

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

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. 19-0724.01 Jacob Baus x2173

HOUSE BILL 19-1187

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Coleman,

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Bridges,

House Committees

Education
Appropriations

Senate Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 **CONCERNING INCREASING COMPLETION RATES OF APPLICATIONS FOR**
102 **STUDENT FINANCIAL AID FOR HIGHER EDUCATION.**

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 general assembly to appropriate \$250,000 each year for the 2020-21, 2021-22, and 2022-23 fiscal years from the general fund to the state board of education. The state board of education shall distribute the appropriation to education providers that receive a grant under the school counselor corps grant program, for the purpose of educating and supporting students and families with the completion and

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

submission of the free application for federal student aid or applications for state student aid.

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

2 **SECTION 1. Legislative declaration.** (1) The general assembly
3 finds and declares that:

4 (a) During the 2015-16 academic year, Colorado students did not
5 claim approximately fifty million dollars available through federal Pell
6 grants because they did not complete or submit the free application for
7 federal student aid;

8 (b) Low-income students are hurt the most by not completing or
9 submitting the free application for federal student aid. Federal aid for
10 higher education includes Pell grants, which are awarded to
11 undergraduate students from low-income families. Unlike student loans,
12 Pell grants generally do not have to be paid back. The maximum Pell
13 grant amount for the 2018-19 academic year was over six thousand
14 dollars. Pell grants are awarded based on financial need and are
15 determined by completing and submitting the free application for federal
16 student aid.

17 (c) Completing the free application for federal student aid allows
18 all students to understand the financial aid package they are entitled to in
19 the form of grants, loans, and work study programs. Without completing
20 or submitting the free application for federal student aid, students might
21 incorrectly believe that higher education is unaffordable when they might
22 be entitled to a substantial amount of financial aid or low-interest loans
23 that would make attending a higher education institution a smart
24 investment.

25 (d) If high school graduates knew how much money was available

1 for higher education, especially students from low-income families that
2 are eligible for Pell grants, then more students would choose to attend
3 higher education institutions.

4 (2) The general assembly, therefore, further declares that it is in
5 the best interest of the people of Colorado to educate and support students
6 and families with the completion and submission of the free application
7 for federal student aid and applications for state student aid to claim
8 available federal and state money so that more Colorado students are able
9 to attain higher education degrees.

10 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-91-104, **amend**
11 (5) as follows:

12 **22-91-104. School counselor corps grant program - application**
13 **- criteria - grant awards - rules - repeal.** (5) (a) Subject to available
14 appropriations, but not to exceed ten million dollars annually, the state
15 board shall award grants to applying education providers pursuant to this
16 section. The state board shall base the grant awards on the department's
17 recommendations. Each grant has a term of four years beginning in the
18 2014-15 budget year. In making a grant award, the state board shall
19 specify the amount of each grant.

20 (b) (I) IN ADDITION TO THE AMOUNT APPROPRIATED PURSUANT TO
21 SUBSECTION (5)(a) OF THIS SECTION, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHALL
22 APPROPRIATE TWO HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS EACH YEAR FOR
23 THE 2020-21, 2021-22, AND 2022-23 FISCAL YEARS, FROM THE GENERAL
24 FUND TO THE STATE BOARD. THE STATE BOARD SHALL DISTRIBUTE THE
25 APPROPRIATION TO THE EDUCATION PROVIDERS THAT RECEIVE A GRANT
26 FOR THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES:

27 (A) DEVELOPING AND DISTRIBUTING INFORMATION TO STUDENTS,

1 FAMILIES, AND SCHOOL LEADERS REGARDING THE FREE APPLICATION FOR
2 FEDERAL STUDENT AID AND APPLICATIONS FOR STATE STUDENT AID, AND
3 THE BENEFITS OF COMPLETING THE FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL
4 STUDENT AID AND APPLICATIONS FOR STATE STUDENT AID;

5 (B) DEVELOPING AND DISTRIBUTING INFORMATION TO STUDENTS
6 AND FAMILIES REGARDING THE STEPS REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THE FREE
7 APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID AND APPLICATIONS FOR STATE
8 STUDENT AID;

9 (C) TRAINING SCHOOL COUNSELORS ON BEST PRACTICES TO
10 SUPPORT STUDENTS AND FAMILIES WITH FILLING OUT THE FREE
11 APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID AND APPLICATIONS FOR STATE
12 STUDENT AID, WITH AN EMPHASIS ON SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES WHO
13 HAVE HISTORICALLY LOW COMPLETION RATES OF THE FREE APPLICATION
14 FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID AND APPLICATIONS FOR STATE STUDENT AID;
15 AND

16 (D) ORGANIZING AND HOSTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS AND
17 FAMILIES TO MEET WITH STAKEHOLDERS WHO ASSIST IN COMPLETING THE
18 FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID OR APPLICATIONS FOR
19 STATE STUDENT AID.

20 (II) THIS SUBSECTION (5)(b) IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2024.

21 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-91-105, **amend**
22 (1)(e) and (1)(f); and **add** (1)(g) as follows:

23 **22-91-105. Reporting - repeal.** (1) Each education provider that
24 receives a grant through the program shall report the following
25 information to the department each year during the term of the grant:

26 (e) Information indicating an increase in the level of
27 postsecondary preparation services provided to students at recipient

1 schools, such as the use of individual career and academic plans or
2 enrollment in pre-collegiate preparation programs or postsecondary or
3 vocational preparation programs; and

4 (f) (I) ~~Any additional information that the state board, by rule,~~
5 ~~may require.~~ A COMPARISON OF THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO
6 COMPLETED THE FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID OR
7 APPLICATIONS FOR STATE STUDENT AID FOR THE YEAR THE EDUCATION
8 PROVIDER RECEIVES THE GRANT, IF AVAILABLE, AND THE NUMBER OF
9 STUDENTS WHO COMPLETED THE FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL
10 STUDENT AID OR APPLICATIONS FOR STATE STUDENT AID FOR EACH OF THE
11 YEARS THE EDUCATION PROVIDER RECEIVES THE GRANT.

12 (II) THIS SUBSECTION (1)(f) IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2024.

13 (g) ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT THE STATE BOARD, BY
14 RULE, MAY REQUIRE.

15 **SECTION 4. Safety clause.** The general assembly hereby finds,
16 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate
17 preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.