

CHAPTER 255

EDUCATION - POSTSECONDARY

HOUSE BILL 20-1002

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 also SENATOR(S) Zenzinger and Story, Bridges, Coram, Crowder, Danielson, Fields, Gardner, Ginal, Hansen, Hisey, Lee, Marble, Moreno, Pettersen, Priola, Rodriguez, Scott, Sonnenberg, Tate, Todd, Williams A., Winter, Woodward, Garcia.

AN ACT**CONCERNING A STATEWIDE PLAN FOR AWARDING COLLEGE CREDIT FOR WORK-RELATED EXPERIENCE.**

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

SECTION 1. Legislative declaration. (1) The general assembly hereby finds and declares that:

(a) In addition to the student rights pursuant to section 23-1-125 (1)(a), (1)(c), and (1)(d), Colorado Revised Statutes, students need additional rights for their work-related experience to be evaluated fairly for application toward a postsecondary credential;

(b) To ensure the economic vitality of Colorado, every industry needs access to a skilled workforce, every Coloradan needs access to meaningful employment, and institutions of higher education must maintain the ability to enroll qualified students and produce high-quality credentials of value;

(c) During the 2016-17 and 2017-18 academic years, high school students earned nine thousand industry credentials related to high-demand jobs and industries in Colorado. These industry credentials should be evaluated for potential application toward a postsecondary credential with transferability among two-year and four-year institutions.

(d) The commission on higher education, in collaboration with representatives

Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material added to existing law; dashes through words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law and such material is not part of the act.

from institutions of higher education, must develop a plan to align work-related experience with academic credit that counts toward a student's postsecondary education credential;

(e) The plan must be open, transparent, and credible so students can progress more efficiently along pathways into postsecondary education and the workforce;

(f) Industry members, especially from high workforce demand and growing industries with critical occupations and top jobs that are identified in the Colorado talent pipeline report, are important stakeholders in this process to ensure Colorado's higher education system is responsive to students and to the changing economy; and

(g) Through this work, the general assembly ensures additional pathways to career and financial success for Colorado students and workers and reduced costs to students through less time required to earn a degree.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add 23-5-145.5** as follows:

23-5-145.5. Credit for work-related experience - plan - report - definitions - repeal. (1) AS USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

(a) "COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION" OR "COMMISSION" HAS THE SAME MEANING SET FORTH IN SECTION 23-1-101.1 (1).

(b) "COUNCIL" MEANS THE COUNCIL CREATED AND EXISTING PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-1-108.5, CONVENED BY THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION.

(c) "GUARANTEED-TRANSFER PATHWAYS" OR "GT PATHWAYS" MEANS THE STATEWIDE ARTICULATION MATRIX SYSTEM OF COMMON COURSE NUMBERING FOR GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES DESCRIBED IN SECTION 23-1-108.5 (3)(c).

(d) "STATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION" OR "INSTITUTION" HAS THE SAME MEANING SET FORTH IN SECTION 23-1-135 (2).

(e) "STATEWIDE DEGREE TRANSFER AGREEMENT" MEANS A STATEWIDE DEGREE TRANSFER AGREEMENT DESCRIBED IN SECTION 23-1-108 (7).

(f) "WORK-RELATED EXPERIENCE" MEANS ANY EXPERIENCE ACQUIRED WITHIN THE PAST TEN YEARS THROUGH PAID OR UNPAID EMPLOYMENT, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO SELF-EMPLOYMENT, AN INTERNSHIP, A RESIDENCY, A PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM, OR AN APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM THAT MAY LEAD TO OR RESULT IN A BUSINESS CREDENTIAL, AN INDUSTRY CREDENTIAL, A TECHNICAL CERTIFICATE, OR A PROFESSIONAL LICENSE.

