.

R3—Fort Lewis College Native American Tuition Waiver | The Department requests an increase of \$2.9 million General Fund to account for the anticipated cost of the Fort Lewis College Native American Tuition Waiver in FY 2021-22. **Approved.**

R4—Wind Down Professional Student Exchange Program | The Department requests a reduction of \$126,025 reappropriated funds in FY 2021-22 for the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP). This request also includes further reductions of \$171,775 and \$78,800 in FY 2022-23 and FY 2023-24, respectively, resulting in the program being completely phased out. **Not approved.**

R5—Restore Cyber Coding Cryptology Program | The Department requests an increase of \$2.0 million General Fund for the Cyber Coding Cryptology Program in FY 2021-22 and ongoing. This increase would restore state funding for the program to the FY 2019-20 level (\$5.1 million General Fund). **Approved.**

R6—Realign Funding for Colorado Student Leaders Institute | The Department requests a reduction of \$218,825 General Fund and 1 FTE for the Colorado Student Leaders Institute (COSLI) in FY 2021-22 and ongoing. This reduction would eliminate state funding for the program. **Not approved.**

R7—Continue Open Educational Resources | The Department requests \$100,838 reappropriated funds and 1 FTE in FY 2021-22 and ongoing for the continuation of the Open Educational Resources (OER) program. **\$1M annually for 5 years for grants and 1 FTE at the Department was approved.**

For More Information

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Colorado Department of Higher Education <https://highered.colorado.gov/>

Colorado Rises: Advancing Education and Talent Development <http://masterplan.highered.colorado.gov/>

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R8—RISE Fund for Higher Education | The Department requests a one-time appropriation of \$10 million General Fund in FY 2021-22 to expand on the Response, Innovation, and Student Equity (RISE) Education Fund created by the Governor in the summer of 2020. The funds would provide grants to Colorado’s public institutions of higher education to support institution-led initiatives to reduce costs, improve operational efficiency, and adapt and lead in the post-pandemic “new-normal.”

Not approved.

R9—Restore Educator Loan Forgiveness Program | The Department requests \$2.9 million General Fund and 0.5 FTE in FY 2021-22 to restore the Educator Loan Forgiveness Program established by S.B. 19-003. Funding for this program was de-funded in FY 2019-20 and ongoing in order to balance the FY 2020-21 budget. This request would provide enough funding to pre-pay the full cost of one cohort of 100 teachers receiving 5 years of \$5,000 in loan forgiveness per year.

Approved. SB21-185, *Supporting Educator Workforce In Colorado*, sponsored by Senators Zenzinger and Rankin & Representatives McLachlan and McCluskie, will make some changes to the program and appropriate the funding. The JBC also approved partially restoring the Teacher Mentor Grant Program that was cut in the budget last year.

Legislative Agenda

SB21-083 Higher Education Student Financial Assistance Funding, sponsored by Senator Hansen and Representative Herod |

This bill is a technical change that temporarily suspends a statutory provision (C.R.S. 23-3.3-103(1)) which requires state financial aid to increase at the same percentage rate as operating support for institutions of higher education.

Signed by the Governor.

SB21-179 Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative Advisory Board, sponsored by Senators Kirkmeyer and Zenzinger & Representatives Kipp and Lynch | This bill makes statutory changes to the composition of the COSI Advisory Board to include members of the Colorado Commission of Higher Education (CCH) and students.

Passed the Senate with bipartisan support. Passed out of the House Education committee unanimously.

SB21-215 Use of Open Educational Resources in Higher Education, sponsored by Senators Hansen and Rankin &

Representatives Herod and McCluskie | This bill appropriates \$1M ongoing for the next 5 years for the OER grant program. The bill also charges public institutions to create zero textbook cost pathways, in which students can complete an entire program or certificate without paying for textbooks and enhances the Department’s ability to measure and report on OER implementation, including analysis of impact on student success metrics and other classroom outcomes.

This bill is traveling with the Long Bill.

SB21-232 COSI Displaced Workers Grant, sponsored by Senators Kirkmeyer and Zenzinger & Representatives Bird and Kipp |

This bill appropriates \$15M to COSI for the purposes of the Displaced Workers Grant. The grant is available to all public institutions of higher education. The purpose is to provide scholarships and wraparound support to individuals that lost employment or had a significant reduction in hours due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The grant will allow them to finish their degree or reskill and upskill.

Passed out of the Senate Education committee unanimously.

