

Accessibility

Recommendation #1

Integrated System: Colorado requires an integrated higher education system to meet its needs. An effective oversight body with a system view is needed to identify state needs, direct policy to address them, and enforce accountability.

- Maintain clarity of and focus on mission
 - Colorado residents and students should be able to easily understand -- and rely on -- the mission and quality of education (certificates to degrees) to be achieved at each of Colorado's public institutions.
- Adhere to tiered selectivity
 - Colorado's current tiered system, with open to highly selective admission requirements, should be preserved but revised to fewer tiers with clearer, focused selectivity requirements.
 - Rather than presenting barriers, the tiered selectivity should be used as a vehicle to ensure higher education in Colorado meets Colorado's accessibility needs for all of its citizens.
- Consider state funding with view to the system
 - State appropriations, tuition policy, state financial aid and institutional subsidies should be considered together when assessing policy changes.
 - Funding streams should be integrated, including COF, federal, state, local and institutional student financial aid, and tuition and fees, to ensure access for targeted students.
 - Colorado's tiered system should be used as a mechanism for the state to target funding as it deems appropriate.
- Assure financial access for targeted populations

- o State and institutional financial aid funding, policies and practices should be overseen centrally to ensure goals for access and completion for targeted populations are met and aligned with economic development needs.
- o Advocacy for more funding for student financial aid should be paramount, including appeals to business and industry as well as foundations and the federal government.
- o Students and families should be informed of the costs, benefits, and potential return on their higher education investments.

Challenges 2, 6 addressed.

Accessibility

Recommendation #2

Student Educational Access: Colorado students need flexible entry points and paths to completion.

- Entry points – Before admittance:
 - Student “readiness” for college level work should be determined sooner, including using assessments in 11th grade or earlier.
 - Career cluster/pathway models should be in practice, transparent, and supported statewide regardless of the educational institution.
 - Supportive services should be in place before post secondary education.
 - Targeted “awareness” campaign should be developed and implemented designed to “break” barriers suggesting that “higher education is not for us”.
 - Efforts must continue to create pathways through higher education completion for students regardless of their immigration status.
- Entry points – “Deemed” admittance:
 - All qualified students should be guaranteed admittance into Colorado’s integrated system of public higher education institutions.
 - Students who satisfy defined admission requirements for each tier of the system should be deemed to be admitted to a school in that tier as well as colleges below that tier.
 - Notice should be sent, proactively, to students and families stating that, based on admittance criteria established for such tier, the student has been admitted to college.
- Paths to completion -- Movement between institutions and tiers:

- o All qualified students should be able to move to public institutions with more selective admission criteria (up the pyramid) if they meet transparent and uniform transfer requirements.
- o Transfer to public institutions from two year to four year institutions of qualified students should be developed from the student's perspective, should be seamless and should be instituted statewide.
- o Dual admittance in "sister" higher education institutions should be in practice statewide and supported
- o Concurrent enrollment with high schools should be statewide practice and supported.

Challenges 3, 4, 5, 7 addressed.

Accessibility

Recommendation #3

Student Financial Access: Students need affordable opportunities to complete higher education.

- Choice at all tiers based on merit, not affordability:
 - Students who qualify for admission on merit should find that institution affordable to attend according to their financial needs.
 - Students attending public institutions at the top of the pyramid should be charged competitive market tuition and fees. “Opportunity slots” should be accessible at upper tier institutions, to be paid for by institutional subsidies and to be filled by a diverse pool of students.
 - For qualified, low income students, 100% of their financial need should be met, through a combination of loans, grants and self help and without use of parent or private loans.
 - Just as with federal Pell grants, need-based financial aid should be awarded to students directly and should be portable to any Colorado public, regionally accredited, non-profit higher education institution.
- Better, easier process:
 - Students should be assisted with financial planning, including requiring them to use FASFA 4caster in 11th grade and providing them statements detailing expected costs and financial aid potential.
 - Financial aid information should be shared sooner through vehicles that reach targeted groups (e.g. social networking, multi-lingual).
 - One statewide application form, if necessary, should be used, and timing of Pell and state aid calendar should be aligned.
- More financial aid, better use of it:

- o State financial aid funding for undergraduate education should be increased to better meet needs.
- o Current ~\$100 M in state financial aid for undergraduate education needs to be used for higher impact:
- o More dollars should be devoted to work study, certificate, part time and adult learners.
- o Student “shared commitments”, such as turning loans to grants if certain performance met or if students graduate early or “on time”, should be in place.
- o Some “merit-based” loans/grants should be reinstituted, and their impact on retention should be assessed.

