



Higher Education Budget Requests

Fiscal Year 2021-22 Budget Requests

In priority order

R1 – State Funding Increase for Public Higher Education | The Department of Higher Education (DHE) requests an increase of \$494 million General Fund to restore operating support for institutions of higher education to the FY 2019-20 level.

DHE respectfully requests that the JBC sponsor legislation to temporarily suspend the provision at C.R.S. 23-3.3-103(1), in order to maintain funding for state financial aid at the FY19-20 level.

The Governor’s proposed budget makes critical investments in postsecondary education in order to support economic recovery and resilience, advance college access and affordability for students and families, and promote innovation and adaptation to the post-pandemic “new normal.”

This is the first year in which the new funding formula established by HB20-1366 that allocates state funding to institutions is statutorily required to be used. The formula contains three key steps. Steps one and three allocate flexible funding based on institutional needs, base funding concerns, specific institutional projects, and funding related to specific populations. Funding allocated via step one is base building, while step three funding is one-time. Step two funding awards institutions based on their performance on various Master Plan metrics

R2—Tuition Spending Authority | This request caps resident undergraduate tuition growth to 3% while allowing institutions to request permission through the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) for a greater increase.

R3—Fort Lewis College Native American Tuition Waiver | The Department requests an increase of \$2.9 million General Fund to account for the anticipated cost of the Fort Lewis College Native American Tuition Waiver in FY 2021-22.

R4—Wind Down Professional Student Exchange Program | The Department requests a reduction of \$126,025 reappropriated funds in FY 2021-22 for the Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP). This request also includes further reductions of \$171,775 and \$78,800 in FY 2022-23 and FY 2023-24, respectively, resulting in the program being completely phased out.

R5—Restore Cyber Coding Cryptology Program | The Department requests an increase of \$2.0 million General Fund for the Cyber Coding Cryptology Program in FY 2021-22 and ongoing. This increase would restore state funding for the program to the FY 2019-20 level (\$5.1 million General Fund).

R6—Realign Funding for Colorado Student Leaders Institute | The Department requests a reduction of \$218,825 General Fund and 1 FTE for the Colorado Student Leaders Institute (COSLI) in FY 2021-22 and ongoing. This reduction would eliminate state funding for the program. The Department respectfully requests that the JBC sponsor legislation to clarify in statute that the program is subject to available appropriations.

R7—Continue Open Educational Resources | The Department requests \$100,838 reappropriated funds and 1 FTE in FY 2021-22 and ongoing for the continuation of the Open Educational Resources (OER) program. This request would allow the Department to maintain a state-level Director of OER and the OER Council in order to support the further development of free digital textbooks and course materials at Colorado’s public institutions of higher education. The requested funds are from savings generated by the Department’s R-04 request. DHE respectfully requests that the JBC sponsor legislation to reauthorize the program for an additional five years.

R8—RISE Fund for Higher Education | The Department requests a one-time appropriation of \$10 million General Fund in FY 2021-22 to expand on the Response, Innovation, and Student Equity (RISE) Education Fund created by the Governor in the summer of 2020. The funds would provide grants to Colorado’s public institutions of higher education to support institution-led initiatives to reduce costs, improve operational efficiency, and adapt and lead in the post-pandemic “new-normal.” The Department respectfully requests that the JBC sponsor legislation establishing the RISE Higher Education Fund and authorizing the distribution of grants.

R9—Restore Educator Loan Forgiveness Program | The Department requests \$2.9 million General Fund and 0.5 FTE in FY 2021-22 to restore the Educator Loan Forgiveness Program established by S.B. 19-003. Funding for this program was de-funded in FY 2019-20 and ongoing in order to balance the FY 2020-21 budget. This request would provide enough funding to pre-pay the full cost of one cohort of 100 teachers receiving 5 years of \$5,000 in loan forgiveness per year.

Supplemental Request

The Department of Labor and Employment and DHE request a one-time investment of \$40 million General Fund in FY 2020-21 in Colorado's Plan for Workforce and Economic Recovery in 2021 (CO POWER 21). **Of the \$40 million in requested funds, \$15 million would be invested in the Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative's (COSI) Displaced Worker Program** and \$25 million would be invested in local workforce centers through the Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC).