



**CO L O R A D O**

**Colorado Commission on  
Higher Education**

Department of Higher Education

## **CCHE AGENDA**

**June 6, 2024**

**Virtual Zoom Meeting**

**BUSINESS MEETING**

**1:00pm - 4:00pm**

1600 Broadway, Suite 2200 • Denver, Colorado 80202 • (303) 862.3001

DR. ANGIE PACCIONE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**COLORADO**  
Colorado Commission on  
Higher Education  
Department of Higher Education

Sarah Kendall Hughes, Chair  
Jennifer Walmer, Vice Chair  
Paul Berrick Abramson  
Lisandra Gonzales  
Aaron Harber  
Teresa Kostenbauer  
Steven Meyer  
Ana Temu Otting  
Eric Tucker  
Jim Wilson

## Colorado Commission on Higher Education

Thursday, June 6, 2024

Virtual

[ZOOM](#)

(Meeting ID: 848 0196 7109 / Passcode: 601811)

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11:30 am – 1:00 pm

### COMMISSIONER & ADVISOR WORK SESSION

11:30 am – 12:30 pm 2024 Higher Education Legislative Overview – **Carla Blanc**, *Legislative Liaison*

12:45 pm – 1:00 pm Lunch Break

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1:00 – 4:00pm

### BUSINESS MEETING

- I. **Opening Business (30 minutes)**
  - A. Attendance
  - B. Approval of the Minutes for the May 3, 2024 Commission Meeting
  - C. Reports
    1. Chair
    2. Vice Chair
    3. Commission Standing Committees
      - a. Student Success & Workforce Alignment
      - b. Finance, Performance & Accountability
      - c. HB22-1349 Technical Workgroup Update
      - d. Transfer Ad Hoc Subcommittee
    4. Commissioners
      - a. Commissioner Temu Otting - COSI
    5. Advisors
  - D. Executive Director Report

Governor Jared Polis    Dr. Angie Paccione, Executive Director

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- E. Public Comment
- II. Consent Items (5 minutes)**
- A. Approval of Dual Enrollment Authorization for Baylor University –  
*Heather DeLange, Director Office of Private Postsecondary Education*
  - B. Approval of Provisional Authorization for Vermont College of Fine Arts –  
*Heather DeLange, Director Office of Private Postsecondary Education*
  - C. Approval of Authorization Renewal for Religious Training Institutions –  
*Heather DeLange, Director Office of Private Postsecondary Education*
  - D. Approval of Stackable Credential Pathways Required by SB22-192 – *Dr. Ruthanne Orihuela, Director of Credential Pathways and Prior Learning Initiatives*
  - E. Approval of Revisions to CCHE Policy Section I, Part L: Statewide Transfer and gtPathways Policy – *Christina Carrillo, Academic Policy Officer & Advocate*
  - F. Approval of Annual COF Eligibility and Student FTE for Extended Studies Programs for FY25 – *Dr. Chris Rasmussen, Senior Director of Academic Pathways and Innovation*
  - G. Approval of FY 24- 25 Institutional Financial Aid Allocations – *Corey Evans, Budget Director & DeAnna Castaneda, Lead Finance Analyst*





**Minutes of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) Meeting  
Virtual  
May 3, 2024**

**BUSINESS MEETING**

Chair Hughes called the business meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

**I. Opening Business**

**A. Attendance**

Commissioners attending: Chair Hughes, Vice Chair Walmer, Commissioners Abramson, Gonzales, Harber, Kostenbauer, Meyer, Temu-Otting, Tucker, and Wilson, Executive Director Paccione

Advisors attending: Mark Cavanaugh, Mark Superka, Danielle Ongart, Jamie Viefhaus-Zak, Dr. Melinda Piket-May

**B. Approval of the Minutes for the April 5, 2024 Commission Meeting**

Commissioner Harber moved to approve the April 5<sup>th</sup> minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Gonzales . The motion was approved.

**C. Reports**

1. Chair - Chair Hughes shared the nominees for Chair and Vice Chair of CCHE as well as the process that will be used for voting later in this meeting. She also reminded the commissioners and advisors that the retreat is scheduled for July 24-26 at Colorado Western University in Gunnison.
2. Vice Chair – Vice Chair Walmer informed the Commission of the Colorado Business Roundtable event that is scheduled for May 8<sup>th</sup> 1-4pm. She mentioned that this event will include a panel focused on Higher Education. This panel will feature President Marshall, President Brownlee, President Parsons and President Feinstein. She encouraged the commissioners to attend for a chance to hear from these leaders.
3. Commission Standing Committees
  - a. Student Success & Workforce Alignment – Commissioner Abramson reported that this committee met about 10 days ago. This group has really been



focused on recommendations coming out of the 1215 and having conversations around credentialing. This committee has also been identifying opportunities for potential partnerships with higher education colleagues and programs like OEDIT. Commissioner Abramson also mentioned that this committee will bring a few action items before the commission. They are looking forward to presenting those items with explanations and encouragement to approve them.

- b. Finance, Performance & Accountability - Commissioner Tucker reported that this committee has had some great discussions around financial aid in the budget, data challenges and collection processes for when the data systems are back up and running, and also the funded capital projects that are in the works and lastly the review of staff recommendations on the capital review process from Kennedy Evans.
- c. HB22-1349 Technical Workgroup Update – Chair Hughes shared that we had a brief update for this working group during the work session earlier today. In this session 3 main categories were covered. Understanding earnings of Colorado Students starting with 07-08 cohort, understanding what students who didn't pursue post-secondary education would have made if they had gone to college, and finally looking at net cost overall. Chair Hughes also informed the commission of 2 upcoming meetings, 1 with the data group DAG that will have representatives from each IHE across our ecosystem giving feedback and input on the progress to date. The second meeting is the CFO meeting scheduled for the 14<sup>th</sup> of this month.
- d. Transfer Ad Hoc Subcommittee - Commissioner Abramson – This Committee is on hiatus until after the legislative session.

#### 4. Commissioners.

- a. **Commissioner Temu-Otting – COSI Update** Commissioner Temu-Otting shared with the group that COSI was able to award 4 second chance scholarships this year. New this year they have the Youth Mentorships Scholarship Program with \$100,000 to give. There are currently four organizations that have applied for these funds. Commissioner Temu-Otting also shared some outcomes for COSI from 2021 to now. COSI spent \$11.3 million, served 4,525 students and 2,818 credentials were completed. They are prioritizing the rural areas with their career launch and can fund places like Pueblo and Weld. They have great applications coming from those areas. COSI is still working on their program review and redesign. She mentioned that she invited Cynthia to share information from the COSI Board meetings but if she is unable to attend, Commissioner Temu-Otting is happy to share that information as well.
- b. **Commissioner Kostenbauer** shared
- c. **Commissioner Wilson** shared that he enjoyed being at the Capitol and observing the process for the bill hearing for SB24-164 in April.



## 5. Advisors

- a. **Advisor Cavanaugh** updated the Commission on the Better FAFSA news from the Federal Level. There were 8.7 million FAFSA applications received, and the initial processing has been done on 8.6 million of those applications. This work continues as the department aims for a 2-3 day turnaround for folks to hear back regarding their applications. Advisor Cavanaugh also shared that the impact of the delays and low application numbers are expected to have a heavy impact on the institutions in the rural areas across the country. He believes that there are some institutions that may not survive the fallout from all of the FAFSA issues this year, in particular, the rural institutions that are enrollment dependent. More to come on this topic in the discussion portion of the meeting.

## D. Executive Director Report

**Executive Director Paccione – Executive Director Paccione** shared that our small outreach team has been traveling all over the state working with leaders and counselors to address the better FAFSA issues and help students mitigate those.

Dr. Paccione reported protests on Auraria Campus, and the protesters were encamping on campus. While we are all in support of the freedom of speech and to assemble, there are policies in place that prohibit encampments, tents, and overnight stays on the campus. Dr. Paccione has been incredibly involved, meeting with students, leadership and campus security regularly discussing strategy and how to keep the protests peaceful and yet allow the administrations to enforce their policies. There are protests on campuses across the country and some commencements have been cancelled as result. Dr. Paccione has offered to answer any questions the commission may have regarding this issue; they can reach out to her directly.

Executive Director Paccione also reminded the Commission of the deadline to submit legislative ideas to the department.

## E. Public Comment – No public comment

## II. Discussion Items

- A. **Legislative Update- Dr. Paccione** reported on Bills that have been passed and signed by the Governor. She started with House Bill 1231. This Bill pertains to healthcare campuses in the state and involves UNC, CU Anschutz, Vista Peak (private campus), additions to CSU Vet School and finally a health tower for MSU Denver. This bill has been many years in the making and it finally signed. She also mentioned House Bill 1403, a Bill for providing the cost of attendance to students experiencing homelessness. This Bill is slightly based on the Foster Youth Bill from last year and will allow us to now cover room and board for those students. Teh department is excited about the life-changing impact of this Bill on students. Senate Bill 24-164 also passed and will be signed next week.



Dr. Paccione then briefly talked about House Bill 1340. This is a new Bill that was just introduced yesterday. This Bill provides a Promise Program where the state will pay the last dollar for the first 2 years of college for students at public institutions. Students will need to apply for FAFSA and other grants and scholarships and then the state will provide the last dollar in, as a tax credit to the student. This is a significant Bill and high on the priority list for the Governor.

Executive Director Paccione gave Kudos to the staff that did all the splendid work behind the scenes on this Bill.

- B. **Administrative FAFSA Update Cont.** - Commissioner Kostenbauer asked Advisor Cavanaugh to talk a little about the downstream impact of the Better FAFSA and how it might impact populations other than the Institutions, particularly the first generation, low income and other diverse groups. Advisor Cavanaugh shared that he believes that Colorado has been able to get ahead of the national crisis with Better FAFSA because of the all the hard work of the staff at CDHE. He also reported that the populations that Commissioner Kostenbauer asked about and the very same populations that we want to pull into our institutions are the populations that have and will suffer the most in all of this. They are more likely to not complete the FAFSA application because of the issues and roadblocks to completion. Advisor Cavanaugh realizes that it has been a rough rollout for the Better FAFSA but he also believes that it will eventually be a fantastic new FAFSA. He says that we can work on closing the gap by getting national attention around some of the smaller institutions that are very enrollment dependent. It would be more detrimental to have these institutions close their doors.

### III. Consent Items

- A. Approval of Revisions to CCHE Policy, Section I, Part J, Degree Authorization Act – *Heather DeLange, Director Office of Private Postsecondary Education*
- B. Resolution to Endorse the Colorado GenEd Foundational Skills Credential – *Allana Farley, Credential Pathways Coordinator*

Commissioner Wilson moved to approve the consent items. Seconded by Commissioner Gonzales. The motion was approved.

### IV. Action Items –

- A. Approval to Continue the CCHE Innovation Policy Pilot Program by Colorado Community College System Institutions and Colorado Mountain College to Award Financial Aid to Concurrent Enrollment Students – *Carl Einhaus, Senior Director of Student Affairs & P20 Alignment and DeAnna Castañeda, Lead Finance Analyst*

Carl gave a brief presentation on the innovation policy, the Concurrent Enrollment (CE) pilot and outcomes pursued by Colorado Mountain College and Pueblo Community College. The pilot provided funding for expenses outside of tuition for low-income students to participate in CE. Shane Larson from Colorado Mountain College and Michael Gage from Pueblo Community College answered questions. Commissioners praised the innovation policy Dr.



Kim Poast wrote and the pilot initiative which PCC and CMC implemented. All Commissioners voted to approve the pilot to continue for an additional two years.

Commissioner Meyer made a motion to approve action agenda item IV. A. Seconded by Commissioner Abramson. The motion was approved with no objections.

*B. 2024-2025 CCHE Chair/Vice Chair Election – Executive Director Paccione*

Dr. Tricia Johnson facilitated the vote for the CCHE Chair and Vice Chair positions for the commissioners. They all received private forms for voting via email. Chair Hughes allowed an opportunity for the commissioners who were nominated to speak if they wanted.

Commissioner Kostenbauer shared her nomination choices and why she elected to nominate those Commissioners.

Commissioner Harber thanked his fellow Commissioners for their willingness to serve in the Chair and Vice Chair capacity.

Commissioner Gonzales thanked the other Commissioners for their kind words and for the nominations. She is committed to serving and getting to know the other Commissioners, the work and the stakeholders a little better.

Commissioner Meyer shared his nomination choices and why he elected to nominate those Commissioners.

Dr. Johnson tallied the Chair votes first and there were 8 votes for Commissioner Walmer and 2 votes for Commissioner Tucker. Commissioner Jennifer Walmer was named the new CCHE Chair. As a result of this, Commissioner Walmer motioned to remove herself from the nomination for Vice Chair. Commissioner Harber second that motion, and it was approved with no objections. With the removal of Commissioner Walmer on the Vice Chair ballot, Commissioner Gonzales was elected CCHE Vice Chair.

Commissioner Wilson thanked Chair Hughes for leadership of the Commission and congratulated the new Officers.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:08





**TOPIC:** APPROVAL OF DUAL ENROLLMENT AUTHORIZATION FOR BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

**PREPARED BY:** HEATHER DELANGE, OFFICE OF PRIVATE POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

## **I. SUMMARY**

This consent item recommends Dual Enrollment authorization for Baylor University under the Degree Authorization Act.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) has statutory responsibility for administration of Title 23, Article 2 of the Colorado Revised Statutes, commonly referred to as the Degree Authorization Act (DAA). The Act sets out the terms by which the Commission may authorize accredited private colleges and universities, out-of-state public colleges and universities, and seminaries and bible colleges to operate in Colorado.

The DAA outlines the Department's jurisdiction over private education programs available to the residents of the state of Colorado. The DAA establishes standards to (1) prevent misrepresentation, fraud, and collusion in offering educational programs to the public and (2) protect, preserve, foster, and encourage the educational programs offered by private educational institutions, which meet generally recognized criteria of quality and effectiveness as determined through voluntary accreditation.

Institutions of higher education continue to evolve the way they educate the students. Based on the changes made at institutions, the Commission voted to approve a new authorization level in CCHE policy, Section I, Part J that addresses the presence of institutions in Colorado that are only providing instruction for dual enrollment students.

Dual Enrollment Authorization is for out-of-state institutions that intend to partner with a local high school to provide college course instruction to interested high school students. Institutions authorized for dual enrollment must renew their authorization annually to ensure the instruction at the local high school remains the only presence the institution triggers in Colorado.

## **III. STAFF ANALYSIS**

Baylor University is a private, not-for-profit, institutionally accredited postsecondary institution located in Waco, Texas. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools has accredited the University since 1914.

Baylor University is partnering with a local private high school to offer two dual credit courses. The Baylor courses the students will earn credit for are Intro to Engineering and Intro to Business. These courses are not available for AP credit but are freshman level classes for those who are interested in pursuing those fields of study.

Upon review of the materials provided by Baylor University, staff has determined the University meets the criteria for Dual Enrollment Authorization.

#### **IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**Staff recommends the Commission approve Dual Enrollment Authorization for Baylor University.**

#### **V. STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

C.R.S §23-2-103.3(5)

A private college or university that has authorization from the commission pursuant to this section and maintains its accreditation shall apply to the department for reauthorization in accordance with the schedule for reaccreditation by its accrediting body or every three years, whichever is longer. A seminary or religious training institution shall apply for reauthorization every three years. A private college or university or seminary or religious training institution that seeks reauthorization shall submit an application in accordance with the procedures and policies adopted by the commission and shall pay the reauthorization fee established by the commission pursuant to §23-2-104.5.

**TOPIC:** APPROVAL OF PROVISIONAL AUTHORIZATION FOR VERMONT COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS

**PREPARED BY:** HEATHER DELANGE, OFFICE OF PRIVATE POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

## **I. SUMMARY**

This agenda item recommends Provisional Authorization for Vermont College of Fine Arts to legally operate in Colorado pursuant to the Degree Authorization Act (§23-2-101 et seq.).

## **II. BACKGROUND**

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) has statutory responsibility for administration of Title 23, Article 2 of the Colorado Revised Statutes, commonly referred to as the Degree Authorization Act (DAA). The Act sets out the terms by which the Commission may authorize accredited private colleges and universities, out-of-state public colleges and universities, and seminaries and bible colleges to operate in Colorado.

The DAA outlines the Department's jurisdiction over private education programs available to the residents of the state of Colorado. The DAA establishes standards to (1) prevent misrepresentation, fraud, and collusion in offering educational programs to the public and (2) protect, preserve, foster, and encourage the educational programs offered by private educational institutions, which meet generally recognized criteria of quality and effectiveness as determined through voluntary accreditation.

Provisional authorization is the authorization level for institutions, new or new to Colorado, which have been evaluated by Department staff under Commission procedures and authorized by the Commission to enroll students, offer instruction, graduate students, and award degrees under the condition that the institution is continuously seeking and is making satisfactory progress toward accreditation at the local site. Institutions with provisional authorization are required to renew annually and must receive accreditation at the Colorado site within three years of initial authorization.

Vermont College of Fine Arts is a private, graduate-level art school in Montpelier, Vermont. The College is seeking authorization to offer a 9-day residency at Colorado College in July 2024, as part of its low-residency Master of Fine Arts programs.

Vermont College of Fine Arts is institutionally accredited by the New England Commission on Higher Education.

## **III. STAFF ANALYSIS**

As required by the Degree Authorization Act, Vermont College of Fine Arts submitted the required documents concerning its organization, programs, faculty, accreditation, and finances. Department staff contracted an evaluation team to review the application materials. The team did provide some recommendations, which are binding in terms of requiring a response from the institution. The institution provided responses to the areas of concern and the team provided a recommendation that addressed the questions the evaluation team had and provided a recommendation to staff in support of moving forward with the authorization of Vermont College of Fine Arts to hold its residency program in Colorado.