Challenges 3, 5, 6 addressed.

Accessibility

Recommendation #4

Student Educational Completion: Success is earning the credential sought by the student.

- Strategies for student completion:
 - Collaboration and coordination between higher education and K-12 education around Higher Education Admissions Requirements, Senate Bill 08-212, and post-secondary academic preparation should be continued.
 - “Supportive services” targeted to low income or first generation students should be the practice statewide, with emphasis on mentoring and advising.
 - “Individual Career and Academic Plans” should be developed and implemented to put and keep students on track to complete their educations.
 - Efforts should be focused on retaining students in the first two years of college.
 - Adult Basic Education must be strengthened through funding and expertise in cooperation in with Pre-K-12.
 - Performance targets must be set by institution for low income students, students of color, and according to the economic development needs of the state.
- Funding focused on student completion:
 - Revenue generated by market rate tuition and fees at those institutions at the top of the pyramid should be taken into consideration when allocating general fund dollars; general fund dollars for students in other tiers should be allocated to fund "supportive services" that help them stay on track and complete their education.
 - Institutions should be funded, in part, on the percentage of students who graduated from high school from their geographic region who complete higher education certificates and degrees regardless of the institution attended.

Challenges 4, 6, 7 addressed.

DRAFT

Sustainability

Recommendation #1

Colorado's economic future depends on maintaining a robust system of colleges and universities. Creating and sustaining a funding source for higher education must become a top state priority.

- Colorado is next to last in per student spending on our colleges and universities behind states like Mississippi and Arkansas.
- Since 1980, Colorado has reduced the investment to colleges and universities compared to other state services by 70 percent – far more than any other state,
- Colorado colleges and universities are persistently at risk of extinction because they have no reliable source of revenue,
- Colorado's relative total tax burden is low, but compared to most states we have a strong economy and enough wealth to improve our position nationally and demand greater performance from our colleges and universities. Today, Mississippi invests three times more in their colleges and universities than Colorado. Arkansas invests over two times more.
- Our colleges and universities must work as a system with leaders across the state on strategies to set aside a sustainable and dedicated funding source for basic operations and improved performance.

Challenges 1, 2, 6, 8 addressed.

DRAFT

Sustainability

Recommendation #2

\$760 million is recommended as a minimum, subsistence level of support necessary for sustaining basic operations and to allow low and middle income students basic access to Colorado's colleges and universities.

- FY 2008-09 General Fund (\$706M) plus FY 2010-11 Financial Aid (\$104M) = \$810M, minus ongoing cost savings and efficiencies (\$50M) = \$760M,
- The minimum level identified includes restoring recent cuts of \$150 million and represents a very lean funding level relative to other states. At \$760 million of state funding, Colorado would still place 49 of 50 states relative to personal income,
- The \$760 million estimate assumes a reasonable growth factor to address increased costs going forward,
- Potential revenue sources are outlined on the attachment to these recommendations.

Challenges 1, 2, 6, 8 addressed.

Sustainability

Recommendation #3

If Colorado wants colleges and universities that can perform and compete globally in terms of excellence, quality, performance and reputation, we need to invest beyond a bare minimum funding level.

- Doing more costs more. If high quality colleges and universities are a top priority for Colorado's citizens it will take an investment beyond subsistence funding for basic operations,
- The margin of additional investment beyond basic operations need not be large but if leveraged properly the return on a relatively small investment can be significant.
- Linking monetary rewards to measurable progress will spur innovation at Colorado colleges and universities to use state investments to further state priorities,
- The state's investment in higher education should be focused on state-wide priorities even at a subsistence level of support.
- Colorado is 49th out of 50 states in state support per \$1,000 of personal income. A state contribution of \$1.5B annually would raise Colorado to 27th nationally.

Challenges 1, 2, 6, 8 addressed.

Sustainability

Recommendation #4

At any funding level, the majority of state dollars should be given directly to the students to spend where they believe their academic needs will best be met and in order to motivate Colorado's colleges and universities to meet those needs.

