

STATE OF COLORADO



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Colorado Commission on Higher Education

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CCHE Takes Major Step Toward Improved Higher Ed Funding

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) today took the first formal action to implement a new approach to funding higher education that emerged from the state's June higher education summit.

At its September meeting this morning, CCHE unanimously approved the selection of peer institutions for each public institution of higher education. The average revenue per student at these peer institutions will be the basis for determining the appropriate revenue per student at their Colorado counterparts.

The next step will be for the institutions, the Department of Higher Education (DHE) and CCHE to determine the proper split between state funds and tuition to recommend to the General Assembly in achieving the revenue goals for each institution for the next fiscal year, which begins July 1, 2009.

The participants at the June summit agreed that the gap between Colorado institutions and their peers' average should be closed as quickly as possible. The peer groups will be the basis for a budget model to bring funding for the state's public higher education at least to par with national averages. Currently, Colorado ranks 48th in state funding per FTE and 50th in total revenue per FTE.

The peer groups were recommended by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems and extensively vetted by DHE with the institutions.*

"The institutions' agreement on the composition of their peer groups is the result of great cooperation and teamwork. It paves the way for a new higher education funding model that reflects Colorado's unique system," CCHE Chairman Ray Baker said. "It should help people understand how important it is to close the funding gap our schools have endured for some years."

"This is a major step in getting Colorado where it needs to be in support for higher education," DHE Executive Director David Skaggs commented. "Today's vote and the institutional consensus that preceded it reinforce the Governor's commitment to improved funding for higher ed and his belief that it requires a team effort."

*Note to editors: The full list of institutions' peers is available at www.state.co.us/cche/agenda/agenda07/sep07/sep07iic.pdf.

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