

**First Regular Session  
Seventy-first General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO**

**INTRODUCED**

LLS NO. 17-0671.01 Julie Pelegrin x2700

**HOUSE BILL 17-1003**

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**HOUSE SPONSORSHIP**

**McLachlan,**

**SENATE SPONSORSHIP**

**(None),**

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**House Committees**

Education

**Senate Committees**

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**A BILL FOR AN ACT**

101      **CONCERNING A STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS TEACHER**  
102      **SHORTAGES IN COLORADO.**

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**Bill Summary**

*(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)*

The bill requires the department of higher education in partnership with the department of education to examine recruitment, preparation, and retention of teachers and to prepare a strategic plan to address teacher shortages in school districts and public schools within the state. The departments must collaborate with institutions of higher education, school districts, and other educational interest groups in preparing the plan. The

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.  
*Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.*  
*Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.*

department of higher education must submit the plan to the Colorado commission on higher education, the state board of education, and the education committees of the general assembly by December 1, 2017.

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1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 23-1-120.9 as  
3 follows:

4 **23-1-120.9. Department study - teacher shortage - legislative**  
5 **declaration - repeal.** (1) (a) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS THAT:

6 (I) IN DECEMBER 2016, THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION  
7 AND THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ISSUED THE 2016 LEGISLATIVE  
8 REPORT ON EDUCATOR PREPARATION IN COLORADO. THE REPORT FOUND  
9 THAT:

10 (A) THE NUMBER OF PERSONS WHO COMPLETED A TEACHER  
11 PREPARATION PROGRAM AT A COLORADO COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY IN THE  
12 2015-16 ACADEMIC YEAR DECLINED BY TWO AND TWO-TENTHS PERCENT  
13 FROM THE PREVIOUS YEAR. THIS IS THE SIXTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR IN  
14 WHICH THE NUMBER OF TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM GRADUATES  
15 HAS DECLINED, LEADING TO A TOTAL DECLINE OF TWENTY-FOUR AND  
16 FOUR-TENTHS PERCENT FROM 2010 THROUGH 2016. THIS DECREASE IN  
17 TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM GRADUATES IS REFLECTED IN NATIONAL  
18 AND GLOBAL STATISTICS AS WELL.

19 (B) THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO ENROLL IN TEACHER  
20 PREPARATION PROGRAMS CONTINUES TO BE LOW, AND IN THE 2015-16  
21 ACADEMIC YEAR, THERE WERE SIGNIFICANT DECLINES IN THE NUMBER OF  
22 STUDENTS WHO ENROLLED IN TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS. THE  
23 LOW ENROLLMENT NUMBERS ARE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE HAVING A  
24 NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE NUMBER OF TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM

1 GRADUATES FOR THE NEXT FOUR TO FIVE YEARS.

2 (C) THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO ENROLL IN UNDERGRADUATE  
3 PROGRAMS IN MATH, SCIENCE, AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS HAS ALSO  
4 SIGNIFICANTLY DECREASED, NEGATIVELY AFFECTING THE NUMBER OF  
5 STUDENTS WHO ARE PREPARED TO SEEK TEACHER PREPARATION AND A  
6 TEACHER LICENSE IN THESE AREAS; AND

7 (D) RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS CONTINUE TO HAVE DIFFICULTY  
8 RECRUITING AND RETAINING TEACHERS IN THE HISTORICALLY  
9 HARD-TO-STAFF ENDORSEMENT AND LICENSURE AREAS OF MATH, SCIENCE,  
10 AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS, AND THE OVERALL TEACHER SHORTAGE  
11 HAS A PARTICULARLY DRAMATIC IMPACT ON RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS,  
12 ESPECIALLY THOSE ON COLORADO'S EASTERN PLAINS.

