

STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION

February 14, 2024

TOPIC: Legislative Update

PRESENTED BY:

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EXPLANATION:

(Report generated on January 30, 2024.) On Wednesday, January 10, 2024, the Colorado General Assembly convened for the second regular session of the 74th General Assembly. On February 14th, it will be Day 36 of the Session. Prior to the start of session, CCCS was engaged at the Capitol for several hearings:

- December 12, 2023: Chancellor Garcia, FRCC, and OC testified before the Joint Technology Committee.
- December 14, 2023: Chancellor Garcia, CNCC, PPSC, and TSC testified before the Capital Construction Committee.
- January 9, 2024: Chancellor Garcia presented to the Joint Budget Committee on behalf of CCCS.

Shortly after the session convened, Pikes Peak State College President, Dr. Bolton, testified alongside Mesa, Metro, CSU, and CU before the Joint Business Committee during the committee's SMART Act hearing for Senate Bill 18-086 (cyber workforce development). The Committee recommended to the Joint Budget Committee that funding for Senate Bill 18-086 be continued. The motion passed without objection.

CCCS Priority Bills

At this time, CCCS is leading one cleanup bill and partnering on another:

[SB24-051 Adult Education](#) clarifies 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 are implemented by the community colleges or a local district college. Bill updates:

- Sponsors: Senators Rachel Zenzinger and Barbara Kirkmeyer; Reps. Cathy Kipp and Marc Catlin
- 01/17/24 Bill introduced and assigned to Senate Education.
- 01/31/24 Scheduled for Senate Education Committee hearing at 1:30pm. Dr. Landon Pirius will testify on behalf of the CCCS.

[SB24-104 CTE & Apprenticeship](#) provides resources for CCCS's Career & Technical Education (CTE) Office to work with the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment's (CDLE's) State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA) to align the high school CTE system and registered apprenticeship system for programs related to infrastructure, advanced manufacturing, education, or health care. The bill also requires an expansion of aligned pathways, prioritizing "top jobs" as identified in Colorado's annual talent pipeline report. Bill updates:

- Sponsors: Senator Jessie Danielson and Rep. Eliza Hamrick
- 01/26/24 Bill introduced and assigned to Business, Labor, & Technology.

Governor's Budget Proposal for Higher Education

During the November Board meeting, the legislative team discussed the Governor's November 1 budget proposal for fiscal year 2024-25 that included:

- an increase of \$38.9 million in State General Fund for higher education, which equates to a 2.9% increase over previous year's funding levels (FY-24),
- flexibility for institutions to raise resident tuition up to 2% for resident-tuition and 6.5% for non-resident,
- a favorable recommendation to prioritize funding for CNCC's capital renewal project for the Rangely Campus (\$3.6M), and
- a recommendation to fund all level 1 controlled maintenance.

On January 2, the Governor released supplemental requests. Important to CCCS were the following:

- Flexibility for institutions to raise resident tuition up to 2.5%, compared to 2% in his earlier proposal.
- \$1.3 million increase in state financial aid programs.
- \$5.5 million for IHE classified employees WINS-steps implementation – this is an additional \$5.5M in state operating support to help the institutions implement the WINS agreement on step pay plan system for covered classified employees.
- Recommendation to prioritize funding for:
 - FRCC's IT capital project for cellular improvements (\$2.6M) and
 - OC's IT capital project for security software and computer equipment upgrades (\$438,000).
- Recommendation to fund 16 projects in controlled maintenance level 2 (it is unclear how many CCCS projects may be included in this request).
- A roll-forward request for the \$15 million (ARPA dollars) allocated to CCCS, per Senate Bill 22-181, to build a stackable pathway in behavioral health. The request is a technical correction that needs to be made to statute to match SB22-181's timeline.

Joint Higher Education Funding Request

It is important for the Board to understand that the Governor's FY-25 budget proposal for additional Higher Education state funding and supplemental adjustments (\$38.9 million) and tuition spending authority (2.5% resident and 6.5% non-resident) will only cover half of CCCS's projected salary, benefits, and operating increases for next fiscal year (July 2024 – June 2025). To put this in context, resident tuition at CCCS would need to increase by 8.2% to cover costs under the Governor's requested state appropriation level. Our students, many of whom come from low-income, minority, veteran, and first-generation backgrounds, already face significant financial challenges. Any substantial tuition increases would disproportionately burden them, hindering their ability to access transformative training to power their economic mobility.

CCCS's mandatory cost drivers include:

- Employee compensation to keep up in a competitive job market. This includes estimated expenses tied to the COWINS Step Plan implementation.
- Benefits - covering the rising costs of health/life/dental.
- Inflationary increases on operating expenses.

Over the years, CCCS and the Colleges have implemented numerous cost-cutting measures, optimizing resources and streamlining operations to ensure the most efficient use of every dollar. Despite these efforts, the reality is that the demand for quality education and workforce training continues to grow, and our ability to meet these demands is contingent on adequate state funding.

As a result, CCCS has joined with every public institution of higher education across the state to request additional \$130.8 million in State General Fund for the operations of all public IHEs and tuition spending authority of 2% resident and no more than 4% non-resident.

Upcoming Dates:

- February - The Capital Development Committee (CDC) is scheduled to discuss prioritization of FY-25 capital construction requests.
- February - The Joint Technology Committee (JTC) is scheduled to discuss prioritization of FY-25 capital IT construction requests.
- March 17th - The Joint Budget Committee is scheduled to discuss figure setting for higher education.

Monitored Bills:

As of January 30, 2024, over 250 bills have been introduced and CCCS is tracking a dozen bills. The table below lists bills that CCCS is tracking.

#	Bill	CCCS Position
1	HB24-1015 Workplace Suicide Prevention Education	Monitor
2	HB24-1018 College Textbook Sales Use Tax Exemption	Monitor
3	HB24-1049 School Mental Health Professional Loan Repayment Program	Monitor
4	HB24-1070 Allowing Certain Items at School Graduation	Monitor
5	HB24-1082 First-Generation-Serving Higher Education Institutions	Monitor
6	HB24-1087 Professional Endorsement Special Education Teaching	Monitor
7	SB24-012 Reentry Workforce Development Cash Assistance Pilot Program	Monitor
8	SB24-044 Public Employees' Retirement Association Retiree Refundable Income Tax Credit	Monitor
9	SB24-050 Colorado Workforce Demonstration Grants Pilot Program	Monitor
10	SB24-051 Adult Education	Support
11	SB24-053 Racial Equity Study	Monitor
12	SB24-104 Career & Technical Education & Apprenticeships	Support

RECOMMENDATION:

No Board action required.

ATTACHMENT(S):

Legislative Fact Sheet – SB24-051 Enhancing Adult Education in Colorado

Legislative Fact Sheet – SB24-104 Workforce Aligning CTE & Apprenticeship

Joint Higher Education Funding Request for FY-25