The evaluation team has communicated to Department staff that it supports the recommendation for provisional authorization of Vermont College of Fine Arts. The team has stated that the College has demonstrated its compliance with the Degree Authorization Act and policy.

#### **IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Staff recommends the Commission approve provisional authorization for Vermont College of Fine Arts to hold its summer residency program in Colorado under the Degree Authorization Act.**

#### **STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

##### **C.R.S. §23-2-103.3 Authorization to operate in Colorado – renewal**

(1) (a) To operate in Colorado, a private college or university shall apply for and receive authorization from the commission. A private college or university shall obtain a separate authorization for each campus, branch, or site that is separately accredited. A private, nonprofit college or university shall submit with its application verification of nonprofit status, including a copy of the institution's tax-exempt certificate issued by the Colorado department of revenue.

(b) After receiving an application, the department shall review the application to determine whether the private college or university is institutionally accredited by a regional or national accrediting body recognized by the United States department of education. The department shall not recommend and the commission shall not approve an application from a private college or university that, in the two years preceding submission of the application, has had its accreditation suspended or withdrawn or has been prohibited from operating in another state or that has substantially the same owners, governing board, or principal officers as a private college or university that, in the two years preceding submission of the application, has had its accreditation suspended or withdrawn or has been prohibited from operating in another state.

(2) To operate in Colorado, a private college or university shall be institutionally accredited on the basis of an on-site review by a regional or national accrediting body recognized by the United States department of education; except that a private college or university may operate for an initial period without accreditation if the commission determines, in accordance with standards established by the commission, that the private college or university is likely to become accredited in a reasonable period of time or is making progress toward accreditation in

accordance with the accrediting body's policies. The commission may grant a provisional authorization to a private college or university to operate for an initial period without accreditation. The private college or university shall annually renew its provisional authorization and report annually to the commission concerning the institution's progress in obtaining accreditation.

**TOPIC:** AUTHORIZATION RENEWAL FOR RELIGIOUS TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

**PREPARED BY:** HEATHER DELANGE, OFFICE OF PRIVATE POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

## **I. SUMMARY**

This consent item recommends renewal of authorization for several institutions currently authorized as Religious Training Institutions/Seminaries under the Degree Authorization Act.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) has statutory responsibility for administration of Title 23, Article 2 of the Colorado Revised Statutes, commonly referred to as the Degree Authorization Act (DAA). The Act sets out the terms by which the Commission may authorize accredited private colleges and universities, out-of-state public colleges and universities, and seminaries and bible colleges to operate in Colorado.

Pursuant to statute and policy, all authorized institutions under the DAA must renew authorization periodically. The renewal period varies by the type of authorization that the institution holds from the CCHE. Seminaries and religious training institutions are required to apply for renewal of authorization every three years. To be considered for renewal of authorization, an institution must demonstrate that it continues to meet the minimum operating standards specified in statute and CCHE policy, Section I, Part J. Those minimum operating standards are demonstrated by the following documentation:

- An updated list of program offerings;
- Confirmation of non-profit status;
- Confirmation of property exemption pursuant to Colorado State Law; and
- Updated contact information.

## **III Staff Analysis**

Staff received the required documentation and based on review of the institutions' materials for renewal, recommends the following seminaries or religious training institutions for renewal of authorization until 2027:

- Artios Christian College
- Bear Valley Bible Institute
- BEE Word (Biblical Education by Extension)
- Camp Gunnison, The Way Corps

- Colorado Theological Seminary
- Front Range Bible Institute
- Harvest University
- Iliff School of Theology
- Rocky Mountain School of Ministry & Theology
- Sangre de Cristo
- Summit Christian College

The materials submitted by each institution includes an updated list of program offerings to ensure only religious programs are offered, a review of the institution's property tax exemption, a review of the institution's tax status, and renewal fee. Institutions that continue to meet the provisions of the Religious Training Institution/Seminary authorization are recommended for renewal.

### **III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**Staff recommends approval for the Religious Training Institutions/Seminaries listed above in Section III of this consent agenda item.**

### **STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

§23-2-103.3 C.R.S.

(II) A seminary or religious training institution that continues to meet the minimum operating standards specified in this section is presumed qualified for renewal of authorization, and the department shall recommend that the commission renew the institution's authorization for three additional years.

**TOPIC:** APPROVAL OF STACKABLE CREDENTIAL PATHWAYS  
REQUIRED BY SB22-192 (OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREDENTIAL  
ATTAINMENT)

**PREPARED BY:** DR. RUTHANNE ORIHUELA, DIRECTOR OF CREDENTIAL  
PATHWAYS & PRIOR LEARNING INITIATIVES

I. **SUMMARY**

This agenda item recommends approval of five stackable credential pathways pursuant to Senate Bill 22-192 (§C.R.S. 23-5-145.6).

II. **BACKGROUND**

In 2022, Senate Bill 22-192 passed, which calls on the Colorado Department of Higher Education to build ten stackable credential pathways across five growing, high value Colorado industries by January 1, 2025. CCHE approved the first six of ten pathways in December 2023. The department is seeking CCHE approval of the remaining legislatively obligated four pathways plus an additional one pathway beyond the obligation.

Per CRS 23-5-145.6 (3):

“By January 1, 2024, the department, in consultation with the representatives described in Section 23-5-145.5 (5), shall facilitate the creation of stackable credential pathways for at least three growing industries identified by the most recent Colorado Talent Pipeline report. By January 1, 2025, the department, in consultation with the representatives described in Section 23-5-145.5 (5), shall facilitate the creation of stackable credential pathways for at least two additional growing industries identified by the most recent Colorado Talent Pipeline Report. The department shall facilitate the creation of at least two stackable credential pathways for each industry.”

Per CRS 23-5-145.6 (4):

“The stackable credential pathways must be approved by the commission, in consultation with the Colorado Work Force Development Council.”

Regarding the stackable credential pathways, statute states the pathways must include “a competency framework that articulates the knowledge, skills, learning outcomes, non-degree credentials, and degrees associated with the pathway, and identifies the career and professional development opportunities associated with the pathway; an inventory of credentials that are a part of the pathway, offered by accredited and non-accredited providers, including training and industry credential providers, high schools, programs recognized by the career development success program pursuant to section 22-54-138, postsecondary institutions and nonprofit organizations; credentials that are a part of the pathway evaluated pursuant to section 23-5-145.5 (3), including credit awarded for courses in GT Pathways or a statewide transfer degree agreement; and credits that are awarded for other courses with a career and technical education focus in a postsecondary degree, non-credit program, or industry certification program.”



The Department established a Stackable Credential Pathways Steering Committee which has convened bimonthly since November 2022 as well as five industry-specific leadership teams that have met monthly to complete the ten required stackable credential pathways in the industries of behavioral health, cybersecurity, education, healthcare, and software development. The Commission approved six stackable credential pathways in behavioral health, cybersecurity, and education in December 2023.

The Department is seeking the Commission's approval of five stackable credential pathways across healthcare (2 pathways) and software development (3 pathways). The completion of ten stackable credential pathways is built into the Department's wildly important goals as a 2023-24 leading indicator for Workforce Development.

### III. STAFF ANALYSIS

The five stackable credential pathways presented to the Commission were developed via a 15-month collaborative and industry-specific process that engaged a diversity of stakeholders. Stakeholders on the industry-specific stackable credential pathways leadership teams included employers, faculty subject matter experts from two-year and four-year colleges and universities including members of the General Education Council, learner/earners, high school and district teachers and administration, and advocacy organizations such as Attainment Network, Colorado Succeeds, CareerWise Colorado, as well as state agency representatives from Colorado Department of Higher Education, Colorado Community College System, Colorado Workforce Development Council, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, Colorado Department of Education, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Healthcare Policy and Finance, and Department of Regulatory Agencies. This inclusive and collaborative process of pathway development was founded in an understanding of the equity implications of developing improved navigation through career and training to support Colorado learner/earners through the length of their career and education journey.

### IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

**Staff recommends approval of the five stackable credential pathways in healthcare (two pathways) and software development (three pathways) as presented.**

### STATUTORY AUTHORITY

§C.R.S. 23-5-145.5 – Opportunities for credential attainment – fund – report - definitions – repeal.

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

(a) "Apprenticeship certificate" means verification of completion of an apprenticeship program. Apprenticeship certificates are applicable to industry trades and professions.

(b) "Colorado talent report" means the report prepared pursuant to section 24-46.3-103.

(c) "Commission on higher education" or "commission" has the same meaning as set forth in section 23-1-101.1 (1).

(d) "Department" means the department of higher education created and existing pursuant to section 24-1-114.

(e) "Guaranteed-transfer pathways" or "GT pathways" means the statewide articulation matrix system of common course numbering for general education courses described in section 23-1-108.5 (3)(c).

(f) "Industry certification" means a credential awarded by an industry-recognized third-party or industry-governing board based on an individual demonstrating by assessment that the individual has acquired the designated knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform a specific occupation or skill. Industry certifications may be time-limited dependent upon the occupation or industry.

(g) "Nondegree credential" means a postsecondary certificate, apprenticeship certificate, professional license, or industry certification.

(h) "Postsecondary certificate" means a credential awarded by an institution of higher education at an undergraduate level based on completion of all requirements for a program of study, including course work and exams. Postsecondary certificates are not time-limited and do not require renewal. "Postsecondary certificate" does not include a degree and does not include a credential awarded by an institution of higher education after completion of a bachelor's degree in the same pathway.

(i) "Stackable credential pathway" means a sequence of credentials earned through various means, including through assessment of prior learning, that may be accumulated over time and move an individual along a career pathway or up a career ladder. (j) "State institution of higher education" or "institution" has the same meaning as set forth in section 23-1-135 (2).

(k) "Statewide degree transfer agreement" means a statewide degree transfer agreement described in section 23-1-108 (7).

(2) By June 15, 2023, the department, in consultation with institutions and at least one business organization or representative of industry, shall develop and implement a process that encourages institutions to identify incremental achievements on the path to degree completion and organize stackable credentials that build upon each other toward degrees and may articulate to pathways in high-demand industries. The department and institutions shall collaborate to identify how credentials may be evaluated for their component skills, competencies, and learning outcomes, and then may become stacked into a stackable credential pathway to provide increased access to employment and may result in a degree. As a part of the process, the department and institutions shall: (a) Evaluate the quality of nondegree credentials that are currently available that lead to in-demand living wage jobs identified in the most recent Colorado talent report and respond to critical job shortages in Colorado. The department, in collaboration with institutions, shall evaluate the quality of nondegree credentials using the framework and process created in this subsection (2) and informed by one or more quality standards frameworks developed by national organizations. (b)(I) Identify where alignment currently exists along a degree pathway between nondegree and degree credentials and work-based learning and apprenticeships; and (II) Identify opportunities to develop where further alignment may be created between nondegree and degree credentials and work-based learning and apprenticeships; and (c) Articulate where the various alignments identified in subsection (1)(b) of this section may incorporate into stackable

credential pathways that may lead to a degree and opportunities for credits to be transferred in order for persons to be able to attain nondegree or degree credentials that lead to in-demand or living wage jobs.

**(3)** By January 1, 2024, the department, in consultation with the representatives described in section 23-5-145.5 (5), shall facilitate the creation of stackable credential pathways for at least three growing industries identified by the most recent Colorado talent report. By January 1, 2025, the department, in consultation with the representatives described in section 23-5-145.5 (5), shall facilitate the creation of stackable credential pathways for at least two additional growing industries identified by the most recent Colorado talent report. The department shall facilitate the creation of at least two stackable credential pathways for each industry. The stackable credential pathways must include: **(a)** A competency framework that articulates the knowledge, skills, learning outcomes, nondegree credentials, and degrees associated with the pathway and identifies the career and professional development opportunities associated with the pathway; **(b)** An inventory of credentials that are a part of the pathway, offered by accredited and nonaccredited providers, including training and industry credential providers, high schools, programs recognized by the career development success program pursuant to section 22-54-138, postsecondary institutions, and nonprofit organizations; **(c)** Credentials that are a part of the pathway evaluated pursuant to section 23-5-145.5 (3), including credit awarded for courses in GT pathways or a statewide degree transfer agreement; and **(d)** Credits that are awarded for other courses with a career and technical education focus in a postsecondary degree, noncredit program, or industry certification program.

**(4)** The stackable credential pathways must be approved by the commission, in consultation with the Colorado work force development council.

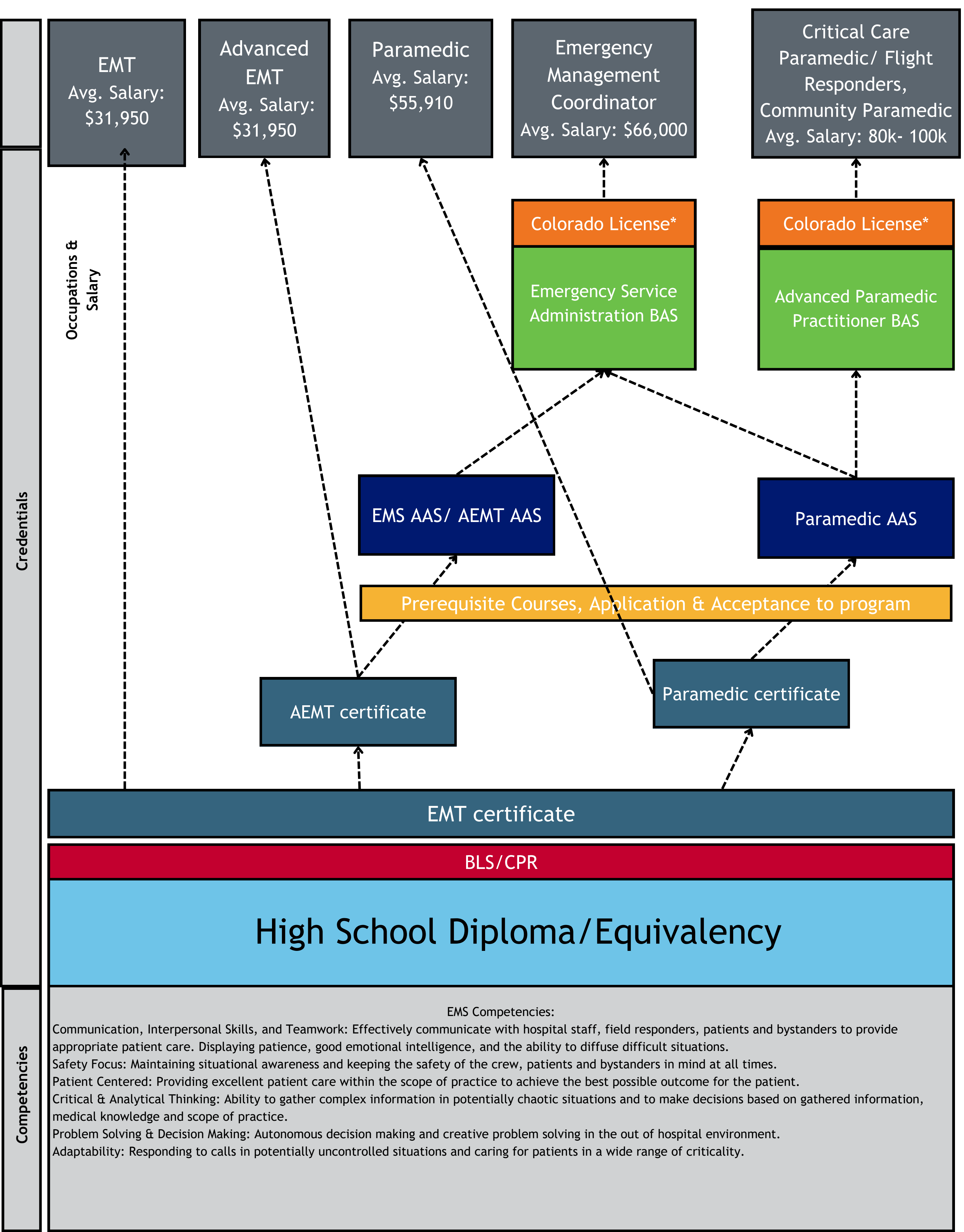
**(5)(a)** The credentials to support the Colorado jobs cash fund, referred to in this section as the "fund", is created in the state treasury. The fund consists of money credited to the fund pursuant to subsection (5)(b) of this section and any other money that the general assembly appropriates or transfers to the fund. **(b)** For the 2022-23 state fiscal year, the general assembly shall appropriate one million dollars to the department from the workers, employers, and workforce centers cash fund created in section 24-75-231. The department shall use this appropriation for the purposes described in this section. **(c)** The state treasurer shall credit all interest and income derived from the deposit and investment of money in the fund to the fund. **(d)** Subject to annual appropriation by the general assembly, the department may expend money from the fund for the purposes described in this section.

**(6)** On or before December 29, 2023, and on or before December 31, 2025, the department of higher education shall submit a report to the education committees of the senate and house of representatives, or any successor committees, regarding the implementation of this section. The report must include data collected by institutions to measure the total number of credits, credentials, certificates, and professional licenses earned in each pathway at each institution, as practicable. The report must include the data for the state as a whole and for each institution, in total and disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and gender.

**(7)(a)** Nothing in this section supersedes or replaces the curriculum or program standards of a construction industry registered apprenticeship program that is registered and approved by the United States department of labor or the state apprenticeship agency. **(b)** Nothing in this section supersedes or replaces any statutory or regulatory training requirement for a professional license or credential regulated by the department of regulatory agencies.

**(8)** This section is repealed, effective July 1, 2026.  
*C.R.S. § 23-5-145.6*

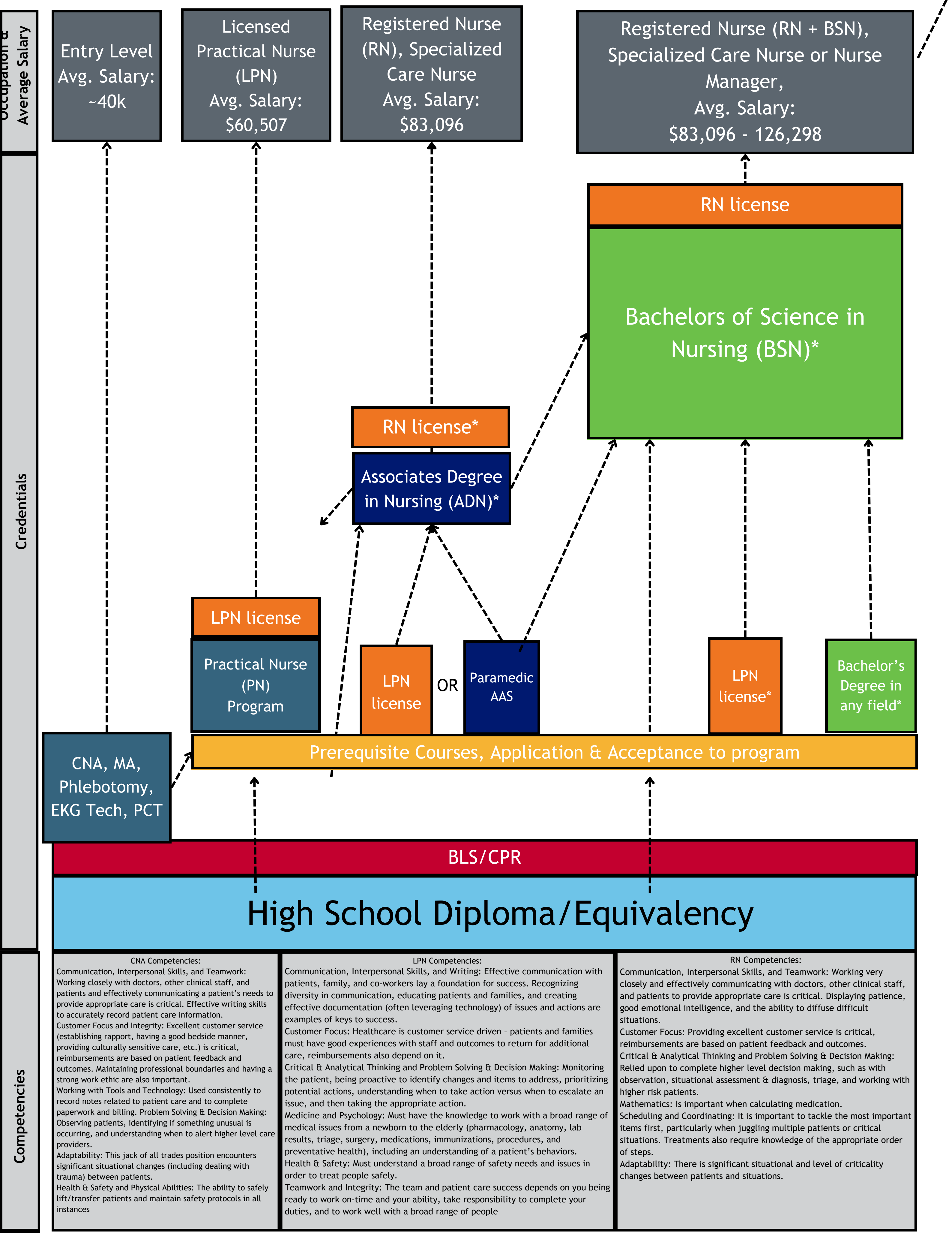
# Emergency Medicine Pathway



**Notes**

\*An EMS provider is eligible to apply for Colorado Licensure at any level after completion of a bachelor's degree in a health science or related field.  
 \*\*Military MOS code 68 Whiskey crosswalks to civilian credentials at or above the EMT certificate level

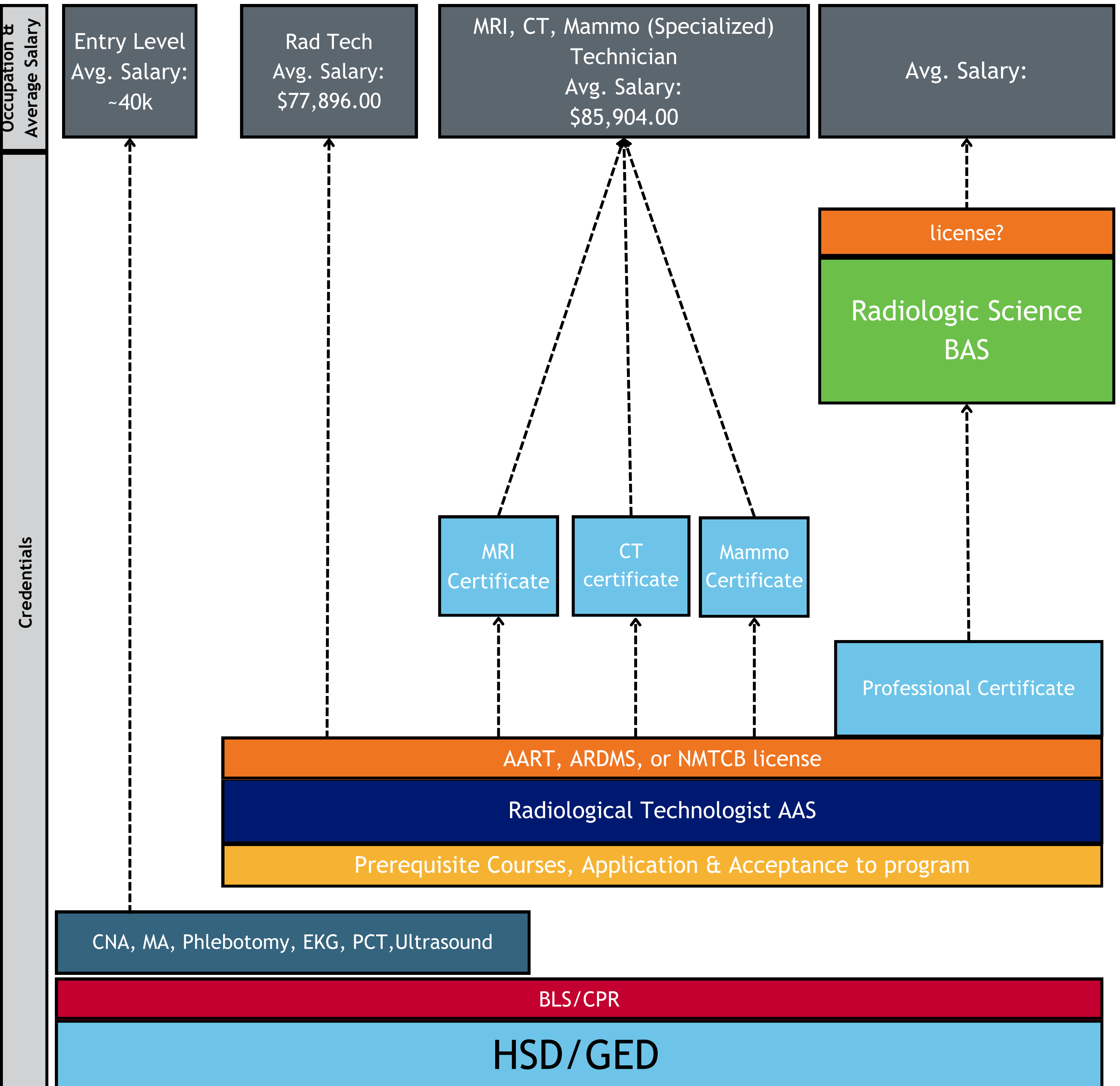
# Nursing Pathway



**Notes**

- \*LPN to BSN: Complete remaining GE courses + upper level BSN courses
- ADN to BSN: BSN courses via Dual Enrollment, pre-RN licensure
- ADN-RN to BSN: Complete upper level BSN courses, post-RN licensure
- Bachelor's Degree to BSN: Accelerated BSN program (approx. 1 yr)

# Medical Imaging Pathway



**Competencies**

CNA Competencies:	Rad Tech Competencies:	Specialized Tech Competencies:
<p><b>Communication, Interpersonal Skills, and Teamwork:</b> Working closely with doctors, other clinical staff, and patients and effectively communicating a patient's needs to provide appropriate care is critical. Effective writing skills to accurately record patient care information.</p> <p><b>Customer Focus and Integrity:</b> Excellent customer service (establishing rapport, having a good bedside manner, providing culturally sensitive care, etc.) is critical, reimbursements are based on patient feedback and outcomes. Maintaining professional boundaries and having a strong work ethic are also important.</p> <p><b>Working with Tools and Technology:</b> Used consistently to record notes related to patient care and to complete paperwork and billing.</p> <p><b>Problem Solving &amp; Decision Making:</b> Observing patients, identifying if something unusual is occurring, and understanding when to alert higher level care providers.</p> <p><b>Adaptability:</b> This jack of all trades position encounters significant situational changes (including dealing with trauma) between patients.</p> <p><b>Health &amp; Safety and Physical Abilities:</b> The ability to safely lift/transfer patients and maintain safety protocols in all instances.</p>	<p><b>Teamwork and Interpersonal Skills:</b> Being respectful of patients and treating them with the proper demeanor as well as being timely and dependable for your team, who is counting on you to be ready to work on time.</p> <p><b>Working with Tools and Technology:</b> Being comfortable using technology to acquire images (like CT) and maintain patient records that are technology-based.</p> <p><b>Health &amp; Safety:</b> Is important when dealing with radiation in proper doses.</p> <p><b>Communication:</b> Explaining procedures in laypersons terms and in a culturally competent way, including a proper explanation when an uncomfortable position is needed to get a good image.</p> <p><b>Customer Focus:</b> Providing excellent customer service, including keeping things on time or making a patient happier when they are not.</p> <p><b>Critical and Analytical Thinking:</b> Being able to recognize that the current situation will not create a quality image and knowing the changes needed to create the image, including potentially conferring with a Radiologist.</p>	<p><b>Critical and Analytical Thinking:</b> Applying theory and knowledge to correlate with a patient's results and identifying when the results do not correlate with the current situation.</p> <p><b>Basic Problem Solving:</b> Following procedures to analyze a specimen, but also being able to troubleshoot and solve issues as they arise.</p> <p><b>Health &amp; Safety:</b> Knowing and following institutional policies in an ethical manner and leading by example in dealing with specimens in a proper manner.</p> <p><b>Teamwork:</b> Interacting professionally with colleagues and other members of the Healthcare team.</p> <p><b>Communication and Customer Focus:</b> Communicate effectively with patients, to provide good customer service, co-workers, to facilitate effective shift handoffs of in-process activities, and physicians/care providers so that test results are understood and appropriate action/treatment can be taken.</p> <p><b>Tools &amp; Technology:</b> Must be able to skillfully use laboratory information software and instrument software.</p>

# DevOps Pathway

Occupations & Salary	<p><b>Systems Administrator</b> Average Salary \$103,896</p>	<p><b>Cloud Developer</b> Average Salary \$83,491</p>	<p><b>DevOps or DevSecOps Engineer</b> Average Salary \$136,906</p>
Required Credentials	<p>Some employers, but not all, require a Bachelor Degrees</p>	<p>Some employers, but not all, require a Bachelor Degrees</p>	<p>Some employers, but not all, require a Bachelor Degree experience usually substituted for education</p>
Valued Credentials	<p>CompTIA Network+ &amp; Security+ OR Vendor-Specific (i.e. Cisco, Juniper, Microsoft)</p>	<p>CompTIA Security+</p>	<p>Vendor-Specific Certifications (i.e. AWS, Microsoft, Google)</p>
Valued Knowledge & Experience	<p>1-2 Years Experience</p>	<p>1-2 Years Experience</p>	<p>Knowledge and Skills in Languages (i.e. Java, C#, JavaScript, Python); evaluated through tests and interview process + 2+ Years Experience</p>
HSD / GED			
Competencies	<p><b>Competencies:</b> The top 5 are Communication, Teamwork, Critical and Analytical Thinking, Planning and Organizing, and the Ability to Learn New Concepts. The most important Software Quality Assurance Tester competencies are problem solving and decision making (identifying measures/ indicators of system performance and the impact of a change within the system), critical and analytical thinking (identifying potential weaknesses or errors while testing), and communication (gathering requirements and communicating testing results).</p>	<p><b>Competencies:</b> The top 5 are Communication, Teamwork, Critical and Analytical Thinking, Planning and Organizing, and the Ability to Learn New Concepts. The top 5 most important Software Developer competencies are developing software, software development best practices, understanding of agile and hybrid methodologies, storing and accessing data, and developing in/for a cloud environment. To advance in a career, it is important to be able to research/find answers to questions, learn/apply new concepts on their own, and the ability to fail fast and fail forward when the initial solution doesn't work.</p>	<p><b>+ Competencies:</b> The most important to advance in a career are being well-balanced (good at teamwork, influencing a team, and technology), Communication (effective between teams, departments, customers), and Business Fundamentals (understand the business supported and effectively build IT solutions and communicate IT concepts in context of that business). To advance in a career, Software Developers usually complete more and more difficult tasks completely independently, begin to help others with their tasks, and then to begin to design solutions and influence a team of developers as they complete their tasks.</p>



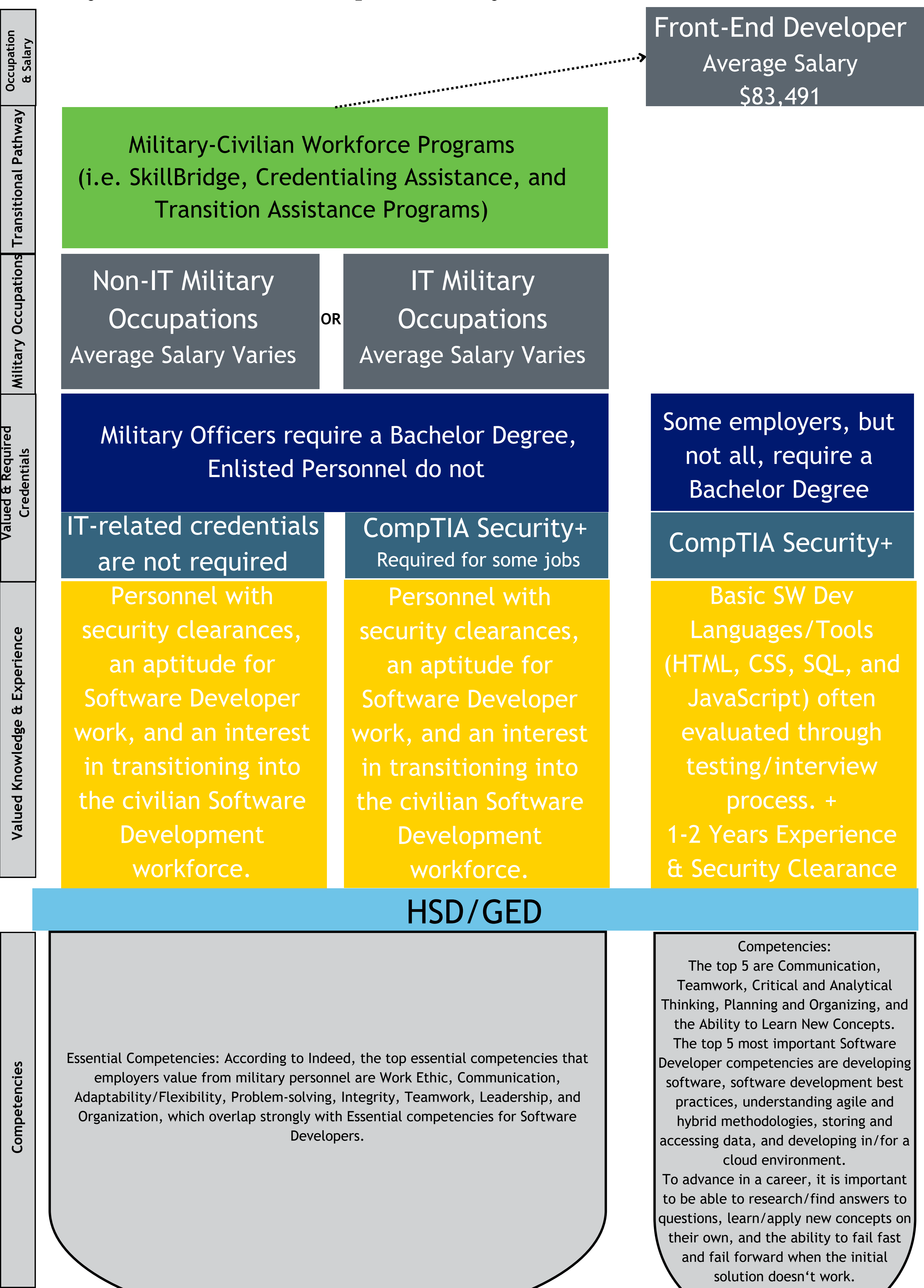
# Full-Stack Developer Pathway

Occupations & Salary	Software Quality Assurance Tester Average Salary \$110,094	Front-End Developer Average Salary \$83,491	Full-Stack Developer Average Salary \$136,906
Required Credentials	Some employers, but not all, require a Bachelor Degree	Some employers, but not all, require a Bachelor Degree	Some employers, but not all, require a Bachelor Degree experience usually substituted for education
Valued Credentials	ISTQB Foundational or CAST	CompTIA Security+	Vendor-Specific Certifications (i.e. AWS, Microsoft, Google)
Valued Knowledge & Experience	Basic SWD Concepts (Jira, APIs), Environmental Tools (Git, Selenium) and languages (Python, Java, etc.) + 1-2 Years Experience	Basic SW Dev Languages/Tools (HTML, CSS, SQL, and JavaScript) often evaluated through testing/interview process. + 1-2 Years Experience	Knowledge and Skills of Languages (i.e. Java, C#, or JavaScript) + 2+ Years Experience

## HSD/GED

Competencies	Software Quality Assurance Tester	Front-End Developer	Full-Stack Developer
	<p><b>Competencies:</b> The top 5 are Communication, Teamwork, Critical and Analytical Thinking, Planning and Organizing, and the Ability to Learn New Concepts. The most important Software Quality Assurance Tester competencies are problem solving and decision making (identifying measures/ indicators of system performance and the impact of a change within the system), critical and analytical thinking (identifying potential weaknesses or errors while testing), and communication (gathering requirements and communicating testing results).</p>	<p><b>Competencies:</b> The top 5 are Communication, Teamwork, Critical and Analytical Thinking, Planning and Organizing, and the Ability to Learn New Concepts. The top 5 most important Software Developer competencies are developing software, software development best practices, understanding agile and hybrid methodologies, storing and accessing data, and developing in/for a cloud environment. To advance in a career, it is important to be able to research/find answers to questions, learn/apply new concepts on their own, and the ability to fail fast and fail forward when the initial solution doesn't work.</p>	<p><b>+ Competencies:</b> The most important to advance in a career are being well-balanced (good at teamwork, influencing a team, and technology), Communication (effective between teams, departments, customers), and Business Fundamentals (understand the business supported and effectively build IT solutions and communicate IT concepts in context of that business) To advance in a career, Software Developers usually complete more and more difficult tasks completely independently, begin to help others with their tasks, and then to begin to design solutions and influence a team of developers as they complete their tasks.</p>

# Military to Front-End Developer Pathway



# Approval of Stackable Credential Pathways Required by SB22-192 (Opportunities for Credential Attainment)

Presentation to the Student Success and Workforce Alignment Working Group of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education

Dr. Ruthanne Orihuela, Director of Credential Pathways & Prior Learning Initiatives

June 3, 2024



# Each stackable credential pathway includes:

- Competency framework
  - Non-degree credentials along the pathway
- Degree credentials associated with the pathway
- Job opportunities upon credential completion
- Average starting salary upon credential completion

# Healthcare

Pathway 1: Emergency Medicine

Pathway 2: Nursing

[Additional Pathway: Medical Imaging]

# Questions?

Thank you for your consideration and support.

## **CDHE Stackable Credential Pathways Team:**

- [Allana Farley](#)
- Emily Millican
- Madelyn Oaks
- [Ruthanne Orihuela](#)

## **Stackable Credential Pathways Consultants:**

- [Scott Fast](#), Innovate+Educate
- Erin Silver, Envision Strategy Group

# Software Development

Pathway 1: DevOps

Pathway 2: Full-Stack Developer

Pathway 3: Military to Front-End Developer

**TOPIC: APPROVE REVISIONS TO CCHE POLICY I, PART L:  
STATEWIDE TRANSFER AND GT PATHWAYS POLICY**

**PREPARED BY: CHRISTINA CARRILLO, ACADEMIC POLICY OFFICER AND  
ADVOCATE**

## **I. SUMMARY**

This item presents for action changes to the Commission’s Statewide Transfer and GT Pathways policy to codify additional roles and responsibilities for public institutions of higher education and members of the General Education Council (or “GE Council”) regarding statewide transfer articulation agreements; and to include the new general education completion credential framework, recently endorsed by the Commission, that formally recognizes students when they have fulfilled all GT Pathways requirements.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

In 2001, §23-1-108.5, Colorado Revised Statutes<sup>1</sup>, charged the Commission to “oversee the adoption of a statewide articulation matrix system of course numbering for general education courses” that “every student...must successfully complete to attain an associate’s or bachelor’s degree”. Statute also created the General Education Council, which was charged with developing and maintaining the articulation matrix. The Council—working closely with institutional faculty—developed content criteria and competencies (student learning outcomes) to guide institutions in mapping existing courses, and creating new courses, to align with the matrix. GT Pathways courses are grouped into 6 broad categories, 14 sub-categories, and 10 competencies. The 31 required credits are distributed among the categories and sub-categories in a manner articulated by Commission policy.

In 2010, the General Assembly further charged the Commission to create a number of statewide transfer articulation agreements, which are defined in statute as agreements “among all of the state institutions of higher education for the transfer of an associate of arts or an associate of science degree” in “common degree programs” (§23-1-108(7)(g)(III), C.R.S.). Statewide transfer articulation agreements allow students to graduate from a two-year institution with a 60-credit Associate of Arts (A.A.) or Associate of Science (A.S.) Degree with Designation (e.g., Associate of Arts in Psychology); enroll, with junior status, at a participating four-year institution if the student successfully completes the A.A. or A.S. degree that is subject of the statewide transfer articulation agreement; and complete the bachelor’s degree in no more than 60 additional credits at the receiving four-year institution (for a total of 120 credits).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> References to Colorado Revised Statutes reflect statutory language through 2023 and do not include recent changes resulting from Senate Bill 24-162: Institution of Higher Education Transparency Requirements; none of the changes from this bill impact the CCHE policy revisions presented in this agenda item. The staff will prepare further revisions to this policy in response to the bill for Commission consideration at a later date.

<sup>2</sup> The Commission approved changes to this policy to allow for Degrees with Designation of more than 60 credits when the associated bachelor’s degree has been exempted from the 120-credit limit due to technical or accreditation-



Statewide transfer articulation agreements help students by improving the simplicity, transparency, equity, and portability of transfer systems. As a result, students have advanced information about transferability and are able to apply more of their earned credits toward their degree. Students who use statewide transfer articulation agreements are more likely to earn an A.A. or A.S. prior to transferring and are more likely to complete a bachelor's degree and earn their bachelor's degree in less time and with fewer completed credits compared to students who do not use statewide transfer articulation agreements. Department staff estimate that statewide transfer agreements have saved students over \$5 million since their initial launch.

The *Colorado GenEd Foundational Skills Credential* is a formal recognition of an undergraduate student's completion of all GT Pathways requirements at a Colorado public institution of higher education. The credential rewards students for achieving a significant milestone in their degree pathways and highlights the in-demand skills and competencies that are developed through general education—competencies that employers indicate again and again are foundation for workplace success.

### **III. STAFF ANALYSIS**

Statewide transfer articulation agreements, like all academic programs and curricular pathways, are not designed to be evergreen. Changes in curriculum, in the academic disciplines, in accreditation and professional requirements, and in employer expectations collectively dictate that an occasional review of the agreements is merited. In the fall of 2019, Department staff – in partnership with the GE Council – launched a process to “Revisit, Revise, and Renew” all then-34 existing agreements. The process was paused due to the Covid-19 pandemic and restarted in the fall of 2021.

The review process was launched to ensure that the agreements are in alignment with the current and evolving state of the disciplines and that they best prepare students for upper-division study and eventual success in their chosen career. Each review is conducted in collaboration with faculty, academic advisors, and academic staff from both two-year and four-year institutions from across the state. Proposed revisions are then reviewed by Department staff and GE Council, who together ensure compliance with statute and Commission policy. Review teams may be convened on more than one occasion for further discussion and attempts to arrive at consensus. GE Council members then facilitate institutional adoption of revisions. As of June 2024, all existing agreements have been reviewed and are in different stages of revision and adoption. During revision meetings, teams are asked to consider:

- How the agreements might be revised to better prepare students for upper-division study in the discipline and the evolving needs of employers in related areas
- How the agreements could be simplified to maximize their portability, in part by minimizing the number of included exceptions, conditions, and divergent pathways specific to a particular institution

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related requirements.

- Whether the required math course(s) are best aligned with the type of quantitative literacy needed for success in upper-division study
- Whether required courses are taught with sufficient frequency and location to merit their continued inclusion in the agreement

Based on experience with the reviews, the GE Council has recommended that agreements be reviewed no less frequently than every five years, and that expectations be codified on both process and requirements for institutions who exit an agreement due to the sunseting of specific academic programs.

Discussion of the need to formally recognize the significance of completing all general education requirements began in 2019 but was postponed, like many initiatives in progress, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2021 and 2022, the Department engaged in two initiatives to encourage institutions to develop shorter-term credentials on the way to a bachelor's degree, or that could stack into a bachelor's degree while functioning as standalone vehicles for workplace advancement. Out of these efforts emerged a renewed focus on the role and value of general education in preparing students for advanced study in a specific major or academic discipline, as well as preparation for career through the timeless, foundational skills that are developed through the general education curriculum.

In August 2023, Department staff convened a General Education Credential Task Force to develop a framework for a completion award using the GT Pathways competency matrix. The resulting framework and recommendations were endorsed by the General Education Council at its January 8, 2024 meeting. At its May 2024 meeting, the Commission approved a resolution endorsing the Colorado GenEd Foundational Skills Credential Framework and encouraging institutions to create and implement academic awards that align with the framework.

Guidance from the statutes listed below under "Statutory Authority" was used in developing proposed revisions to the policy. The following changes are proposed:

1. Section 5.00: Roles and Responsibilities
  - a. New sub-section 5.03.17, add new text indicating that institutions "shall follow their standard teach-out provisions for academic programs when statewide transfer articulation agreements are revised or when an institution discontinues a program that is part of a statewide transfer articulation agreement".
  - b. In sub-section 5.06.06, revise language as institutional liaisons to assist the Department in the "creation and adoption" to "creation, adoption, and revision" of statewide transfer articulation agreements; "train academic advisors" to "training of academic advisors and other institutional staff members"; and "provide guidance to the Department in the resolution of transfer student disputes" to "providing guidance to the Department in the resolution of transfer disputes."

- c. New sub-section 5.06.07, add text indicating that GE Council members “shall assist the Department in reviewing and revising statewide transfer articulation agreements no less frequently than every five years; facilitating meetings for discipline-specific faculty to negotiate revisions to their agreement; recruit discipline-specific faculty to participate in revision negotiations; and facilitate institutional adoption of revisions to statewide transfer articulation agreements.” This codifies the established practices that were developed by the GE Council – in partnership with Department staff – when the process to “Revisit, Revise, and Renew” all 34 existing agreements started in fall 2019.
2. Section 7.00 General Education and gtPathways Curriculum
    - a. New sub-section 7.03, add language describing the *Colorado GenEd Foundational Skills Credential*. This credential formally recognizes students when they have fulfilled all GT Pathways requirements, rewards students for achieving a significant milestone in their degree pathways while also highlighting the in-demand skills and competencies that are developed through general education. Institutions may require additional general education courses that go above and beyond GT Pathways; therefore, it is the prerogative of institutions to determine whether to award the credential, as well as the credential name, documentation, and method of award.

The proposed revisions were presented to both General Education Council and Academic Council in May, prior to the June 6 Commission meeting.

#### **IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval of the proposed revisions to CCHE Policy Section I, Part L: Statewide Transfer and GT Pathways Policy.

#### **V. STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

As noted previously, the statutory language used here does not reflect changes from the 2024 legislative session.

#### **C.R.S. §23-1-108**

##### **Duties and powers of the commission with regard to systemwide planning – reporting – definitions**

(1) The commission, after consultation with the governing boards of institutions and as part of the master planning process, shall have the authority to:

...

(7)(a) The commission shall establish, after consultation with the governing boards of institutions, and enforce statewide degree transfer agreements between two-year and four-year state institutions of higher education and among four-year state institutions of higher education. Governing boards and state institutions of higher education shall implement the statewide degree transfer agreements and the commission policies relating to the statewide degree transfer

agreements. The statewide degree transfer agreements shall include provisions under which state institutions of higher education shall accept all credit hours of acceptable course work for automatic transfer from an associate of arts, associate of applied science, or associate of science degree program in another state institution of higher education in Colorado. The commission shall have final authority in resolving transfer disputes.

...

**C.R.S. §23-1-125**

**Commission directive – student bill of rights – degree requirements – implementation of core courses – competency test – prior learning**

(1) **Student bill of rights.** The general assembly hereby finds that students enrolled in public institutions of higher education shall have the following rights:

(a) Students should be able to complete their associate of arts and associate of science degree programs in no more than sixty credit hours or their baccalaureate programs in no more than one hundred twenty credit hours unless there are additional degree requirements recognized by the commission;

...

(3) **Core courses.** The department, in consultation with each Colorado public institution of higher education, is directed to outline a plan to implement a core course concept that defines the general education course guidelines for all public institutions of higher education. The core of courses shall be designed to ensure that students demonstrate competency in reading, critical thinking, written communication, mathematics, and technology. The core of courses shall consist of at least thirty credit hours but shall not exceed forty credit hours. Individual institutions of higher education shall conform their own core course requirements with the guidelines developed by the department and shall identify the specific courses that meet the general education course guidelines. Any such guidelines developed by the department shall be submitted to the commission for its approval. In creating and adopting the guidelines, the department and the commission, in collaboration with the public institutions of higher education, may make allowances for baccalaureate programs that have additional degree requirements recognized by the commission. If a statewide matrix of core courses is adopted by the commission, the courses identified by the individual institutions as meeting the general education course guidelines shall be included in the matrix. The commission shall adopt such policies to ensure that institutions develop the most effective way to implement the transferability of core course credits.

...

**ATTACHMENT**

Attachment A: Proposed Revisions to CCHE Policy I, L: Statewide Transfer and GT Pathways Policy



## SECTION I

### PART L STATEWIDE TRANSFER AND gtPATHWAYS POLICY

#### 1.00 Introduction

The Statewide Transfer and gtPathways Policy<sup>1</sup> pertains to the state general education courses, known as Guaranteed Transfer Pathways (gtPathways); Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreements; transfer of course credits from one higher education institution to another; intra-institutional transfer; and reverse transfer. The policy applies to most Colorado public higher education undergraduate degree programs.<sup>2</sup> The policy applies to student transfer from two-year to four-year institutions, four-year to four-year institutions, four-year to two-year institutions, two-year to two-year institutions, or within four-year institutions. This policy does not address transfer issues where the state has limited legal authority: the transfer of credits from private, non-accredited, or out-of-state institutions or the awarding of credit for non-credit bearing courses.

The policy is divided into the following sections:

- 1.00 Introduction
- 2.00 Statutory Authority
- 3.00 Definitions
- 4.00 Policy Goals
- 5.00 Roles and Responsibilities
- 6.00 Other Statutory Provisions that Affect Transfer
- 7.00 General Education and gtPathways Courses
- 8.00 Transfer Options for Students

#### 2.00 Statutory Authority

This policy is based on the following Colorado Revised Statutes:

- 2.01 §23-1-108(7)(a), C.R.S. “The commission shall establish, after consultation with the governing boards of institutions, and enforce statewide degree transfer agreements between two-year and four-year state institutions of higher education and among four-year state institutions of higher education...”
  
- 2.02 §23-1-108.5(1), C.R.S. “The general assembly finds, therefore, that it is in the best interests of the state for the commission to oversee the adoption of a statewide articulation matrix system of course numbering for general education courses that includes all state-supported institutions of higher education and that will ensure that

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<sup>1</sup> Additional resources related to gtPathways and transfer of courses are available [online](#).

<sup>2</sup> A listing of degrees that have been waived of gtPathways requirements can be found [online](#) including all bachelor’s degrees at the Colorado School of Mines, and professional degrees at other public institutions subject to specialty accreditation criteria (e.g., nursing, engineering, business, music).

the quality of and requirements that pertain to general education courses are comparable and transferable systemwide.”

- 2.03 §23-1-125 et seq., C.R.S. Commission directive – student bill of rights – degree requirements – implementation of core courses – competency testing – prior learning.
- 2.04 §23-1-125(3), C.R.S. “In creating and adopting the [gtPathways] guidelines, the department and the commission, in collaboration with the public institutions of higher education, may make allowances for baccalaureate programs that have additional degree requirements recognized by the commission.”
- 2.05 §23-1-131(3)(a), C.R.S. “The commission shall collaborate with the governing boards of the two-year and four-year institutions to develop and coordinate a process to notify students concerning eligibility for the award of an associate degree. The notification process shall apply to students at a four-year institution who have accumulated seventy credit hours at a four-year institution<sup>3</sup> and who transferred to the institution after completing the residency requirements for an associate degree at a two-year institution.”
- 2.06 §23-5-122, C.R.S. “...the governing board of every state-supported institution of higher education shall have in place and enforce policies regarding transfers by students between undergraduate degree programs which are offered within the same institution or within the same institutional system.”
- 2.07 §23-60-802, C.R.S. Area technical colleges – credits – transfer.

### **3.00 Definitions**

- 3.01 “Commission” means the Colorado Commission on Higher Education created pursuant to section Title 23, Article 1 of the Colorado Revised Statutes.
- 3.02 “Core courses” means the thirty-one credit lower division gtPathways curriculum to which “...Individual institutions of higher education shall conform their own core course requirements...” (i.e., general education requirements). “The core of courses shall be designed to ensure that students demonstrate competency in reading, critical thinking, written communication, mathematics, and technology.

The core of courses shall consist of at least thirty credit hours but shall not exceed forty credit hours” [§23-1-125(3), C.R.S.].<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Note that statute has been interpreted to mean that students must have accumulated 70 credit hours in total, at all two- and four-year institutions attended, not just at a four-year institution.

