



SB24-051 - Enhancing Adult Education in Colorado

Sponsors: Senators Zenzinger and Kirkmeyer, Reps. Kipp and Catlin

Background:

Thanks to legislation spearheaded in 2023 by Senators Zenzinger and Kirkmeyer, and Representatives Kipp and Catlin (SB23-007), community colleges and local district colleges are permitted to develop and award high school diplomas. This important legislation was a tremendous step forward for the state to deliver resources and create systems needed to support Colorado's diverse adult learner population.

SB 24-051, "Adult Education," amends CRS 23-60-111 and 23-71-135. The legislation clarifies that authority resides with the state board of community colleges and a local district college board of trustees, respectively, for approval of graduation requirements for a high school diploma that is implemented by the community colleges or a local district college.

Bill Highlights:

- **Adult-focused, career-connected programs.** The legislation will allow flexibility needed for community colleges and local district colleges to develop customized curriculum that meets adult learners' needs and couples their high school diploma with a career and technical education credential.

Benefits:

- Adult education is the catalyst for the over 300,000 Coloradans, who do not have a high school credential, to secure higher-quality jobs with wages and benefits to adequately support themselves and their families.
- Along with putting adults in a better position to contribute to the state's workforce and economy and opening doors to continued educational attainment, higher levels of literacy for parents are also associated with better school performance among their children.

Roll Forward

The legislation also authorizes the Department of Education to roll forward unexpected and unencumbered money for FY-24 and FY-25.