13 (II) IN ADDITION TO DECREASING NUMBERS OF PERSONS ENTERING  
14 THE TEACHING PROFESSION, INCREASING NUMBERS OF TEACHERS ARE  
15 LEAVING THE PROFESSION, SOME AFTER ONLY TEACHING A FEW YEARS,  
16 SOME RETIRING WITH SEVERAL YEARS' EXPERIENCE. BASED ON DATA FROM  
17 THE 2011-12 AND 2012-13 ACADEMIC YEARS, SIX AND THREE-TENTHS  
18 PERCENT OF TEACHERS LEFT THE PROFESSION DURING THOSE YEARS AND  
19 EIGHT AND FOUR-TENTHS PERCENT WERE PLANNING TO LEAVE EITHER AS  
20 SOON AS POSSIBLE OR AS SOON AS A MORE DESIRABLE JOB OPPORTUNITY  
21 BECAME AVAILABLE.

22 (III) RECENT RESEARCH DEMONSTRATES THAT THE FACTORS THAT  
23 MOST INFLUENCE A TEACHER'S DECISION TO LEAVE THE TEACHING  
24 PROFESSION ARE:

25 (A) SALARIES AND OTHER COMPENSATION;

26 (B) TEACHER PREPARATION AND THE COSTS OF ENTERING THE  
27 PROFESSION;

1 (C) HIRING PRACTICES AND PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT;  
2 (D) INDUCTION PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT FOR NEW TEACHERS; AND  
3 (E) WORKING CONDITIONS, INCLUDING SCHOOL LEADERSHIP, THE  
4 OPPORTUNITY FOR PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION AND SHARED  
5 DECISION-MAKING, ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS, AND RESOURCES FOR  
6 TEACHING AND LEARNING;

7 (IV) THE MEDIA REPORT THAT IT IS DIFFICULT FOR URBAN SCHOOL  
8 DISTRICTS TO FILL TEACHING POSITIONS AND THAT THE TEACHER  
9 SHORTAGE IN RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN COLORADO IS AT A NEAR CRISIS  
10 LEVEL; AND

11 (V) THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND THE CAUSES OF TEACHER  
12 SHORTAGES IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS VARY WIDELY ACROSS THE STATE.  
13 STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THE TEACHER SHORTAGES IN VARIOUS SCHOOL  
14 DISTRICTS MUST BE TAILORED TO THE PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES OF  
15 EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT.

16 (b) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS, THEREFORE, THAT IT IS  
17 NECESSARY THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION, IN  
18 COLLABORATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, STUDY THE  
19 TEACHER SHORTAGE IN COLORADO TO IDENTIFY THE REASONS FOR THE  
20 SHORTAGE AND TO RECOMMEND STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING THE  
21 RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF TEACHERS IN ALL AREAS OF THE STATE.

22 (2) THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN PARTNERSHIP  
23 WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SHALL CREATE A STRATEGIC  
24 ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS TEACHER SHORTAGES IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND  
25 PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITHIN THE STATE. THE DEPARTMENTS SHALL PREPARE  
26 THE PLAN IN COLLABORATION WITH, AT A MINIMUM, INSTITUTIONS OF  
27 HIGHER EDUCATION, A STATEWIDE ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING SCHOOL

1 DISTRICTS, A STATEWIDE ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING BOARDS OF  
2 COOPERATIVE SERVICES, ALTERNATIVE TEACHER PREPARATION  
3 PROGRAMS, A STATEWIDE ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING TEACHERS, A  
4 STATEWIDE ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING ADMINISTRATORS, AND  
5 EDUCATION ADVOCACY GROUPS, AS WELL AS OTHER INTERESTED PERSONS  
6 OR ORGANIZATIONS. TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, THE DEPARTMENTS  
7 MUST SEEK CONSENSUS AMONG THE COLLABORATORS ON THE  
8 RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES AND MUST INDICATE IN THE PLAN WHETHER  
9 THE RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES ARE SUPPORTED BY CONSENSUS. IN  
10 PREPARING THE PLAN, THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL, AT  
11 A MINIMUM:

