



COLORADO

Department of
Higher Education

Higher Education Budget & Legislative Agenda

Updated as of November 1, 2021

Fiscal Year 2022-23 Budget Requests

In priority order

R1 – State Funding Increase for Public Higher Education | The Department of Higher Education (DHE) requests a **4.6% increase** in operating support for institutions of higher education, parallel to the “inflationary and per pupil” increase in the state’s funding for K-12 education. The **\$93.5 million** increase is comprised of **\$52.5 million in General Fund and \$41.0 million reappropriated funds** for operating support for institutions of higher education. This appropriation would cover increased Education and General operating costs for the 10 governing bodies **including a 3% increase in salaries for classified employees** resulting from negotiations with COWINS and includes the statutorily required increases in financial aid and operating appropriations for CSU/CU SEPs, CMC, Aims, and the ATCs.

R2—Tuition Spending Authority | This request caps resident undergraduate tuition growth to **remain flat** while allowing institutions to request permission for a greater increase on a case-by-case basis.

R3—Fort Lewis College Native American Tuition Waiver | The Department requests an **increase of \$750k in General Fund** appropriations to account for the anticipated cost of the Fort Lewis College Native American Tuition Waiver in FY 2022-23 and in all future years. With this increase, the state will be fully funding its requirements for paying student tuition associated with Native American student enrollment and tuition costs at Fort Lewis College, pursuant to Section 23-52-105(1)(b), C.R.S.

R4—Colorado Higher Education Competitive Research Authority Spending Authority Increase (CHECRA) | The Department requests a pre-pandemic restoration of **\$800,000 in cash funds spending authority in FY 2022-2023 and ongoing** to CHECRA to provide required cost shares for existing and new grants pertaining to research conducted by higher education institutions.

R5—Division of Outreach and Attainment Services | The Department requests a **\$250,000 increase to General Fund in FY 2022-2023 and 2.0 FTE**. These funds would allow DHE to continue serving education, workforce, and corrections professionals statewide by supporting their efforts to use tools and resources during their individual career, postsecondary and job exploration and planning with their stakeholders. These outreach efforts include direct work with special populations including the formerly incarcerated, Colorado ASSET students, and foster youth.

R6—Support Expansion of Single Stop | The Department requests **\$45,000 in General Fund to support the use of Single Stop** at all institutions of higher education in Colorado (public and private). This request would allow the Department to cover the statewide licensing costs of Single Stop, thereby removing a significant barrier that institutions face when attempting to setup the system on their campuses. Having this system in place allows a campus to better connect eligible students to the wide array of public benefit programs, further leveraging federal dollars.

Governor Polis’ FY 2022-23 Budget and legislative agenda continues to prioritize higher education, focusing on ensuring Colorado’s students have access to a wide variety of quality, affordable, postsecondary education options and helping to fill in-demand jobs across the state.

For More Information

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Colorado Department of Higher Education <https://highered.colorado.gov/>

Colorado Rises: Advancing Education and Talent Development <http://masterplan.highered.colorado.gov/>

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R7—Lowering Fees for Former Students of Closed Schools | The Department requests a **\$4,833 decrease in cash fund spending authority** resulting from a proposed reduction in closed school transcript request fees from \$35 to \$20 per transcript. This will be split into a \$4,450 annual reduction in the Department of Higher Education’s Division of Private Occupational Schools (DPOS) appropriation line, and a \$383 annual reduction to the Department’s Administration line, which includes cash fund spending authority for the Office of Private Postsecondary Education (OPPE). The decrease will come from lower fees for students requesting transcripts from closed schools, reflecting cost savings from schools’ transition to digital transcripts.

R8—Colorado Cannabis Research Funding-Institute for Cannabis Research (ICR) | The Department requests an **ongoing cash appropriation from the Marijuana Tax Cash Fund of \$1.8 million**. This funding would allow the institute a second cycle of grant funding with no need for additional administrative support. The mission of ICR is to fund research related to cannabis and to publicly disseminate the results of the research, however the existing funding only supports a single 3-yr cycle of grant funding, meaning new topics for research may have to wait as long as three years for the next funding opportunity.

Capital Investment

Governor Polis has requested **\$139.8 million** in state funding for higher education capital construction, IT, and controlled maintenance projects. This one-time money is set aside in the Governor’s budget, which the Capital Development Committee and Joint Budget Committee consider for the statewide capital budget.

State Stimulus Priorities

1) The Amplifier - Virtual Learning-Career Aligned English Language Learning (\$1,044,919)

Expand use of funds in the Dropout Prevention and Student Re-Engagement Program, administered by CDE, to support English Language Learners in Equitable economic recovery depends on our ability to integrate New Americans and English Language Learners, who are often left out of career training and credentialing, and/or are not equipped with English skills to support their success. This proposal is for one-time purchase of licenses to an existing virtual platform that provides career-aligned virtual English language classes for New Americans and ELLs. This proposal would purchase licenses in bulk (facilitating bulk pricing) and provide them to adult education programs, including ATCs and Community Colleges.

2) Boosting Non-Degree Credentials (\$7,000,000)

This proposal would provide support to **job seekers attempting to gain a non-degree credential**. Non-degree credentials provide opportunities for workers to upskill and reskill in high-wage, in-demand jobs, in fields such as automotive repair, CDL/professional drivers, electricity/plumbing, and construction. Types of non-degree credentials include certificates, apprenticeships, and industry certifications. These credentials are attained through short-cycle training programs that can be completed in a weekend, few weeks or months versus years of coursework in the traditional higher education experience.

Legislative Agenda

Improving Services for Post-Secondary Students with Disabilities | This legislative proposal charges DHE with creating a task force to make recommendations to CCHE, the General Assembly and institutions of higher education on how to best serve postsecondary students with disabilities. The effort would convene experts in disability services from many different state institutions of higher education and system offices (area technical colleges, two-year, and four-year institutions), agencies with a vested interest, individuals from the disability community and professional experts. The legislative proposal will also charge institutions of higher education to annually share enrollment, completion, and services data with DHE to be included in a statewide report.