<sup>4</sup> Note that this does not apply to every degree program at every institution; §23-1-125(3) gives the Commission authority to “...make allowance for baccalaureate programs that have additional degree requirements...” A list of

- 3.03 “Course numbering system” means the common system of numbering used by all institutions for gtPathways courses, such as GT-CO1 for an introductory written communication course, GT-CO2 for an intermediate written communication course, GT-MA1 for a mathematics course, and so on, pursuant to §23-1-108.5(2)(b), C.R.S.
- 3.04 “Degree with Designation” means a two-year degree with academic designation in a particular discipline or interdisciplinary field, and that is part of a Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreement (with the exception of dental hygiene), as described in §23-60-211, C.R.S. A Degree with Designation is a 60-credit Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree that includes the 31-credit GT Pathways curriculum, plus a collection of required and elective courses that provides students with a solid foundation for further study in a given discipline or program area. Exceptions to the 60-credit limit, and to the GT Pathways requirement, may be made by the Commission to facilitate transfer in certain disciplines or fields, including where the associated bachelor’s degree program has received a waiver from the 120-credit cap and/or GT Pathways curriculum requirements.
- 3.05 “Department” means the Colorado Department of Higher Education created and existing pursuant to section §24-1-114, C.R.S.
- 3.06 “GE Council” means the General Education Council convened pursuant to §23-1-108.5(3)(a), C.R.S.
- 3.07 “gtPathways” means guaranteed transfer pathways as described in §23-1-108.5 and §23-1-125(3), C.R.S.
- 3.08 “gtPathways content criteria” means the sets of criteria for the six content areas that make up the gtPathways curriculum: 1) written communication, 2) mathematics, 3) arts and humanities, 4) social and behavioral sciences, 5) history and 6) natural and physical sciences.<sup>5</sup>
- 3.09 “gtPathways competency criteria” means the ten competencies embedded in the gtPathways content criteria in which students must demonstrate proficiency: 1) civic engagement, 2) creative thinking, 3) critical thinking, 4) diversity & global learning, 5) information literacy, 6) inquiry & analysis, 7) oral/presentational communication, 8) problem solving, 9) quantitative literacy, and 10) written communication, pursuant to §23-1-125(3), C.R.S.<sup>6</sup>
- 3.10 “‘General education courses’ means the group of courses offered by an institution of higher education that every student enrolled in the institution must successfully

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degrees that have been waived of gtPathways requirements is maintained on the Department’s [website](#).

<sup>5</sup> Available on the Department’s [website](#).

<sup>6</sup> Available on the Department’s [website](#).

complete to attain an associate’s or bachelor’s degree” [§23-1-108.5(2)(c), C.R.S.] and that meet the requirements of §23-1-125(3), C.R.S. It should be noted that besides a general education core, degrees also have major, elective and other requirements (see Table 1 under section 7.00). It should also be noted that general education requirements may differ between degree programs at the same institution and that some degree programs at some institutions have received waivers from the Commission not to have to include the 31 credit gtPathways curriculum in the general education cores for some baccalaureate degrees.<sup>7</sup> Institutions may designate certain upper division courses as fulfilling requirements in their general education curriculum, but only lower division courses can be identified as part of gtPathways, with the exception of courses designated as GT-CO3 (Advanced Written Communication), which are often numbered as 300/3000-level courses.

- 3.11 For the purposes of this policy, “native student” means a student at a Colorado public four-year institution who did not transfer from a Colorado community or local-district college under a statewide transfer agreement.
- 3.12 “Prior Learning Assessment” is the evaluation—using approved practices—of learning that occurs outside of the institution where a student is enrolled or may enroll. Learning can be demonstrated by a student through achieving a certain score on a national exam; through achieving a certain score or rating on an institutionally-devised exam or other assessment; through performance in a course taken at another institution; through completion of certain military training, education, and occupational programs; and through work products and other professional achievements included in a student’s portfolio.
- 3.13 “Reverse Transfer” means the process whereby a student who begins his or her postsecondary education at a two-year institution and transfers to a four-year institution prior to receiving an associate degree, or who has left the four-year institution prior to completing a bachelor’s degree, and has accumulated at least 70 credits and completed the residency requirements at the two-year institution, may be eligible to receive an associate of arts or associate of science degree.
- 3.14 “Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreement” means a transfer agreement between two-year and four-year state institutions of higher education and among four-year institutions, which includes provisions under which state institutions of higher education shall accept all credit hours of acceptable course work for automatic transfer from an associate of arts or associate of science Degree with Designation, pursuant to §23-1-108(7)(a), C.R.S. Further guidance is found in 23-1-108(7)(g)(III), C.R.S., which defines a Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreement as a “Statewide degree transfer agreement,” which “...means an agreement among all of the state institutions of higher education for the transfer of an associate of arts or an associate of science degree. A statewide degree transfer agreement applies to common degree programs and specifies the common terms, conditions, and expectations for students enrolled in statewide degree transfer programs.”

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<sup>7</sup> A list of degrees that have been waived of gtPathways requirements is maintained on the Department’s [website](#).



- 3.15 “Transfer” means transferring the credit for courses taken at one institution of higher education to another. It is important to note that while most coursework can transfer, not all credit can be applied to a student’s chosen major. That is, the receiving institution will usually *accept coursework in transfer* and list those courses on the student’s transcript but may not be able to *apply the credit* for those courses to any of the requirements in the student’s degree program.
- 3.16 “Transfer Student” means a student entering the reporting institution for the first time but known to have previously attended a postsecondary institution at the same level (e.g. undergraduate, graduate) after high school graduation (or passing an equivalency exam). The student may transfer with or without credit. This excludes students who completed remedial coursework and students who completed college-level coursework as a high school student through Concurrent Enrollment or as their homeschool curriculum.

#### 4.00 Policy Goals

The policy goals are to provide guidance on each entity’s role in the implementation of:

- 4.01 gtPathways, “that includes all state-supported institutions of higher education and that will ensure that the quality of and requirements that pertain to general education courses are comparable<sup>8</sup> and transferable system wide,” [§23-1-108.5(1), C.R.S.]; and
- 4.02 The Student Bill of Rights, which states that:
- 4.02.01 “(a) Students should be able to complete their associate of arts and associate of science degree programs in no more than sixty credit hours or their baccalaureate programs in no more than one hundred twenty credit hours unless there are additional degree requirements recognized by the commission;”<sup>9</sup>
- 4.02.02 “(b) A student can sign a two-year or four-year graduation agreement that formalizes a plan for that student to obtain a degree in two or four years,

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<sup>8</sup> It should be noted that gtPathways is not about course equivalencies and that “comparable” does not mean “equivalent.” That is, gtPathways are guaranteed to meet gtPathways requirements of most Liberal Arts & Sciences degrees but may not meet other general education or major requirements of degrees that received waivers because those degrees have additional requirements.

<sup>9</sup> At its April 1, 2004 meeting, the Commission granted waivers to exceed the 120 credit cap to the following degree programs (new credit limits in parentheses): nursing (126 cr.); teacher preparation (126 cr. with the stipulation that students can complete the program in 4-years); engineering, engineering technology, computer science and related programs (exempt from the 120 credit limit but with the stipulation that all programs must “guarantee that students will be able to complete the program requirements in 4 years”); all degree programs at Colorado School of Mines (exempt from the 120 credit limit); and landscape architecture at CSU (132 cr.). At its June 4, 2009 meeting, the Commission approved a credit waiver of 138 credits and lifted the 4-year graduation agreement requirement for all science teacher preparation programs.

unless there are additional degree requirements recognized by the commission;”

- 4.02.03 “(c) Students have a right to clear and concise information concerning which courses must be completed successfully to complete their degrees;”
- 4.02.04 “(d) Students have a right to know which courses are transferable among the state public two-year and four-year institutions of higher education;”
- 4.02.05 “(e) Students, upon successful completion of core general education courses, regardless of the delivery method, should have those courses satisfy the core course requirements of all Colorado public institutions of higher education;”
- 4.02.06 “(f) Students have a right to know if courses from one or more public higher education institutions satisfy the students’ degree requirements;”
- 4.02.07 “(g) A student’s credit for the completion of the core requirements and core courses shall not expire for ten years from the date of initial enrollment and shall be transferable.” [§23-1-125(1), C.R.S.]

## **5.00 Roles and Responsibilities**

### **5.01 Students**

Students are responsible to act in their own best academic interests and to seek the information necessary for making informed transfer choices, including:

- 5.01.01 Contacting academic advisors at both the sending and receiving institutions to understand the limitations on transfer;
- 5.01.02 Checking with the receiving institution for the availability of Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreements, Transfer Guides, other inter-institutional transfer agreements that may exist, and graduation requirements of the institution and the degree program into which the student hopes to transfer;
- 5.01.03 Understanding the limits in applying transfer credits within general education, major requirements, and elective categories for the institution and degree program into which the student hopes to transfer; and
- 5.01.04 Filing an appeal with the institution in a timely manner to resolve transfer disputes.

### **5.02 Governing Boards of Public Institutions or Systems**

All Governing Boards of public institutions or systems:

- 5.02.01 “...shall implement the statewide degree transfer agreements and the commission policies relating to the statewide degree transfer agreements.” [23-1-108(7)(a), C.R.S.]
- 5.02.02 “...shall implement the [student transfer] agreements [between degree programs offered on the same campus or within the same institutional system] and commission policies relating to the agreements.” [23-1-108(7)(f), C.R.S.]
- 5.02.03 “...shall modify its existing policies as may be necessary to accept the transfer of these [gtPathways course] credits.” [23-1-108.5(5), C.R.S.]
- 5.02.04 “...shall have in place and enforce policies regarding transfers by students between undergraduate degree programs which are offered within the same institution or within the same institutional system. Such policies shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following provisions:
- (a) If, not more than ten years prior to transferring into an undergraduate degree program, a student earns credit hours which are required for graduation from such undergraduate degree program, such credit hours shall apply to the completion of such student's graduation requirements from such undergraduate degree program following such transfer;
- (b) A student who transfers into an undergraduate degree program shall not be required to complete a greater number of credit hours in those courses which are required for graduation from such undergraduate degree program than are required of students who began in such undergraduate degree program, nor shall there be any minimum number of credit hours required post-transfer other than the normal degree requirements for non-transferring students; and
- (c) The grade point average which is required for a student to apply for and be fully considered for transfer into an undergraduate degree program shall be no higher than that which is required for graduation from such undergraduate degree program.” [23-5-122(1), C.R.S.]
- 5.02.05 “...shall adopt policies to ensure that, if a student completes a program of study at an area technical college and subsequently enrolls in an institution within the state system of community and technical colleges, or transfers from an area technical college to an institution within the state system of community and technical colleges, any postsecondary course credits earned by the student while enrolled in the area technical college will apply in full at another area technical college or to an appropriate program leading to a certificate or to an associate degree at a

community or technical college. Postsecondary credits earned by a student at an area technical college may be transferred into an associate degree program at a community college or into a degree program at a four-year institution of higher education as provided in section 23-1-108(7) and the state credit transfer policies established by the Colorado commission on higher education.” [23-60-802, C.R.S.]<sup>10</sup>

### 5.03 Public Institutions of Higher Education

All public institutions:

- 5.03.01 Shall publish the Student Bill of Rights [23-1-125(1)(a-g), C.R.S.] in course catalogs and advising centers.
- 5.03.02 Shall honor the Student Bill of Rights.
- 5.03.03 Shall comply with “...the intent of the general assembly that academic degree programs at state-supported institutions of higher education be designed and implemented to assure and emphasize that undergraduate students have the maximum range of opportunities and assistance to complete their course of study and obtain their degree in a reasonable amount of time.” [23-1-108(13)(a), C.R.S.]
- 5.03.04 “...shall review its course offerings and identify those general education courses offered by the institution that correspond with the courses included in the course numbering system. The higher education institution shall submit its list of identified courses, including course descriptions and, upon request of the commission, summaries of course syllabi, for review and approval by the commission on or before March 1, 2003.” [23-1-108.5(4)(a), C.R.S.]<sup>11</sup>
- 5.03.05 “...shall publish, and update as necessary, a list of course offerings that identifies those general education courses offered by the institution that correspond with the courses included in the course numbering system.” [23-1-108.5(4)(b), C.R.S.]
- 5.03.06 ”...shall participate in the course numbering system.” [23-1-108.5(5), C.R.S.]
- 5.03.07 Shall develop effective transfer advising systems, including but not limited to, training faculty and academic advisors, providing freshman students with planning information, and providing transfer students with appeals information.

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<sup>10</sup> Community colleges and 4-year institutions may accept credits earned from an area technical college as long as that school is accredited to offer the credit. Area technical colleges are not accredited to offer general education (gtPathways). As of February 7, 2019, the three area technical colleges in Colorado are Emily Griffith Technical College (Denver), Pickens Technical College (Aurora), and Technical College of the Rockies (Delta; formerly Delta-Montrose Technical College).

<sup>11</sup> This process was completed.

- 5.03.08 Shall develop advising partnerships among all four-year and two-year public institutions to jointly advise students.
- 5.03.09 “...shall implement the [student transfer] agreements [between degree programs offered on the same campus or within the same institutional system] and commission policies relating to the agreements.” [23-1-108(7)(f), C.R.S.]
- 5.03.10 “...shall implement the statewide degree transfer agreements and the commission policies relating to the statewide degree transfer agreements.” [23-1-108(7)(a), C.R.S.]
- 5.03.11 “...shall conform their own core course requirements with the guidelines developed by the department and shall identify the specific courses that meet the general education course guidelines.” [23-1-125(3), C.R.S.]
- 5.03.12 “...shall grant full course credits to students for the core courses they successfully test out of, free of tuition for those courses.” [23-1-125(4), C.R.S.]
- 5.03.13 “...shall adopt and make public a policy or program to determine academic credit for prior learning.” [23-1-125(4.5), C.R.S.]
- 5.03.14 Shall accept in transfer from within the institution and from other state institutions of higher education prior learning assessment credit awarded for GT Pathways requirements and shall not prohibit students from attempting to meet general education/GT Pathways requirements with prior learning assessment credit.
- 5.03.15 To approve degrees with designation, the Colorado Community College System shall “...submit the degree program designation to the board for its review and approval. The community college may offer the degree program only after it has been approved by the board and by the Colorado commission on higher education. The community college shall exclusively use the degree program designation name in official publications, course catalogs, diplomas, and official transcripts” [23-60-211(1), C.R.S.] and Colorado Mountain College and Aims Community College shall “...submit the degree program designation to the board of trustees for its review and approval. The local district college may offer the degree program only after it has been approved by the board of trustees and by the Colorado commission on higher education.<sup>12</sup> The local district college shall exclusively use the degree program designation name in official publications, course catalogs, diplomas, and official transcripts” [23-71-123(3), C.R.S.].<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Refer to CCHE Policy I, V for more information on approval of new degree programs.

<sup>13</sup> GE Council agreed that if a two-year institution is unable to offer all coursework required for a Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreement, that institution should not offer the corresponding Degree with Designation.

- 5.03.16 “...should work in collaboration with the commission to develop a process that reduces a potential barrier to degree completion by providing students with information about the student’s eligibility for an associate degree” [23-1-131(1)(b)]. “The two-year and four-year institutions shall agree upon the contents of the notification to eligible students. At a minimum, the notification shall include the requirements for the degree audit by the two-year institution and information concerning the process for a student to be awarded an associate degree in the future if the degree requirements are not met or the student declines the associate degree at the time of the notification” [23-1-131(3)(b), C.R.S.]. “Each two-year and four-year institution shall provide students with information concerning the process developed pursuant to this section” 23-1-131(4), C.R.S.].
- 5.03.17 Shall follow their standard teach-out provisions for academic programs when statewide transfer articulation agreements are revised or when an institution discontinues a program that is part of a statewide transfer articulation agreement.

#### 5.04 Participating Private Institutions of Higher Education

Private institutions of higher education may choose to participate in gtPathways, provided an institution meets the statutory criteria outlined in 23-1-125(5)(e), C.R.S., including accreditation by an accrediting agency or association approved by the United States Department of Education; provision of an educational program for which it awards a bachelor’s degree or a graduate degree; and determination by the United States Department of Education to be eligible to administer federal financial aid programs pursuant to Title IV of the federal Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. Participation by private institutions of higher education in gtPathways may include conforming their general education curricula to include the gtPathways curriculum; being guaranteed their approved gtPathways courses will transfer to all public and other participating nonpublic institutions, and agreeing to accept in transfer and apply credit for gtPathways courses from other participating nonpublic and public institutions of higher education, pursuant to §23-1-125(5), C.R.S.

#### 5.05 Colorado Commission on Higher Education

The Commission, with the Colorado Department of Higher Education acting as its staff:

- 5.05.01 “...shall establish, after consultation with the governing boards of institutions, and enforce statewide degree transfer agreements between two-year and four-year state institutions of higher education and among four-year state institutions of higher education.” [23-1-108(7)(a), C.R.S.]
- 5.05.02 “...shall establish and enforce student transfer agreements between degree programs offered on the same campus or within the same institutional system.” [23-1-108(7)(f), C.R.S.]
- 5.05.03 Shall, “...within existing resources, ...implement and revise appropriate policies, including financial incentives, to assure that students at state-supported institutions of higher education complete their academic degree programs in the most efficient, effective, and productive manner. The policy implementation and review shall include:
- (I) Academic advising and counseling at such institutions and consideration of methods for the improvement of early and continuous availability of such academic advising and counseling in order to assist students with the completion of degree programs;
  - (II) The frequency and availability of courses essential to completion of degree programs at such institutions and evaluation of what changes may be necessary to assure that the course scheduling for degree programs by such institutions maximizes the opportunities for students to complete their course of study efficiently, effectively, and productively;
  - (III) Measures for minimizing and eliminating the restrictions against automatic transfer of credit hours of acceptable course work between such institutions and whether the provisions of transfer agreements between two-year and four-year institutions and among four-year institutions entered into pursuant to subsection (7) of this section are directed at easing such transfer restrictions;
  - (IV) Methods for minimizing the loss of credit hours when a student changes degree programs at such institution and assurance that such credit hours are transferred or substituted for appropriate course work in the other degree program;
  - (V) The review of possible solutions for access of nontraditional and part-time students to complete programs within the student's time frame goals;
  - (VI) What effect, if any, the reduction of degree programs would have on the increased availability of classes within existing degree programs;

(VII) What effect increases in educational costs may have on the average length of time for a student to complete a degree program; and

(VIII) The implementation of core curricula as a measure for assisting students to graduate.” [§23-1-108(13)(a), C.R.S.]

