



Aligning Career and Technical Education & Registered Apprenticeships

Sponsor(s): Senator Danielson, Representative Hamrick

Legislative Fact Sheet
December 18, 2023

Background:

As the economy continues to evolve and workforce shortages threaten businesses, we know that employers need strategies to build their talent pipeline, and workers need opportunities to earn while they learn, transition to new industries, and build valuable skills. Registered apprenticeships are a powerful model that meets each of these needs.

Registered apprenticeships are industry-driven, high-quality career pathways where employers can develop and prepare their future workforce, and individuals can obtain paid work experience, related instruction, and a portable, nationally-recognized credential. Registered apprenticeships have four core components that ensure their success:

1. **Paid Job:** Apprentices are paid employees who produce high-quality work while they learn skills that enhance their employers' needs.
2. **Related Instruction:** Improves job-related skills through education in a classroom setting (virtual or in-person).
3. **On the Job Learning:** Develops skilled workers through customized and structured learning in a work setting.
4. **Mentorship:** Provides apprentices with the support of an experienced worker.

Colorado has made significant progress in advancing registered apprenticeship, including the successful creation of a State Apprenticeship Agency, which was approved by the U.S. Department of Labor in July 2023. Additionally, with the support of federal grants, Colorado has added over 100 new registered apprenticeship programs in the last year. Currently there are over 500 apprenticeship programs active in Colorado that span industries such as the building and construction trades, healthcare, education, IT, and more. **However, apprentices still make up only 0.1% of Colorado's labor force, with just over 6,000 active apprentices today.**

Summary of Proposal:

In order to increase adoption of registered apprenticeship across employers and access for more Coloradans, there is a need to align siloed education and workforce systems. To align Career and Technical Education with Registered Apprenticeship, the Department proposes funding 2.0 FTE in the Office of the Future of Work and in the Career and Technical Education Division of the Community College System.

These staff will align policies and programs with registered apprenticeship, as well as to establish aligned advisory boards for in demand industries and for CTE with registered apprenticeship policies, and programs to improve access for students and employers. This alignment will allow more students access to registered apprenticeship pathways that connect with their CTE experience in high school, and will better engage the employer partners already participating in either CTE or apprenticeship to ensure they get the talent they need.

Impact:

Though this position is for staffing to align two systems, the potential for impact is massive. 276,290 students (K-12) are enrolled in CTE programs in 401 high schools and 74,776 students are enrolled in 18 community college CTE programs. Through this alignment, more of these students are able to connect their CTE experience and credits directly into a registered apprenticeship that will allow them to earn money, build more skills, and will ensure businesses get sustainable talent.

Funding/Anticipated Fiscal Impact:

2.0 FTE to have CCCS, CTE, and SAA align stackable career-connected learning pathways. \$207,053 for 2.0 FTE for one year.

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