



COLORADO

Department of
Higher Education

Higher Education Budget & Legislative Agenda

Updated as of January 8, 2023

Fiscal Year 2023-24 Budget Requests

In priority order

R1 – State Funding Increase for Public Higher Education | The Department requests a **6.8% increase** in operating support for Colorado’s public institutions of higher education, to a total of \$153.0 million Total Funds, comprising \$86.0 million General Fund and \$67.0 million Reappropriated Funds. This appropriation would go towards covering Education and General operating costs for the ten governing boards, as well as statutorily required increases in financial aid and operating expenses for CSU/CU SEPs, CMC, Aims, and the state’s Area Technical Colleges. The \$16.0 million financial aid increase includes a **\$3 million increase for the College Opportunity Scholarship Initiative** and **\$0.5 million increase for the Dependent Tuition Assistance Program**.

R2—Tuition Spending Authority | The Department requests **capping resident undergraduate tuition growth** for Academic Year 2023-24 to a **maximum of 4% statewide**.

R3—Fort Lewis College Native American Tuition Waiver | The Department requests a **reduction of \$2.6 million** in General Fund appropriations to account for loss in enrollment. With this appropriation, the state will be fully funding its federal and state requirements for paying student tuition associated with Native American student enrollment and tuition costs at Fort Lewis College, pursuant to Section 23-52-105(1)(b), C.R.S., which requires the state to cover tuition for “qualified Indian pupils” at Fort Lewis College.

R4—Colorado Cannabis Research Funding-Institute for Cannabis Research (ICR) | This request seeks to expand state supported cannabis research, as well as take steps towards the long-term vision of securing federal research dollars to support cannabis research in Colorado. **The request is for \$1.14 million cash funds (Marijuana Tax Cash Fund) and 0.9 FTE in FY 2023-24, annualized to 1.0 FTE in FY 2024-25.** The appropriation will be used to directly support cannabis research in Colorado and increase research capacity in the ICR.

Budget Amendments

BA-01—Technical Adjustment for Fitzsimons Lease Purchase Agreement | This Budget Amendment request is to fix a technical error in the November 1st, 2022 request for the Fitzsimons COP payment submitted as “TA-06 AMC COP”. In the initial submission, the total payment amount for FY 2023-24, \$11,542,514, was inadvertently included as General Fund with no cash fund contribution from the tobacco settlement monies. This amendment request seeks to reduce the General Fund portion of the FY 23-24 budget request by \$6,951,508 and increase the Cash Funds portion by the same amount to account for anticipated tobacco settlement monies.

BA-02—Strategic Staffing Support for Department of Higher Education | The Department is requesting \$534,270 GF and 3.8 FTE in FY 2023-24, which would annualize to 4.0 FTE and \$540,960 reappropriated funds in FY2024-25 and ongoing. The request is necessary to develop strategic staffing support in key areas important to higher education and workforce development across the state. It will also ensure that the Department can meet the current challenges of deployment of new strategies, policies, and investments, as well as maximize the potential of Colorado’s workforce. This will allow for the hiring of a Director of Workforce Development and Credential Attainment, a Workforce Development Coordinator, a College Affordability Outreach Coordinator, and a Director of Legislative Affairs.

Governor Polis’ FY 2023-24 budget and legislative agenda prioritizes higher education through investment in operating support and strategic one-time investment in zero-cost postsecondary education in specific credentials that are needed for a strong and resilient workforce.

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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Legislative Set Asides

\$40 million to provide zero-cost postsecondary education and training at Colorado's community colleges, district colleges and area technical colleges | This investment will help close the gap between supply and demand for high-skill, priority credentials in critical sectors of our economy including early childhood, education, law enforcement, fire and forestry, construction trades, advanced manufacturing and nursing. The dollars will waive tuition and fees, as well as providing financial support for books and supplies, for students in need of financial aid. This investment is expected to benefit 20,000 Coloradans pursuing advanced education and training in the next 2 years.

\$5 million to expand short-term nursing programs at community colleges to be able to graduate a larger number of skilled nurses to support the workforce needs of local hospitals | Currently, Colorado has nearly 25,000 open nursing positions across our state, which is projected to persist and grow to 50,000 nurses needed over the next decade. Each year, our institutions of higher education train and graduate approximately 2,500 nurses, which means that in order to meet need, existing training capacity is inadequate. The Colorado Community College System has the opportunity to add capacity for 250 additional short-term nursing students annually. This one-time investment in operating expenses will assist with necessary expenses related to program start-up and expansion. The \$5 million is expected to leverage \$5 million to \$10 million in other investments.

Legislative Agenda

Selective Service at Colorado Institutions of Higher Education

Current state law states that men are not eligible to enroll at any state supported IHE until they have registered for selective service. This creates a barrier to college enrollment particularly for low-income and first-generation students and a time-consuming administrative burden on state institutions of higher education to verify that a student has registered for selective service. The Department is requesting removing this requirement for enrollment and instead request that institutions of higher education share information with their students about the selective service process.

Increasing Access to the Colorado Re-Engaged Initiative

The Colorado Re-Engaged Initiative, created under House Bill 21-1330, enables institutions of higher education in Colorado that offer bachelor's degrees to award associate degrees to eligible students who have stopped-out from a bachelor's degree program after earning 70 or more credit-hours. These former students have invested a significant amount of time and money to advance their knowledge and skills through higher education, but do not have an academic credential to reflect this investment. The Department is seeking a technical fix to the eligibility of the program which would allow approximately over 6,000 additional students to benefit from this innovative initiative.