

TOPIC: 2012 REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE STATUS OF PERFORMANCE CONTRACTS

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I. SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the status of participating private institutions' compliance with the requirements of their performance contracts.

II. BACKGROUND

In 2004, along with the College Opportunity Fund (COF), SB 04-189 created an alternative to traditional state regulation of higher education institutions. SB 04-189 permitted certain private institutions of higher education in the state to participate in the College Opportunity Fund. Three private institutions—the University of Denver, Colorado Christian University, and Regis University—elected to participate in the COF program and, accordingly, signed performance contracts with the state.

III. STAFF ANALYSIS

The three private institutions that have performance contracts with the state of Colorado are Colorado Christian University, Regis University and University of Denver. The quality assurance reporting that is developed with these private institutions differs from that with the public institutions and focuses specifically on the graduation, retention, and success rates of participating Pell-eligible students.

The performance contracts with Colorado Christian University, University of Denver and Regis University contain three goals:

1. Access: Increase by three percentage points the enrollment of underserved students, including low-income (PELL eligible) individuals, males, and minorities;
2. Retention: Ensure that the retention rate for low-income, male and minority students meets or exceeds the institution's overall retention rate; and
3. Other State Needs: The goal is to transmit to the department annually educator preparation, student enrollment, and student completer data.

The access goal was to increase the enrollment of low-income (PELL eligible) students by three percentage points. All institutions met this goal.

Regarding the second goal (retention), Colorado Christian University's deadline to reach it is by June 30, 2014. University of Denver's and Regis University's deadline was June 30, 2010. Both DU and Regis University met their retention goals.

On the third overall goal (other state needs), all three private institutions continue to meet this goal.

It should also be noted that since the three private institutions have relatively small populations of Pell-eligible students. As a result, rate calculations viewed on a year-over-year basis can be unstable. A future consideration for performance contracts is to use "number of individuals retained" rather than "retention rate," or some other metric, because rates that are based on small population sizes can be misleading and leave themselves open to misinterpretation.

V. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

This report is an information item only; no formal action is required by the Commission.

VI. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Copies of all relevant statute, policy, and each institution's or system's performance contract reports are on file in the Academic Affairs Office.

VII. STATUTORY AUTHORITY

23-5-129. Governing boards - performance contract - authorization – operations.

(5)(b) Beginning January 2006, and each January thereafter, data collected and used to measure a state or private institution of higher education's progress towards the goals set forth in the institution's performance contract with the department of higher education shall be made available to the members of the education committees of the house of representatives and the senate, members of the joint budget committee, each governing board, and each institution of higher education covered by a performance contract. The department of higher education shall also provide copies of the data to other members of the general assembly and members of the public on request s.