- 5.05.04 “...shall oversee the adoption of a statewide articulation matrix system of course numbering for general education courses that includes all state-supported institutions of higher education and that will ensure that the quality of and requirements that pertain to general education courses are comparable and transferable system wide.” [23-1-108.5(1), C.R.S.]
- 5.05.05 Consider for approval gtPathways courses recommended by GE Council, pursuant to §23-1-108.5(3), C.R.S.
- 5.05.06 “...shall consult with the governing boards when convening representatives from the higher education institutions [to serve on GE Council].” [23-1-108.5(3)(a), C.R.S.]
- 5.01.07 “...shall review the [GE] council's recommendations and adopt a statewide articulation matrix system of common course numbering for general education courses, including criteria for such courses...” [23-1-108.5(3)(c)(I), C.R.S.]
- 5.05.08 “...shall adopt and implement such procedures [recommended by GE Council to document students’ success in transferring among higher education institutions].” [23-1-108.5(6)(a), C.R.S.]
- 5.05.09 “...in consultation with the governing boards and the higher education institutions, shall design and implement a statewide database to [document students’ success in transferring among higher education institutions].” [23-1-108.5(6)(b), C.R.S.]
- 5.05.10 Resolve student complaints regarding the requirements of this policy, pursuant to CCHE Policy I, T Student Complaint Policy. “The Commission shall have final authority in resolving transfer disputes.” [23-1-108(7)(a), C.R.S.]



5.05.11 “...shall adopt such policies to ensure that institutions develop the most effective way to implement the transferability of core course credits.” [23-1-125(3) C.R.S.]

## 5.06 General Education (GE) Council

The GE Council:

5.06.01 “...shall create a process through which it shall seek input from and consult with various higher education student organizations for each articulation agreement and for the review of general education courses and the course numbering system as required in [23-1-108.5(3)(c)].” [23-1-108.5(3)(a), C.R.S.]

5.06.02 “...shall recommend to the commission a statewide articulation matrix system of common course numbering to which the general education courses for each higher education institution may be mapped.” [23-1-108.5(3)(b), C.R.S.]<sup>14</sup>

5.06.03 “...shall recommend to the commission a list of general education courses to be included in the course numbering system. In identifying said general education courses, the council shall review the course descriptions, and may request summaries of course syllabi for review, focusing first on lower division general education courses.” [23-1-108.5(3)(c)(I), C.R.S.]<sup>15</sup>

5.06.04 “...shall annually review the list of general education courses and the course numbering system, including the criteria, adopted by the commission and recommend such changes as may be necessary to maintain the accuracy and integrity of the course numbering system. The council's annual review shall include consideration of the course descriptions, and the council may request summaries of course syllabi for further review.” [23-1-108.5(3)(c)(II), C.R.S.]<sup>16</sup>

5.06.05 “...shall devise and recommend to the commission procedures for exchanging information to document students’ success in transferring among higher education institutions.” [23-1-108.5(6)(a), C.R.S.]

5.06.06 Shall act as their respective institutions’ liaisons to assist the Department in: the creation, adoption, and revision of statewide transfer articulation agreements; the review of proposed gtPathways courses; training of

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<sup>14</sup> This process was completed and the common course numbering system for gtPathways courses is linked on the Department’s [website](#).

<sup>15</sup> This process was completed per initial requirements of H.B. 01-1298 (the “Berry Bill”) and is ongoing.

<sup>16</sup> Standard practice has been that gtPathways courses continue to carry that designation unless the institution chooses to withdraw the course from general education, the course is not offered within a two-year period, or evaluations indicate that a course does not meet the state content and competency criteria, which are linked on the Department’s [website](#).

academic advisors and other institutional staff members on the requirements of this policy; and providing guidance to the Department in the resolution of transfer disputes.

- 5.06.07 Shall assist the Department in reviewing and revising statewide transfer articulation agreements no less frequently than every five years; facilitating meetings for discipline-specific faculty to negotiate revisions to their agreement; recruiting discipline-specific faculty to participate in revision negotiations; and facilitating institutional adoption of revisions to statewide transfer articulation agreements.

## **6.00 Other Statutory Provisions that Affect Transfer**

### 6.01 Credit cap for degrees.

6.01.01 “Students should be able to complete their associate of arts and associate of science degree programs in no more than sixty credit hours or their baccalaureate programs in no more than one hundred twenty credit hours unless there are additional degree requirements recognized by the commission” [23-1-125(1)(a), C.R.S.]; and

6.01.02 “The commission shall establish a standard of a one-hundred-twenty-hour baccalaureate degree, not including specified professional degree programs that have additional degree requirements recognized by the commission” [23-1-125(2), C.R.S.]<sup>17</sup>

### 6.02 Course/credit limitations and requirements: transfer students and native students.

6.02.01 “A state institution of higher education that admits as a junior a student who holds an associate of arts degree, associate of applied science degree, or associate of science degree that is the subject of a statewide degree transfer agreement shall not require the student to complete any additional courses to fulfill general education requirements” [23-1-108(7)(b)(II)(A), C.R.S.]; and

6.02.02 “A student who transfers under a statewide degree transfer agreement may be required to complete lower-division courses that are part of the major, but are not part of the statewide degree transfer agreement, if taking the courses does not require the transfer student to take more total credit hours to receive the degree than a native student and does not extend the total time

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<sup>17</sup>See earlier footnote on Commission waivers to institutions to exceed the 120-credit cap for certain degree programs.

required to receive the degree beyond that required for a native student”<sup>18</sup> [23-1-108(7)(b)(II)(A), C.R.S.]; and

6.02.03 “A state institution of higher education...is responsible for the total cost of tuition, without participation by the student in the college opportunity fund...for any credit hours that exceed the total credit hours required for a native student or that extend the total time to receive the degree beyond that required for a native student” [23-1-108(7)(b)(II)(A), C.R.S.].

6.03 Competency testing.

6.03.01 “...the commission shall, in consultation with each public institution of higher education, define a process for students to test out of core courses, including specifying use of a national test or the criteria for approving institutionally devised tests. Beginning in the 2010-11 academic year, each public institution of higher education shall grant full course credits to students for the core courses they successfully test out of, free of tuition for those courses.” [23-1-125(4), C.R.S.]

6.03.02 Standard practice is that institutions do not have to allow students to test out of every core course but there must be a means to test out of every gtPathways category (e.g., GT-CO1, GT-MA1, and so on).

6.03.03 Institutions may choose the assessment instruments. Portfolio review and prior learning assessment are allowable instruments.

6.04 Credit for prior learning.

6.04.01 “...each public institution of higher education shall adopt and make public a policy or program to determine academic credit for prior learning.” [23-1-125(4.5), C.R.S.]

6.04.02 Institutions shall accept in transfer from within the institution and from other state institutions of higher education prior learning assessment credit awarded for GT Pathways requirements and shall not prohibit students from attempting to meet general education/GT Pathways requirements with prior learning assessment credit.

## 7.00 General Education and gtPathways Curriculum

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<sup>18</sup> “Total time to receive the degree” presumes that the transfer student and the native student demonstrate substantially similar enrollment patterns in the same program of study.

The gtPathways curriculum is the core of the general education requirements of most Liberal Arts & Sciences bachelor's degrees. This takes some of the guesswork out of transfer because gtPathways courses, in which the student earned a C- or higher, will always transfer<sup>19</sup> and the credit will apply<sup>20</sup> to gtPathways requirements in every Liberal Arts & Sciences bachelor's degree at every public Colorado institution. Depending on the bachelor's degree, gtPathways course credit may also be applied to major and elective requirements at the receiving institution's discretion. gtPathways courses taken beyond the required 31-credit gtPathways curriculum will transfer (and be listed on the student's transcript) but the credit is not guaranteed to apply to general education or major requirements or to electives (or count towards the 120 required credits for the bachelor's degree). Table 1 below highlights where gtPathways courses fit in a bachelor's degree.

**Table 1: The Parts of a Bachelor's Degree**

<p><b>Bachelor's Degree</b> (usually 120 credits)</p> <p>Examples: Bachelor of Arts Bachelor of Science</p>	<p><b>General Education Requirements</b>, includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gtPathways (31 credits) and/or</li> <li>• other courses specified by the institution or major department, not to exceed 40 credits<sup>21</sup></li> </ul>
	<p><b>Major Requirements</b> (number of credits varies)</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biology</li> <li>• English</li> <li>• Political Science</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Electives</b> (number of credits varies)</p>
	<p><b>Other graduation requirements</b></p>

As shown in Table 2 below, the gtPathways curriculum is organized into six categories: 1) written communication, 2) mathematics, 3) arts and humanities, 4) history, 5) social and behavioral sciences, and 6) natural and physical sciences, and several sub-categories.

**Table 2: gtPathways Curriculum**

Semester Credit Hours	gtPathways Curriculum
6	<p><b>Written Communication:</b></p> <p>GT-CO1: Introductory Writing course (minimum 3 credits)</p> <p>GT-CO2: Intermediate Writing course (minimum 3 credits)</p> <p>GT-CO3: Advanced Writing Course (minimum 3 credits)</p> <p>*Students may take GT-CO1 and GT-CO2 or they may take GT-CO2 and GT-</p>

<sup>19</sup> Transfer of credit means the receiving institution notes on its own transcript the credit earned at another institution. Credits that transfer do not reduce time to degree completion unless they are applied to degree requirements at the receiving institution.

<sup>20</sup> Application of credit means the receiving institution applies credit earned at another institution to its own degree requirements, whether as general education, major requirements, or electives. Application of credit to degree requirements reduces time to degree completion.

<sup>21</sup> §Per 23-1-125(3), C.R.S.

	CO3.
<b>3</b>	<b>Mathematics:</b> GT-MA1 (minimum 3 credits)
<b>15</b>	<p><b>Arts &amp; Humanities</b> – 2 courses (minimum 6 credits); courses can be from different sub-categories or from the same sub-category:  GT-AH1: Arts and Expression  GT-AH2: Literature and Humanities  GT-AH3: Ways of Thinking  GT-AH4: World Languages (must be 200 level)</p> <p><b>History</b> – 1 course (minimum 3 credits)  GT-HI1</p> <p><b>Social and Behavioral Sciences</b> – 1 course (minimum 3 credits)  GT-SS1: Economic or Political Systems  GT-SS2: Geography  GT-SS3: Human Behavior, Culture, or Social Frameworks</p> <p>*Students must select one more course from any of the above categories/sub-categories to equal at least 15 credits. (Multiple courses from the same sub-category are allowed.)</p>
<b>7</b>	<p><b>Natural and Physical Sciences</b> – 2 courses, at least one of which must be GT-SC1  GT-SC1: Course with Required Laboratory  GT-SC2: Lecture Course without Required Laboratory</p>
<b>31</b>	<b>TOTAL MINIMUM CREDITS</b>

To complete the gtPathways curriculum, students are required to complete the minimum 31 semester credit hours and earn a C- grade or better in each course. The guarantee of applicability of credit of gtPathways coursework to the receiving institution’s general education requirements is limited to the minimum number of semester credit hours in each category. So, for instance, if a student takes two GT-MA1 courses and then transfers, the receiving institution must apply only one of the GT-MA1 courses. The remaining GT-MA1 course may be applied to major or elective credit at the discretion of the institution.

#### 7.01 Limitations to gtPathways

Students and academic advisors should note that not all of a degree’s general education courses

may be gtPathways approved. Courses that are gtPathways approved are designated as such in each institution's Course Catalog. Generally speaking, as long as a student does not take more general education courses than are required for his or her degree or change his or her major, then gtPathways courses completed at one public or participating private institution with a C- or better shall be applied to the degree's general education requirements or the requirements of the declared major at the receiving institution, given that the degree's general education core contains gtPathways courses. These limitations are explained below in more detail.

#### 7.01.01 Limitation #1: Not All Degrees Contain the gtPathways Curriculum.

Some degrees do not contain the gtPathways curriculum in whole or in part. These degrees have waivers from the Commission not to have to include gtPathways in their general education cores.<sup>22</sup> It should be noted that although the general education cores of these degrees do not contain the gtPathways curriculum, they are still in line with the general education course guidelines in §23-1-125(3), C.R.S. That is, they are "...designed to ensure that students demonstrate competency in reading, critical thinking, written communication, mathematics, and technology". It is also important to note that institutions are still required to accept gtPathways courses in transfer and apply the credit when these degrees contain gtPathways courses in their general education cores. Since not every degree contains the gtPathways curriculum, this has several implications for students who will, or believe they may, transfer:

1. The gtPathways curriculum will satisfy at least 31 credits of general education requirements in most degrees, but not all degrees.
2. If the bachelor's degree into which the student intends to transfer contains the gtPathways curriculum, or an academic advisor for that degree affirms that the student's gtPathways courses will apply to major or elective requirements, then gtPathways courses are a good choice for that student.
3. If the degree does not contain the gtPathways curriculum, and the academic advisor indicates that none or few gtPathways courses will apply to the degree requirements, then the student should be advised that, although all coursework will *transfer*, it may not *apply* so it won't get the student closer to completing the bachelor's degree. Early transfer may be a good option in these instances.

#### 7.01.02 Limitation #2: Similarly Named Courses May Not Be Equivalent.

It is important to note that gtPathways courses are not based on course equivalencies but meet content and competency criteria. Same or similarly-named gtPathways courses at different institutions are not guaranteed to be equivalent to one another. Students should not presume that because they took a gtPathways course at one institution that the same or similarly-named gtPathways course at a different institution contains the same material. This is important because receiving institutions will sometimes advise students to take a course at their institution that has the same or similar name to a course they previously took at a different institution. Institutions advise students to do this when it has been determined that the student's previous coursework has not prepared them for subsequent coursework

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<sup>22</sup> A list of degrees that have been waived of gtPathways requirements is maintained on the Department's [website](#).

at the receiving institution. All gtPathways courses that are a part of the degree's general education will still transfer and apply to general education requirements.

## 7.02 Waivers of gtPathways Curriculum Requirements

Per §23-1-125(3), C.R.S., the Commission “may make allowances for baccalaureate programs that have additional degree requirements recognized by the commission”, thereby enabling institutions to develop academic programs that do not contain the full gtPathways curriculum. Institutions that seek a waiver from gtPathways curriculum requirements for a particular academic program must submit a formal request to the Department that includes responses to the following questions:

1. Why it is important that a gtPathways waiver be granted for this program (address the nature of the degree relative to the profession, if applicable, including work pathways for students entering the program)?
2. Which specific components of the gtPathways curriculum are requested to be waived or modified?
3. How will the institution ensure that the program includes a “core of courses” that provide a general education through which “students demonstrate competency in reading, critical thinking, written communications, mathematics, and technology”, as articulated in Colorado Revised Statutes 23-1-125(3)? How will the general education provided respond to the 10 competencies of the gtPathways curriculum?
4. What additional degree requirements, such as those associated with accreditation and licensure, make it impossible to include the full gtPathways in the program curriculum?
5. How will the absence of a gtPathways waiver potentially harm students (if, for example, it extends the time to degree beyond four years, or results in certain critical courses being left out of a program)?
6. How will the institution ensure that the gtPathways waiver will not create barriers to student transfer?

Upon receipt of an institutional request for a gtPathways waiver, Department staff will place the request on the agenda of an upcoming meeting of the General Education Council and invite institutional representatives to attend the meeting to answer questions. The General Education Council may offer a recommendation to the Department based on information provided by the requesting institution. Department staff will then determine whether to recommend to the Commission 1) a full/blanket waiver of gtPathways curriculum requirements; 2) a modified/limited waiver; or 3) no waiver. In the event a modified/limited waiver is recommended by staff and approved by the Commission, the staff would enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the institution or system to include details on the parameters of the curriculum variation, the waiver duration, and the verification process.

## 7.03 Colorado GenEd Foundational Skills Credential

The *Colorado GenEd Foundational Skills Credential* is a mechanism to formally recognize students when they have fulfilled all gtPathways requirements. The credential rewards students for achieving a significant milestone in their degree pathways and highlights the in-demand skills and competencies that are developed through general education – competencies that employers indicate regularly are foundational for workplace success, including civic engagement, creative thinking, critical thinking, diversity and global learning, information literacy, inquiry and analysis, problem solving, quantitative literacy, and written communication.

The *Colorado GenEd Foundational Skills Credential* is designed to be awarded to students who have completed all gtPathways requirements and appear on the academic transcript similar to other academic credentials including degrees, certificates, minors, and areas of concentration. Recognizing that some institutions require additional general education courses that go above and beyond gtPathways, institutions may require students to meet the institution’s full general education requirements before issuing the award. It is the prerogative of institutions to determine whether to award the credential, as well as the credential name, documentation, and method of award.

## **8.00 Transfer Options for Students**

The following parts of this Section 8.00 describe the options for students to transfer coursework among Colorado’s public and participating private institutions of higher education. To be effective, these transfer options require institutions of higher education to advise students on which courses are most appropriate for their intended major programs of study. Also, students need to consult with their academic advisors when registering for courses to make informed decisions if planning to transfer to another institution. Informed decision-making is the best strategy for successfully transferring coursework among institutions and ensuring this policy’s effectiveness.

### **8.01 Transfer of gtPathways Courses**

When evaluating a transfer student’s transcript, each public higher education institution will apply gtPathways credits to its general education requirements (where the degree’s general education core contains gtPathways courses), subject to the limitations listed above. In some cases, an institution, at its own discretion, may apply gtPathways courses to both general education and major requirements. Receiving institutions may not require students to demonstrate that the gtPathways courses they took at another institution adequately prepared the student for subsequent coursework at the receiving institution.