12 (a) EXAMINE STUDENT ENROLLMENT IN AND COMPLETION OF  
13 TRADITIONAL AND ALTERNATIVE TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS AND  
14 RECOMMEND STRATEGIES TO INCREASE ENROLLMENTS AND THE  
15 PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS COMPLETING OR GRADUATING FROM ALL  
16 TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS;

17 (b) IDENTIFY FINANCIAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO ASSIST  
18 STUDENTS WHO ENROLL IN TRADITIONAL AND ALTERNATIVE TEACHER  
19 PREPARATION PROGRAMS AND RECOMMEND STRATEGIES TO INCREASE THE  
20 AMOUNT OF RESOURCES AND STUDENT AWARENESS OF RESOURCES;

21 (c) IDENTIFY THE SPECIFIC SUBJECT AREAS, GRADE LEVELS, AND  
22 GEOGRAPHIC AREAS OF THE STATE IN WHICH TEACHER SHORTAGES EXIST  
23 OR ARE LIKELY TO EXIST WITHIN FIVE YEARS AND STRATEGIES FOR  
24 ADDRESSING THE SHORTAGES IN THESE SPECIFIC AREAS;

25 (d) IDENTIFY SCHOOL DISTRICT OR SCHOOL PRACTICES THAT  
26 CREATE OBSTACLES FOR RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION AND RECOMMEND  
27 STRATEGIES FOR REMOVING THESE OBSTACLES AND IMPROVING

1 RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF TEACHERS, WHICH MAY INCLUDE  
2 STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING INDUCTION PROGRAMS;

3 (e) EXAMINE RELEVANT AND CREDIBLE RESEARCH THAT  
4 IDENTIFIES THE COMMON REASONS TEACHERS LEAVE THE TEACHING  
5 PROFESSION AND OTHERWISE IDENTIFY ANY OTHER REASONS PREVALENT  
6 AMONG COLORADO TEACHERS AND RECOMMEND STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS  
7 THESE REASONS;

8 (f) IDENTIFY OBSTACLES TO LICENSURE AND MOBILITY WITHIN THE  
9 STATE AND RECOMMEND STRATEGIES TO REDUCE THESE OBSTACLES,  
10 INCLUDING INCREASING TEACHERS' ABILITY TO TRANSFER AMONG SCHOOL  
11 DISTRICTS, IDENTIFYING CRITERIA FOR AN EXPEDITED LICENSING PROCESS  
12 FOR LICENSED TEACHERS WHO MOVE TO COLORADO, AND SUPPORTING  
13 PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION;

14 (g) ENSURE THAT THE PLAN TAKES INTO ACCOUNT DIFFERENCES  
15 AMONG THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS THROUGHOUT THE STATE WHEN  
16 IDENTIFYING STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THE TEACHER SHORTAGE IN ALL  
17 AREAS OF THE STATE; AND

18 (h) EXAMINE AND IDENTIFY THE ANTICIPATED COSTS ASSOCIATED  
19 WITH IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGIES IDENTIFIED IN THE PLAN.

20 (3) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1, 2017, THE DEPARTMENT OF  
21 HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL SUBMIT THE STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN TO  
22 ADDRESS TEACHER SHORTAGES IN THE STATE TO THE COMMISSION, THE  
23 STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, AND THE EDUCATION COMMITTEES OF THE  
24 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND THE SENATE, OR ANY SUCCESSOR  
25 COMMITTEES. THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL ALSO POST  
26 THE COMPLETED PLAN ON THE DEPARTMENT WEBSITE FOR PUBLIC ACCESS.

27 (4) THIS SECTION IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2018.

1           **SECTION 2. Act subject to petition - effective date.** This act  
2 takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the  
3 ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August  
4 9, 2017, if adjournment sine die is on May 10, 2017); except that, if a  
5 referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the  
6 state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act  
7 within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take effect  
8 unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in  
9 November 2018 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the  
10 official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.