- Funds will be provided through the College Opportunity Fund (COF) as well as state financial aid.
 - COF funds may have incentives that provide a per student premium for enrollment that meets specific state needs, i.e. low income and 1st generation students, workforce needs, graduate education,
 - Financial aid funds may include incentives for students to complete courses and graduate in a timely fashion.
- A portion of state funds will be allocated as performance rewards to institutions for measurable outcome achievements in areas that further statewide educational and economic priorities, i.e. Meeting Colorado's current and future workforce needs, better student retention, course completion and degree/certificate completion and better opportunities for Colorado's low and middle income students,
- A portion of state funds will be specifically allocated to the CSU PVM and CU Medical Center because the cost nature of these programs does not lend itself to per student funding.
- A new funding system may force institutions to make significant changes in how they operate and accomplish their mission. It is acknowledged that in some cases institutions may need to merge functions or possibly close.

Challenges 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8 addressed.

Sustainability

Recommendation #5

Colorado's colleges and universities are doing a good job reducing costs and are already far more efficient than most states. Colorado institutions should continue to seek ways to operate more efficiently so that more funding is directed to our classrooms and labs.

- Colorado colleges and universities are already very efficient – our state investment per certificate and degree is second lowest in the nation,
- Colorado colleges and universities are actively seeking ways to do more with less and create long-term savings,
- Colorado's higher education system must leverage administrative efficiencies across the system, such as:
 - Coordinating purchases from system-wide price lists result in economies of scale and lower prices,
 - Consolidating administrative operations,
- Beyond administrative savings and efficiencies, Colorado institutions should actively seek and implement innovations such as online course delivery to meet diverse student's needs at lowest cost while maintaining quality,
- As a goal, the system should be able to demonstrate ongoing savings and efficiencies annually.

Challenges 1, 2, 8 addressed.

Sustainability

Recommendation #6

Local communities that benefit socially and economically from higher education institutions in the community have an obligation to help financially support those institutions.

- The state should create a matching fund where local voters' financial commitment to a local college or university can be matched with state assistance. Such a local commitment would be "equalized" to account for local revenue capacity variances.

Challenges 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8 addressed.

Mission and Governance

Recommendation #1

The Subcommittee recommends the Steering Group adopt the following mission for Higher Education in Colorado

The mission of higher education in Colorado is to:

- *Provide access* to an internationally competitive post-secondary experience to any qualified student through a tiered system (i.e., community colleges, four-year colleges and research institutions);
- *Maximize quality*, efficiencies and affordability;
- *Meet needs* of the workforce and economy of the state;
- *Develop responsible citizens* for a successful civic enterprise.

Mission and Governance

Recommendation #2

The Subcommittee recommends the state maintain the current structure of higher education governance, comprising a state-wide regulatory board for implementing broad state-wide policy for higher education. Governing boards and a state-level board for the community college system should be retained.

Challenges 2, 5 addressed.

Mission and Governance

Recommendation #3

The Subcommittee recommends that the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) have greater authority in higher education policy. The CCHE should have the responsibility and authority as set forth below:

- Articulate and advocate a vision for higher education in the state and set forth a public agenda for higher education that is responsive to the state's demographics, labor market, and economic development needs.
- Serve as the leadership body on such policy issues as ensuring access to and success in higher education; creating an effective articulation and transfer system; supporting cost effective modes of delivery of education (e.g., online education); supporting K-12 to develop new strategies for successful transition to and completion of postsecondary education.
- Ensure access to and availability of specialized programs that fulfill statewide priorities, such as STEM.
- Use finance policy – recognizing the interaction of tuition, COF, state financial aid and performance funding -- to ensure state goals are being met. Make recommendations to the legislature regarding allocations to institutions.
- Collect and compile data on postsecondary education, using common indicators and metrics, for purposes of describing higher education in the state and ensuring accountability by the institutions to state goals.
- Negotiate performance contracts with each institution, utilizing data referenced above, that ensure institutions are contributing to meeting state goals and the state is meeting its obligations to the institutions.

- Continue to approve new degree programs to ensure their compliance with an institution's statutory role and mission.
- Coordinate with governing boards toward the goal of aligning strategic plans and state goals and priorities.
- Appointment of the Executive Director of the Department of Higher education.
[unapproved, to be discussed]

Challenges 2, 6 addressed.