### **8.02 Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreements**

A Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreement (STAA) is an agreement among Colorado community colleges, junior colleges and four-year public institutions that offer a degree program in common, such as a Bachelor of Arts in History. Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreements allow students to:

- 8.02.01 Graduate from a two-year institution with a 60-credit Associate of Arts (A.A.) or Associate of Science (A.S.) Degree with Designation, such as an



Associate of Arts in Business [§23-60-211 and §23-71-123(3), C.R.S.]. Exceptions to the 60-credit limit may be made by the Commission to facilitate transfer in certain disciplines or fields, including where the associated bachelor's degree program has received a waiver from the 120-credit cap and/or GT Pathways curriculum requirements.

8.02.02 Enroll, with junior status, at a 4-year institution if the student successfully completes the A.A. or A.S. degree that is the subject of the Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreement. It is important to note, however, that successful completion of the A.A. or A.S. degree does not guarantee admission into the four-year institution or the degree program at the four-year institution [§23-1-108(7)(b)(I), C.R.S.]. Students should always seek advising from the appropriate advisor at their two-year institution and the four-year institution into which they plan to transfer.

8.02.03 Complete the bachelor's degree in no more than 60 additional credits at the receiving four-year institution (for a total of 120 credits) [§23-1-108(7)(b)(II), C.R.S.], except where the degree program has received a waiver from the Commission to exceed 120 credits [§23-1-125(1)(b), C.R.S.].

Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreements and other Degree Transfer Agreements are listed on the Department's [website](#).

### 8.03 Institutional Transfer Guides

Institutional Transfer Guides ensure that a student who completes an A.A. or A.S. degree with a grade of C- or better in all courses will have at least 60 credits of his or her A.A. or A.S. degree applied to the bachelor's degree requirements at the receiving institution and the students will be granted junior status if admitted. Because most liberal arts and sciences degrees are designed to be completed in 120 credit hours, a transfer student can complete many degrees in 120 credit hours and 4 years, given that the transfer student follows the degree plan outlined in the transfer guide and does not take courses that are not required. It should be noted, however, that not all degrees for which there are transfer guides can be completed in an additional 60 credits. Completion of the curriculum prescribed within Institutional Transfer Guides does not guarantee admission to a participating receiving institution. Students must meet all admission and application requirements at the receiving institution including the submission of all required documentation by stated deadlines. Please note: students transferring to a University of Colorado institution (Boulder, Colorado Springs, Denver) must satisfy the CU System's MAPS (Minimum Academic Preparation Standards) requirements.

Institutional Transfer Guides for each four-year institution are linked on the Department's [website](#).

8.04 Transfer of Associate of Arts and Associate of Science Degrees that are not Degrees

with Designation

A student who earns an Associate of Arts (A.A.) or Associate of Science (A.S.) degree (that is not a Degree with Designation) at a Colorado public institution, including completing the Pathways curriculum with a grade of C- or better in all courses, will transfer, upon admission, with junior standing into all liberal arts and sciences bachelor degree programs offered by a Colorado public four-year university. The credits earned in the associate degree program will apply at minimum to 31 credit hours of lower division general education and 29 credit hours of additional graduation credits. The receiving institution will evaluate credit for prior learning following its standard policy, and in alignment with the Commission's Prior Learning Assessment policy (Section I, Part X). Students should follow the Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreement (if one exists for the chosen bachelor's degree) or the receiving institution's Transfer Guide while considering what courses to complete as part of the A.A. or A.S. degree.

#### 8.05 Colorado Reverse Transfer (formerly known as "Degree within Reach")

Students who have some college completed but who have not yet attained a degree, may be eligible for an associate's degree if they meet the following criteria:

- The student has completed 15 credit hours at a community college in Colorado;
- The student has a minimum of 70 credit hours, including coursework at the four-year institution;
- The student has completed those 70 credit hours within 10 years of enrollment at any institution;
- The student's completed credit hours meet the requirements for an Associate of Science, Associate of Arts or Associate of General Studies, to be determined via degree audit at the community college; and
- The student has not requested that her or his data be withheld at either institution.

For more information, see the Department's [website](#).

#### 8.06 Transfer of Credits from Area Technical Colleges

Students who successfully complete Career and Technical Education (CTE) coursework may be able to transfer the credit for those courses into an Associate of General Studies (A.G.S.) degree, an Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree or a related certificate program. In regards to coursework completed at Area Technical Colleges, (including, but not limited to, Emily Griffith Technical College, Pickens Technical College, and Technical College of the Rockies) pursuant to §23-60-802, Colorado Revised Statutes:

...if a student completes a program of study at an area technical college and subsequently enrolls in an institution within the state system of community and technical colleges, or transfers from an area technical college to an institution within the state system of community and technical colleges, any postsecondary course credits earned by the student while enrolled in the area technical college will apply in full at another area technical college or

to an appropriate program leading to a certificate or to an associate degree at a community or technical college. Postsecondary credits earned by a student at an area technical college may be transferred into an associate degree program at a community college or into a degree program at a four-year institution of higher education as provided in [section 23-1-108 \(7\)](#) and the state credit transfer policies established by the Colorado commission on higher education.<sup>23</sup>

## 9.00 Student Complaints

If disagreement regarding the transferability of credits for coursework or a degree occurs between a student and a receiving institution, or disagreement regarding courses required of students transferring under a Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreement that result in the transfer student taking more total credit hours to receive the degree than a native student in the same academic program, the Department will facilitate an expeditious review and resolution of the matter pursuant to Commission Policy, Section I, Part T: Student Complaint Policy. Complaints can be filed [online](#). Per §23-1-108(7)(a), “The Commission shall have final authority in resolving transfer disputes”.

HISTORY: CCHE Agenda Item V, D – March 14, 2014; CCHE Agenda Item III, I – April 11, 2014; CCHE Agenda Item V, B – February 7, 2019; CCHE Agenda Item III, B – March 8, 2019; CCHE Agenda Item III, A – May 3, 2019; CCHE Agenda Item IV, A – May 1, 2020; CCHE Agenda Item IV, E – October 22, 2020; CCHE Agenda Item III, A – December 3, 2020; CCHE Agenda Item III, D – June 6, 2024.

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<sup>23</sup> Community colleges and 4-year institutions may accept credits earned from an area technical college as long as that school is accredited to offer the credit. Area technical colleges are not accredited to offer general education (gtPathways).

**TOPIC:** APPROVAL OF ANNUAL COF ELIGIBILITY AND STUDENT FTE FOR EXTENDED STUDIES PROGRAMS FOR FY25

**PREPARED BY:** DR. CHRIS RASMUSSEN, SENIOR DIRECTOR OF ACADEMIC PATHWAYS AND INNOVATION

## **I. SUMMARY**

This consent item is to approve College Opportunity Fund (COF) eligibility for the Extended Studies programs listed below for Fiscal Year 2025.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education has statutory authority to approve COF eligibility for selected off-campus (Extended Studies) undergraduate programs per §23-1-109(5), Colorado Revised Statutes. CCHE Policy Section IV: Statewide Extended Studies, subsection 5.02, states that “up to one-half of one percent of the total estimated state eligible [COF] credit hours will be allocated to off-campus programs.” Following this policy, Department staff collected proposals from institutions to recommend to the Commission for approval for FY25 COF eligibility. The Department recommends Commission approval only for complete undergraduate academic programs that result in a degree or another credential. Other considerations include how the program will help meet the state’s workforce development needs; the extent to which the program is directed at underserved populations; and justification of any duplication of a similar program offered by another institution in the same geographic area.

## **III. STAFF ANALYSIS**

This year, only one proposal met the published criteria and is recommended for support. Staff recommends approving the requested FTE for COF eligibility for the following institution’s off-campus programs:

### **Colorado State University Pueblo (280 COF FTE)**

- Business Management, Bachelor of Science in Business Administration
- Construction Management, Bachelor of Science
- Health Science Administration, Bachelor of Applied Science
- Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing
- Diversity Studies Certificate
- Construction Project Manager Certificate
- Estimating and Planning Construction Costs Certificate
- Surveying and Modeling Certificate

- Construction Safety, Law & Management Certificate
- Construction Procurement Certificate

As noted earlier, per CCHE Policy Section IV: Statewide Extended Studies, “up to one-half of one percent of the total estimated state eligible [COF] credit hours will be allocated to off-campus programs.” The Department’s Division of Finance reports that the amount of COF allocated to off-campus programs for FY2021 for state institutions is 111,194 FTE. The institution’s off-campus requested 280 FTE for COF eligibility for FY2025 listed above is within the allowable amount. Moreover, Department staff and institutional representatives verify that these programs are designed to help meet the State of Colorado’s workforce development needs; extend opportunities to underserved populations; and are justifiable in light of any duplication of similar programs offered by another institution in the same geographic area.

#### **IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**Staff recommends that the Commission approve COF eligibility and requested FTE for the Extended Studies programs listed above for FY2025.**

#### **V. STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

##### **C.R.S. §23-1-109. Duties and powers of the commission with regard to off-campus instruction**

- (1) The general assembly declares its intent that the state-supported institutions of higher education may engage in instruction off the geographic boundaries of their campuses.
- (2) The commission shall define, after consultation with the governing boards of institutions, the geographic and programmatic service areas for each state-supported institution of higher education. No such institution shall provide instruction off-campus in programs or in geographic areas or at sites not approved by the commission, unless otherwise provided by law.
- (3) The general assembly declares its intent that all instruction at two-year institutions, including the first two years of instruction at Adams state university and Colorado Mesa university, shall be funded throughout the institutions' commission-approved service area on the same basis as on-campus instruction.
- (4) The department shall administer any centralized, statewide extension and continuing education program of instruction that may be offered by any state-supported baccalaureate and graduate institution. All instruction offered outside the geographic boundaries of the campus, including instruction delivered by television or other technological means, shall be a part of this program unless exempted by policy and action of the commission.

(5) The commission shall set policies, after consultation with the governing boards of institutions, which define which courses and programs taught outside the geographic boundaries of the campus may be eligible for general fund support. The commission may include funding for those courses and programs in its systemwide funding recommendations to the general assembly.

**TOPIC:** FISCAL YEAR 2024-25 FINANCIAL AID ALLOCATION APPROVAL

**PREPARED BY:** DEANNA CASTANEDA, LEAD FINANCE ANALYST AND COREY EVANS, BUDGET DIRECTOR

**SUMMARY**

This action item seeks approval of the Fiscal Year 2024-25 financial aid allocations for the State's undergraduate need, graduate need, work-study and career and technical education financial aid programs. Categorical aid allocations are also included for informational purposes, though the Department and Commission do not have authority over them. For FY2024-25, the Department is recommending a proportional increase in financial aid due to the lack of data available. The Department intends on this being a year action.

**BACKGROUND**

Pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) 23-3.3-102 (2), each year the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) allocates the state-funded, student financial aid appropriations to eligible higher education institutions. Financial aid in Colorado is decentralized; while allocations are made by the Commission, individual packaging decisions are made at the institution level. The Commission does not make funding decisions for individual students. The CCHE's financial aid policy, Section VI F, describes goals, aid programs and eligibility.

The financial aid policy is guided by the following three principles:

1. Maximize the amount of financial aid funds available to Colorado residents;
2. Direct state need-based dollars to students with the least ability to pay; and,
3. Recognize that students can make choices that impact what they pay, such as working or earning scholarships.

House Bill 24-1430 includes an 11% increase in non-entitlement financial aid for Fiscal Year 2024-25 over Fiscal Year 2023-24. The entirety of this increase was in the need-based financial aid line. As such, the Colorado Student Grant and Graduate Grant increased by 11% while the Work Study and Career and Technical Grants were held flat. The appropriation for the Fort Lewis Native American Tuition Waiver (FLNAW), which provides payments to Fort Lewis College for Native American student tuition waivers as mandated by Section 23-52-105 C.R.S., decreased by approximately \$235,968 dollars due to enrollment decline. Finally, the Dependent Tuition Assistance Program, which provides financial aid to the dependents of occupationally disabled police and firefighters, remained flat at \$1,643,700. Table 1 shows FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25 appropriations as reflected in the Long Bill. Due to a Joint Budget Committee decision, up to \$4 million dollars is available for reallocation from need-based financial aid for use by the Colorado Opportunity Scholarship (COSI) over the next two fiscal years. \$2 million has been reallocated for FY2024-25.

**Table 1: FY 2023 and Current Long Bill FY 2024 General Fund Financial Aid Appropriations**

	FY 24 Appropriation	FY 25 Appropriation	\$ Change	% Change
Undergraduate & Graduate Need	\$228,897,742	\$256,288,026	\$27,390,284	11%
Work Study	\$23,129,178	\$23,129,178	\$0	0%
Career and Technical Education (CTE)	\$450,000	\$450,000	\$0	0%
Dependent Tuition Assistance Program (DTAP)	\$1,643,700	\$1,643,700	\$0	0%
FLNAW	\$22,264,858	\$22,028,890	-\$235,968	-2.1%

**III. STAFF ANALYSIS**

The following reviews the state funded financial aid categories included in the FY 2024-25 Long Appropriations Bill.

**Need-Based Aid - \$256,288,026**

Need-based aid is distributed via two formulas, the Completion Incentive Grant model (also referred to as the Colorado Student Grant or CSG model) and the Critical Careers Graduate Grant model (also referred to as the Graduate Grant model). Additional details on both models are available below. All models were approved by the FPA and full Commission in 2022. As a note, the below described allocation methods were *not* used for FY2024-25. The Department used a proportional increase methodology to ensure fairness and transparency. The Department intends on returning to the below approved allocation methodology for FY2025-26 and has left the description of such below.

**A. Completion Incentive Grant (Colorado Student Grant) - \$234,143,196**

The Completion Incentive Grant Program, also referred to as the Colorado Student Grant or CSG, is awarded to undergraduate students with demonstrated financial need. Allocations are based on the sum of student FTE that are in-state, have a Pell-eligible expected family contribution (EFC), and attending at least 0.5 time at each institution with differential dollar allocations based on the FTE at each class rank. The goal of the undergraduate need-based aid model is to encourage institutions to support student progress and timely completion; target aid to the neediest students; and ensure year-to-year predictability for financial aid administrators.

The CSG allocation method provides more aid to institutions who enroll students that have the highest demonstrated need by providing a set amount for each FTE meeting the



aforementioned requirements and increasing that amount of aid awarded to the institution incrementally by student grade-level. This is intended to incentivize institutions to improve the retention and progress of Pell-eligible students. The incremental allocation per FTE between class rank levels was reduced by 25% beginning in 2022 to recognize the disadvantage this posed to two-year institutions.

To encourage institutions to support timely completion, the model also includes an upper limit for advanced seniors – students who have reached their Pell Lifetime Eligibility Used (LEU) as determined by federal financial aid processing documents. Institutions receive the same allocation for advanced seniors as they do for freshman students.

Stability is a key tenant of the need-based financial aid funding model; therefore, a three-year rolling average and a guardrail provision are in place to prevent large fluctuations in allocations to institutions. The lower guardrail is equal to percentage enrollment growth/decline plus than Higher Education Price Index (HEPI). The upper guardrail is equal to three times the growth of the overall allocation for the program.

For FY2024-25, a proportional increase methodology was chosen to ensure transparency and fairness while the Department worked on addressing properly collecting the necessary data to run the approved allocation methodology. The Department determined how much of an increase in allocation each IHE received in FY2023-24 and gave that institution the same proportional percentage increase for FY2024-25.

#### **B. Critical Careers Funding for Graduate Students (Graduate Grant) - \$17,871,434**

This program allocates need-based financial aid for graduate students enrolled in critical career programs as identified by the Colorado Talent Pipeline Report and state priorities. This list was revised in the approved methodology changes. Graduate Grant allocations are based on the sum of student FTE that are in-state, have a Pell-eligible EFC, are enrolled at least 0.5 time, and are enrolled in the list of approved programs.

#### **Work Study Financial Aid - \$23,129,178**

Colorado's Work Study Program allows students to earn funds to assist in attending eligible educational institutions. It is considered a form of "self-help" assistance since the student is earning money to help meet educational costs. Employment may be in jobs at eligible Colorado educational institutions, non-profit organizations, governmental agencies, or for-profit organizations. At least 70 percent of work study funds must be awarded to students with documented financial need. FY 2024-25 funding for work study remained flat to the prior year. Previous years' work study allocations were primarily historical.

#### **Career and Technical Education - \$450,000**

HB 15-1275 was part of the package of workforce bills passed during the 2015 legislative session. This supports low-income students pursuing credentials in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs that are too short to be eligible for a Pell grant. CTE allocations remained the same from

the program’s creation through FY 2020-21. In FY 2021-22, the Department/Commission updated the model to reflect actual completions data in eligible programs, with new allocations being phased in over multiple years in order to preserve stability in allocations from year to year. This is the first year where all three years included in the formula were actual completions. The total allocation has remained at \$450,000 since the program’s inception.

**Categorical Financial Aid** – *see Table 2 below*

Categorical Financial Aid covers the Native American Tuition Assistance program at Fort Lewis College (FLNAW) and Dependents Tuition Assistance Program (DTAP) grants, which are entitlements that go directly to eligible students. **Table 2** details the appropriations to these categorical financial aid appropriations by year.

The Native American Tuition Assistance Program provides tuition for all eligible Native American students at Fort Lewis College under an agreement between the U.S. Government and the State of Colorado. Cost increases/decreases are tied to enrollment shifts and tuition levels. DTAP provides financial support for dependents of law enforcement, firefighters, and eligible military personnel who were injured in the line of duty. The program is authorized by state statute. In FY 2024-25, the DTAP appropriation remained flat.

