



COLORADO

Department of
Higher Education

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2014 Job Skills report ties degree production to future jobs

DENVER — Jan. 29, 2014 — The second annual Jobs Skills Legislative Report, released Wednesday, delves into labor and postsecondary education data to reveal that in most fields, the state is on track to meet workforce needs in many STEM occupations, but is not on track to produce enough medical doctors.

These are among the provocative findings in a report that builds upon the first Job Skills report issued last year by including projections looking ahead to 2020. The report clearly shows that while some jobs may not actually require a degree, a degree is increasingly needed for a job seeker to be competitive.

Among key findings:

- Colorado's postsecondary completions are meeting needs in many Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) professions. However, for certain STEM occupation categories, such as computer science, Colorado needs to increase the number of degree earners in order to meet projected demand.
- Colorado is not on track to produce enough physicians to fill future needs - even though the state is likely meeting the demand for healthcare support and practitioners overall at the mid- and bachelor's degree level, such as medical assistants and registered nurses.
- As more jobs require higher levels of education in the years to come, Colorado will likely need to increase its postsecondary credential production by about 2 percent, or 1,000 additional credentials, annually.
- Experts project that by 2020, 74 percent of jobs in Colorado will require postsecondary education or training.
- Colorado is ranked third nationally in terms of the percentage of jobs requiring postsecondary education for employment.

Colorado is among a handful of states connecting workforce and labor data to higher education data in order to inform broader discussions about degree programs and offerings at the state's public and private institutions, and student decisions on courses of study.

The report also includes several policy recommendations, including the importance of basing state needs on state-level data rather than national-level data; strengthening data sharing relationships; developing effective career pathways; and continuing to build strong industry/institution partnerships.

[Read the two-page executive summary.](#) [Read the full Job Skills report.](#)

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