Mission and Governance

Recommendation #4

**** This Recommendation has not been approved by the subcommittee ****

The committee recommends implementing a finance policy whereby a significant portion of state funding to institutions is based on each institution's performance against specific state goals as put forth by the CCHE.

- The current performance contracts and fee for service policies should be modified/strengthened to ensure that agreements negotiated between the CCHE and individual institutions are relevant and that institutions and the state are held accountable for their performance. While taking a system approach, individual agreements should be negotiated by the CCHE with each institution. Agreements should serve both the traditional student (i.e., freshman entering college directly after graduating from high school) and the nontraditional student, and recognize the value of successfully transferring students from two-year to four-year institutions. State goals, which may or may not be established by statute, would reflect the need for:
 - o increased enrollment and degree attainment of traditionally underrepresented students;
 - o increased degree and individual course attainment/completion;
 - o Maintaining high quality graduate education and a first-rate research system.

Challenges 3, 4 addressed.

Mission and Governance

Recommendation #5

**** This Recommendation has not been approved by the subcommittee ****

The committee recommends Colorado adopt a market-based approach to realigning the system of colleges and universities to better meet the current and forecast future demand of the student population. This approach must include a system of performance measures for both the institutions and the state. A substantial portion General Fund dollars should be allocated to incentivize the system of higher education to:

- increase capacity (serve more students) at the less than highly selective level
- increase capacity at institutions with comparatively lower cost-per-degree

Challenges 3, 4, 5, 6 addressed.

Pipeline

Recommendation #1

The Colorado HE System should support statewide efforts towards increasing the Number and Diversity of Students of all ages pursuing Higher Education.

- Align/synchronize all policies that relate to matriculation, remediation, retention, completion, graduation
 - Conduct policy audit, with emphasis on clarifying and addressing the "porous" aspects of transitions between traditional levels of delivery (MS, HS, Tech Colleges, Community Colleges, 4-Year Colleges and Universities, including both public and private institutions)
- Provide for earlier access to Career and College Prep, with emphasis on Latino students and English Language Learners: focus on Awareness, Academic Preparation, Financial Literacy/Capacity
 - Expand/replicate successful College Prep programs such as GEAR UP, TRiO's - and measure success (cost, \$\$, ROI, avoid redundancy). Acknowledge Cost
 - Increase family educational efforts, engage parents, look beyond students
 - Extend ICAP requirement to Colleges and WorkForce Centers
- Encourage IHEs to develop MOUs with School Districts, RSAs, BOCES.
 - Ensure teacher prep programs address realistic 21st Century postsecondary preparation for all students.
 - Automatic notification from IHEs of College acceptance based on meeting Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (currently Index).
 - Notification to IHEs of student readiness per ACT, SAT, CE courses taken.
 - Guaranteed tuition funding for eligible students who meet admission requirements.

- o Guaranteed admission for students transferring from successful 2-year careers.
- Coordinate and align college admissions policies with jointly adopted standards to ensure assignment of students to levels of postsecondary studies for which they are prepared.
 - o Recalibrate admissions index to accurately reflect selectivity and revisit definition and use of "window".
 - o Adopt assessments which accurately reflect preparation.
 - o Provide for admission of under-represented groups.

Challenges 3, 4, 5, 7 addressed.

Pipeline

Recommendation #2

The State of Colorado/ Colorado HE System must identify, invest in and expand efficient ways of delivering remediation/developmental education in order to move students effectively and successfully into degree/credit-bearing programs.

- Review and refine state approaches to developmental (remedial) education and invest in strategies to meet diverse students' needs from basic education to "brush up/refresher".
 - o Provide funds to Community Colleges to take the lead in redesigning Developmental Ed: clarify standards and timing for 030, 060, 090.
 - o Allow for delivery options via 4-year colleges (090), WorkForce Centers (Adult Learners) etc. Not new agency, but targeted funding and collaborations.
 - o Develop and adopt innovative approaches, e.g. modular offerings.
 - o Adopt minimum standards for open enrollment.
 - o Notify P-12 schools of individual students' remediation needs.
- Promote early assessment of need for credit recovery and/or developmental education needs, with emphasis on under-represented populations.
 - o Support early intervention.
 - o Develop Partnerships between secondary & postsecondary to align expectations, definitions, and assessments.
 - o Expand online capacity.
- Provide incentives for completion of remedial courses.
- Review and define and address "porous" zones between traditional delivery levels.