**Table 2: Summary of State Categorical Financial Aid Programs**

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
FLNAW	\$25,563,965	\$22,264,858	\$22,028,890
DTAP	\$1,143,700	\$1,643,700	\$1,643,700

**Proprietary Institutions**

Five private for-profit institutions currently receive allocations of state financial aid. All five institutions receive a Colorado Student Grant allocation, and Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design (RMCAD) receives an additional allocation of Colorado Work Study. However, proprietary institutions do not participate directly in the funding allocation models; instead, they receive an increase (or decrease) in CSG proportional to the increase (or decrease) in the need-based aid line overall. RMCAD receives the same amount of work study each year. Allocations can be seen in Attachment A.

**IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**Staff recommends approval of the Fiscal Year 2024-25 Financial Aid Allocations provided in Attachment A.**

**V. STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

C.R.S. 23-3.3-102(2): Assistance program authorized - procedure - audits.

(1) The general assembly hereby authorizes the commission to establish a program of financial assistance, to be operated during any school sessions, including summer sessions for students attending institutions.

(2) The commission shall determine, by guideline, the institutions eligible for participation in the program and shall annually determine the amount allocated to each institution.

**ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment A: Fiscal Year 2024-25 Financial Aid Allocations



## COLORADO COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION - BYLAWS

### **Section 1. Organization and Meetings**

- 1.1 **Organization:** Pursuant to C.R.S. §23-1-102, the Commission shall consist of eleven members appointed by the Governor with the consent of the Senate. The members of the Commission are selected on the basis of their knowledge of and interest in higher education and shall serve for four-year terms. No member of the Commission may serve more than two consecutive full four-year terms.
- 1.2 **Officers:** Pursuant to C.R.S. §23-1-110, the officers of the Commission shall be the Chair and Vice Chair. The Secretary shall be the Executive Director of the Commission and the Department and is a non-voting member of the Commission. The Governor appoints, with the consent of the Senate, the Executive Director to serve as the executive officer of the Commission and the Department.
- 1.3 All officers shall be elected at the May meeting of the Commission to serve a term of one year, except the Secretary whose term shall be coterminous with his or her term as Executive Director. Any member may nominate themselves or another member to be chair or vice-chair. Members will vote on each position; if there is more than one nomination the vote will be conducted by private ballot to be counted by the Secretary. Officers shall be limited to two consecutive terms, unless an exception is approved by a vote of more than 60 percent of the Commission. When possible, a Commissioner is encouraged to serve as vice-chair prior to becoming chair.
- 1.4 **Regular Meetings of the Commission:** The Commission shall adopt at the October Commission meeting a schedule of regular meetings of the Commission for the following calendar year.
- 1.3 **Notice of Meetings:** Any meetings at which the adoption of any proposed policy, position, resolution, rule, regulation, or formal action occurs or at which a majority or quorum of the body is in attendance, or is expected to be in attendance, shall be held only after full and timely notice to the public. In addition to any other means selected by the Commission for giving notice to the public, the Commission shall post notice of its meetings at the office of the Colorado Department of Higher Education located at 1560 Broadway, Suite 1600, Denver, Colorado 80202 and on the Colorado Department of Higher Education website. Notices shall be posted no less than two days prior to the holding of the meeting. The posting shall include specific agenda information where possible.
- 1.4 **Special Meetings:** Special meetings of the Commission may be held at the call of the Chair on two days' notice, or at the request of five members of the Commission who may petition the Chair to call such a meeting. Notice of special meetings shall be made electronically or by telephone and posted at the office and on the website of the Colorado

Department of Higher Education no less than two days prior to the meeting date.

- 1.5 **Conduct of Meetings:** The Chair shall preside at all meetings at which he or she is present. In the Chair's absence, the Vice Chair shall preside, and in the event both are absent, those present shall elect a presiding officer. All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with all State laws and regulations. The parliamentary rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, latest revision, shall govern in all cases to which they are applicable, except as modified herein.
- 1.6 **Attendance at Meetings:** The term of any member of the Commission who misses more than two consecutive regular Commission meetings without good cause, as determined by the Chair, shall be terminated and his successor appointed in the manner provided for appointments under C.R.S. §23-1-102.
- 1.7 **Preparation of Agenda:** Meeting agendas shall be prepared by the Executive Director of the Department. A monthly agenda call will be scheduled with the Chair, Vice Chair, and Executive Director, or his or her designee, to discuss and approve the proposed agenda. At a regular or special meeting, an item of business may be considered for addition to the agenda by a majority vote of the Commissioners present.
- 1.8 **Minutes of the Commission:** The Secretary shall maintain an accurate set of minutes of Commission meetings, which shall include a complete record of all actions taken by the Commission. Such minutes shall constitute a permanent record. After the minutes of each meeting are completed they shall be reviewed by the Commission and, after approval, posted on the CCHE website and made available to the public for inspection upon written request.
- 1.9 **Standing Committees:** The Commission may create standing or ad hoc committees comprised of Commissioners to research and make recommendations on specific issues for the full Commission to consider and act on.

## **Section 2. Duties and Responsibilities of Officers**

- 2.1 **Chair of the Commission:** The Chair of the Commission shall preside at meetings of the Commission at which he or she is in attendance.
- 2.2 **Vice Chair of the Commission:** The Vice Chair shall perform all duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence.
- 2.3 **The Secretary/Executive Director of the Commission:** In addition to performing those duties established by law, the Executive Director of the Commission and Department shall: (a) serve as the Secretary of the Commission, (b) meet with the officers and staff of institutions of higher learning as the needs dictate for a mutual discussion of the matters affecting the responsibilities of the Commission, (c) meet with appropriate state and federal groups and/or officials on matters pertaining to the Commission, (d) meet with appropriate committees of the General Assembly on matters pertaining to the

Commission's responsibilities, (e) appoint such professional staff as in his or her judgment are required and are within the budget approved by the Commission and for which funds are available, (f) prepare an annual operating budget and work program for approval by the Commission, (g) implement the policies of the Commission and communicate those policies to interested parties as appropriate.

### **Section 3. The Advisory Committee**

3.1 There is hereby established an advisory committee pursuant to C.R.S. §23-1- 103).

Advisory Committee Members: The advisory committee shall consist of not less than thirteen members, to be designated as follows:

(a) Six members shall be appointed from the General Assembly, including three senators, two of whom shall be from the majority party, appointed by the President of the Senate and one of who shall be from the minority party appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate, and three representatives, two of whom shall be from the majority party, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and one of who shall be from the minority party appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives. Said six members shall be appointed for terms of two years or for the same terms to which they were elected to the general assembly, whichever is the lesser. Successors shall be appointed in the same manner as the original members;

(b) One member shall be selected and designated by the Commission, as recommended by the Colorado Faculty Advisory Council, to represent the faculty in the state;

(c) One member shall be selected and designated by the Commission, as recommended by the Student Affairs Council, to represent the students in the state for a term of one year, commencing on July 1 of the year appointed;

(d) One member shall be selected and designated by the Commission who is a parent of a student enrolled in a state supported institution of higher education in Colorado to represent the parents of students for a term of two years, commencing on July 1 of the year appointed.

(e) Not more than four additional members representing educational or other groups may be selected and designated by the Commission to serve on the advisory committee.

The Commission has designated the four additional advisory committee members to represent:

- Chief Academic Officers of Colorado's state supported institutions of higher education, as recommended by the Colorado Academic Council;
- Chief Financial Officers of Colorado's state supported institutions of higher education, as recommended by the, as recommended by the Chief Financial Officers group;

- Independent Higher Education Institutions in Colorado (Colorado College, Regis, and Denver University), as recommended by the Independent Higher Education Council; and,
- The K-12 system, as recommended by the Colorado Department of Education.

All such appointments shall be for a term of two years, commencing on July 1 of the year appointed.

- 3.2 Notice and Agendas: All members of the advisory committee shall receive agendas and background material and be notified of all public meetings of the Commission and shall be invited to attend for the purpose of suggesting solutions for the problems and needs of higher education and maintaining liaison with the general assembly.
- 3.3 Recommendations of the Advisory Committee: The members of the advisory committee shall have full opportunity to present their views on any matter before the Commission.

#### **Section 4. Change in Bylaws**

- 4.1 Bylaws shall be subject to amendment at any meeting of the Commission provided any such proposed change is listed on the agenda in accordance with the procedure outlined in Section 1.5 Notice of Meetings. Bylaw changes must be approved by a majority of the Commission.

HISTORY: Adopted on September 10, 1965. Amended January 14, 1966; February 25, 1972; June 1, 1978; July 1, 1993; October 7, 2004; May 6, 2011; CCHE Agenda March 3, 2017 Item V; April 5, 2019





## INSTITUTION AND SYSTEM LEADERS

<u><b>INSTITUTION</b></u>	<u><b>CEO</b></u>	<u><b>LOCATION</b></u>
<b>Adams State University</b>	David Tandber, President	Alamosa
<b>Aims Community College</b>	Dr. Leah Bornstein, President	Greeley
<b>Community College System</b>	Joe Garcia, Chancellor	Denver
Arapahoe CC	President Dr. Stephanie Fujii,	Littleton
Colorado Northwestern CC	President Dr. Lisa Jones	Rangely
CC of Aurora	President Mordecai Brownlee,	Aurora
CC of Denver	President Marielena DeSanctis	Denver
Front Range CC	President Colleen Simpson	Westminster
Lamar CC	President Dr. Linda Lujan	Lamar
Morgan CC	President Dr. Curt Freed	Ft. Morgan
Northeastern JC	President Michael White	Sterling
Otero JC	President Dr. Timothy Alvarez	La Junta
Pikes Peak CC	President Dr. Lance Bolton	Colorado Springs
Pueblo CC	President Dr. Patty Erjavec	Pueblo
Red Rocks CC	President Dr. Landon Pirius	Lakewood
Trinidad State JC	President Dr. Rhonda Epper	Trinidad
<b>Colorado Mesa University</b>	President John Marshall	Grand Junction
<b>Colorado Mountain College</b>	President Dr. Carrie Besnette Hauser	Glenwood Springs
<b>Colorado School of Mines</b>	President Paul Johnson	Golden
<b>Colorado State System</b>	Dr. Tony Frank, Chancellor	Denver
CSU-Ft Collins	President Amy Parsons	Fort Collins
CSU-Pueblo	President Armando Valdez	Pueblo
CSU-Global Campus	President Becky Takeda-Tinker	Aurora
<b>CU System</b>	Interim President Todd Saliman	Denver
CU – Boulder	Chancellor Dr. Philip DiStefano	Boulder
UCCS	Chancellor Jennifer Sobanet	Colorado Springs
UCD	Chancellor Dr. Michelle Marks	Denver
UC-Anschutz	Chancellor Don Elliman	Aurora
<b>Emily Griffith Technical College</b>	Randy Johnson, Executive Director	Denver
<b>Ft. Lewis College</b>	President Steven Schwartz	Durango
<b>Metropolitan State University of Denver</b>	President Janine Davidson	Denver



<b>Pickens Technical College</b>	Dr. Teina McConnell, Executive	Aurora
<b>Technical College of the Rockies</b>	Randall Palmer, Director	Delta
<b>University of Northern Colorado</b>	Dr. Andy Feinstein, President	Greeley
<b>Western State Colorado University</b>	Brad Baca, President	Gunnison

# Higher Education Glossary

**529 Savings Plan** - 529 plans are more than just savings accounts. These state-sponsored college savings plans were established by the federal government in Section 529 of the Internal Revenue Code to encourage families to save more for college. They offer unique state and federal tax benefits you can't get from other ways to save, making them one of the best ways to save for college.

**Accuplacer** - A suite of computer-adaptive placement tests that are used as assessment tools at institutions to evaluate the level of course work for a student. Students measured as needing additional course work will be assigned to remediation.

**Admission Standard** - includes both Freshman and Transfer standard. The freshman standard applies to all in-state and out-of-state new freshmen applicants and to transfer applicants with 12 or fewer college credit hours, except freshmen and transfer applicants who meet one of the admissions standards index exemptions. The transfer standard applies to all degree-seeking undergraduate transfer applicants with more than 12 college credit hours who do not meet one of the exemptions

**Admission Window** - Defined in Admission policy, "The maximum allowable percentage of admitted students who are not required to meet the CCHE admission standards within a specific fiscal year is referred to as the admissions window. Separate windows exist for the freshmen and transfer standards. The allowable percentage is determined by the Commission." The percentages vary by institution.

**CAP4K** - SB08-212, Preschool to Postsecondary Education Alignment Act; Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids.

**CHEA** - Council for Higher Education Accreditation. As described on their website, CHEA is "A national advocate and institutional voice for self-regulation of academic quality through accreditation, CHEA is an association of 3,000 degree-granting colleges and universities and recognizes 60 institutional and programmatic accrediting organizations."

**CIP** - Classification of Instructional Program; The purpose of which is to provide a taxonomic scheme that will support the accurate tracking, assessment, and reporting of fields of study and program completions activity. (Relevant in Role & Mission)

**CLEP** - College Level Examination Program; Earn college credit for passing a subject specific examination.

**COA** - Cost of Attendance; in the context of financial aid, it is an estimate of what it will reasonably cost the student to attend a given institution for a given period of time.

**Concurrent Enrollment** – A high school student enrolled for one or more classes at a college or university in addition to high school courses.

**Dually Enrolled** - A student enrolled at two institutions at the same time. This may affect enrollment reports when both institutions count that student as enrolled.

**EFC** - Expected Family Contribution; in the context of financial aid, it is calculated by a federally-approved formula that accounts for income, assets, number of family members attending college, and other information.

**FAFSA** - Free Application for Federal Student Aid. This is a free service provided by the Federal government under the Department of Education and students are not charged to complete/file the FAFSA.

**FAP** – Financial Aid Plan (HESP specific)

**FERPA** - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, view federal website. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

**FFS** – Fee-For-Service Contracts; A portion of the College Opportunity Fund program in addition to COF stipends, this contract provides funding to certain higher education institutions to supplement high cost programs and purchase additional services (such as graduate programs).

**Floor** - In reference to the admission window, the floor is the minimum requirements for admission without requiring an exception of some kind. This usually coincides with the Index score.

**FTE** - Full-time Equivalent; a way to measure a student's academic enrollment activity at an educational institution. An FTE of 1.0 means that the student is equivalent to full-time enrollment, or 30 credit hours per academic year for an undergraduate student.

**GEARUP** - Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs; A Federal discretionary grant program designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education.

**Guaranteed Transfer, GT Pathways** - gtPATHWAYS applies to all Colorado public institutions of higher education, and there are more than 900 lower-division general education courses in 20 subject areas approved for guaranteed transfer. Courses are approved at least twice per academic and calendar year and apply the next semester immediately following their approval.

**HB 1023** - In most cases, refers to HB 06S-1023, which declares "It is the public policy of the state of Colorado that all persons eighteen years of age or older shall provide proof that they are lawfully present in the United States prior to receipt of certain public benefits."

**HB 1024** - In most cases, refers to HB 06-1024, which declares "On or before September 1, 2006, each governing board of a state institution of higher education shall submit to the Colorado commission on higher education and the education committees of the senate and the house of representatives, or any successor committees, a report regarding underserved students".

**HB 1057** - In most cases, refers to HB 05-1057, which declares "a college preparation program operating within the school district that the college preparation program shall provide to the Colorado commission on higher education, on or before December 31 of each school year, a report specifying each student, by unique identifying number."

**HEAR** - Higher Education Admission Requirements, 2008-2010.

**Index, Index Score** - This index score is a quantitative evaluation that is part of a larger student application evaluation. The score is generated from academic achievement (GPA or High School Rank) and college placement tests (ACT or SAT). You can calculate your index score online. Index varies by institution depending on that institutions selection criteria.

**IPEDS** - Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System; Run by NCES, this system collects statistical data and information on postsecondary institutions. The Colorado Department of Higher Education submits aggregated data on public institutions to IPEDS.

**Need** - In the context of student financial aid, Need is calculated by the difference between the COA (Cost of Attendance) and the EFC (Expected Family Contribution)

**NCATE** - National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education; NCATE is the profession's mechanism to help establish high quality teacher preparation.

**NCLB** - No Child Left Behind; The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) -- the main federal law affecting education from kindergarten through high school.

**PSEO** - Post Secondary Enrollment Option; A program that offers concurrent enrollment in college courses while in high school.

**PWR** - Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness; Definition was created during the SB08-212 CAP4K meetings.

**QIS** - Quality Indicator System; Implemented in HB96-1219, the specific quality indicators involved in QIS are similar to those used in the variety of quality indicator systems found in other states: graduation rates, freshmen retention and persistence rates, passing scores or rates on tests and licensure examinations, undergraduate class size, faculty teaching workload rates, and institutional support/administrative expenditures.

**REP** - Regional Education Provider; Colorado Statute authorizes Adams State College, Fort Lewis College, Mesa State College and Western State College to function as regional

educational providers and “have as their primary goal the assessment of regional educational needs...”  
Regional education providers focus their attention on a certain geographical area.

**SB 3** – In most cases refers to SB10-003, the Higher Education Flexibility Bill.

**SB 212** - In most cases, refers to HB 08-212, the CAP4K legislation.

**SBE** - State Board of Education; As described on their website, "Members of the Colorado State Board of Education are charged by the Colorado Constitution with the general supervision of the public schools. They have numerous powers and duties specified in state law. Individuals are elected on a partisan basis to serve six-year terms without pay."

**SFSF** – State Fiscal Stabilization Fund; A component of the ARRA legislation and funding.

**SURDS** - Student Unit Record Data System

**WICHE** - Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education; A regional research and policy organization that assists students, policymakers, educators, and institutional, business and community leaders. WICHE states include: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

**WUE** - Western Undergraduate Exchange Program, managed by WICHE