Challenges 2, 4,7 addressed.

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Pipeline

Recommendation #3

The Colorado HE System should partner with/collaborate with P-12 school districts in expanding early/universal access to College Level Coursework, for underserved populations.

- Promote multiple options for acceleration.
 - Track student progress toward matriculation, persistence, and graduation rates for students taking CE, ESP, AP, and IB coursework in high school. Currently no way to determine if Accelerated Coursework leads to Postsecondary success.
 - Encourage students to try multiple options.
 - Allow students to take courses that interest them, i.e. not necessarily linear approach thru' core.
- Require MOUs on Accelerated Learning between IHEs and LEAs - already in place.
 - Certify Qualified High School teachers as adjunct professors.
 - Authorize High Schools as accelerated sites.
 - Use financial incentives to expand Ascent within school districts.
 - Every student will take Certificate level CTE, CE, AP.
 - HE should develop course offering to promote matriculation without need of remediation.
 - Utilize CLEP for dual language students.
- Educator Preparation and PD should include recognition of the value of accelerated coursework for all students.
 - Ensure inclusion of training on CE in Educator Preparation.

Challenges 3, 4, 5, 7 addressed.

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Pipeline

Recommendation #4

The Department of Higher Education should take the lead in identifying promising practices and provide support to Higher Education Institutions (at all levels) to increase retention, completion and successful graduation.

- Focus on improving persistence % between year 13 and 14. Look at 1st year experience programs.
 - o Invest existing dollars in initiatives with better outcomes for underrepresented students. (Performance Based Funding)
 - 1st to 2nd year completion.
 - Certification/completion.
 - Reward "pre-remediation"
 - o Organize college and course offerings (including remedial courses) to fit students' readiness & interests.
 - o Provide effective, coordinated college level services to address college dropout rates.
 - o Engage Private Colleges and Occupational Schools.
- Review P-12/HE structure to provide for seamless & successful sequence.
 - o Promote seamless transfer from 2-year to 4-year colleges and expedite completion.
 - o Create Online Transfer Center.
 - o Rework Admission Requirements, address Index, Window.
 - o Ensure that Educator Prep Programs and PD prepare educators to understand interface of levels of achievement.

- Create capacity along Front Range for expanded Technical, 2-year and Moderately Selective 4-year options, with capacity to address needs of greatest number of students.
 - o Configure COF to reward persistence and completion; and to promote success in under-represented populations.

Challenges 4, 7 addressed.

Pipeline

Recommendation #5

The Colorado HE system should establish common metrics and standards for data collection and sharing, which measure progress towards meeting the charge of increased admissions, retention and completion.

- Determine Matriculation, Remediation, Graduation data to be collected from Privates, DPOS and National Student Clearinghouse
 - Review current data, establish common metrics & standards; Consolidate "planning" data and reports;
 - Connect to other key databases, DPOS, CDLE, CareerReadiness

Challenges 2, 4, 5, 7 addressed.

Pipeline

Recommendation #6

The Department of Higher Education should take the lead in identifying and supporting colleges and universities which are engaging adult learners who lack academic credentials, such as GEDs, certificates and degrees.

- Support outreach to and re-engagement of adult students to a) complete GED; b) complete Certificates and degrees
 - Improve educational services to incarcerated individuals and ex-offenders.
 - Partner with other state agencies in order to better identify the needs of, and serve, adult learners.

Challenges 3, 4, 5, 7 addressed.

Pipeline

Recommendation #7

The Colorado P-20 System should offer seamless transitions to appropriate levels of learning for all students.

- The State of Colorado should explore the benefits of blending of operations between CDHE and CDE to provide seamless P-20 state educational services in areas of joint or overlapping responsibility.
 - o CDHE and CDE, in collaboration with the respective governing boards of the colleges and universities, BOCES, school districts etc., will explore coordination of operations
 - o Align "Pipeline" standards to ensure effective cooperation between academic and applied (CTE) levels of P-20 and Adult Education.
 - o Coordinate Postsecondary Readiness expectations, measurements and services between CDHE and CDE.

Challenges 1, 2, 4, 5 addressed.