(2) (a) THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION, IN CONSULTATION WITH INSTITUTIONS, SHALL CONDUCT A STUDY CONCERNING AWARDING ACADEMIC CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN ALL INSTITUTIONS. THE STUDY MUST EXAMINE:

(1) THE PROCESSES BY WHICH A STUDENT CAN RECEIVE ACADEMIC CREDIT FOR ANY COURSE IN THE UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM, FREE OF TUITION, THROUGH

SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF A PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT, INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT, EXAMINATION, OR ANY COMBINATION THEREOF THAT IS APPROPRIATE TO THE LEARNING OUTCOMES OF THE COURSE;

(II) THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO A STUDENT, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO IMPACT ON A STUDENT'S OVERALL ATTENDANCE COST, WHETHER A POLICY WOULD ACCELERATE THE TIME TO COMPLETE A POSTSECONDARY CREDENTIAL, AND THE IMPACT ON THE STATE'S GOAL TO INCREASE CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT RATES; AND

(III) THE COSTS TO INSTITUTIONS TO DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN PROCESSES TO GRANT ACADEMIC CREDIT TO A STUDENT FOR PRIOR LEARNING AND THE ABILITY TO RECOVER ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS FROM STUDENTS REQUESTING THE PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT.

(b) ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1, 2021, THE COMMISSION SHALL REPORT TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, OR ANY SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES, THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (2)(a) OF THIS SECTION.

(3)(a) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2022, THE COUNCIL, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE COMMISSION, SHALL CREATE, ADOPT, AND IMPLEMENT A PLAN, REFERRED TO IN THIS SECTION AS THE "PLAN", TO AWARD POSTSECONDARY ACADEMIC CREDIT FOR COURSES IN GT PATHWAYS OR A STATEWIDE DEGREE TRANSFER AGREEMENT FOR LEARNING DEMONSTRATED FROM WORK-RELATED EXPERIENCE. IN CREATING THE PLAN, PRIORITY MAY BE GIVEN TO WORK-RELATED EXPERIENCE THAT IS RESPONSIVE TO WORKFORCE DEMANDS AND GROWING INDUSTRIES IDENTIFIED BY THE MOST RECENT COLORADO TALENT PIPELINE REPORT PREPARED PURSUANT TO SECTION 24-46.3-103 OR IDENTIFIED IN CONSULTATION WITH THE COLORADO WORK FORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL IN SECTION 24-46.3-101.

(b) THE COUNCIL, COMMISSION, OR DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION, OR ANY COMBINATION THEREOF, MAY SEEK, ACCEPT, AND EXPEND GIFTS, GRANTS, OR DONATIONS FROM PRIVATE OR PUBLIC SOURCES FOR THE PURPOSES OF CREATING, ADOPTING, AND IMPLEMENTING A PLAN PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION. THE PLAN SHALL NOT BE CREATED, ADOPTED, OR IMPLEMENTED UNLESS SUFFICIENT MONEY IS AVAILABLE FROM GIFTS, GRANTS, OR DONATIONS TO COVER THE COSTS OF CREATING, ADOPTING, AND IMPLEMENTING A PLAN PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION.

(4) THE PLAN MUST INCLUDE:

(a) A PROCESS FOR ASSESSING AND ALIGNING WORK-RELATED EXPERIENCE TO THE KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCIES REQUIRED FOR AWARDED POSTSECONDARY ACADEMIC CREDIT FOR COURSES IN GT PATHWAYS OR A STATEWIDE DEGREE TRANSFER AGREEMENT, WHICH CREDIT GRANTED MUST BE TRANSFERABLE TO ANOTHER INSTITUTION PURSUANT TO COMMISSION POLICY REGARDING GT PATHWAYS OR A STATEWIDE DEGREE TRANSFER AGREEMENT; AND

(b) A PROCESS FOR EVALUATING CREDENTIALS EARNED BY A STUDENT AT AN AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-60-802 AND DETERMINING HOW POSTSECONDARY ACADEMIC CREDIT WILL TRANSFER FROM AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGES, IF APPROPRIATE, TO PUBLIC TWO-YEAR AND FOUR-YEAR STATE

INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

(5) THE COUNCIL, IN CREATING THE PLAN, SHALL CONSULT WITH:

(a) REPRESENTATIVES OF INSTITUTIONS, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, FACULTY MEMBERS AND REGISTRARS;

(b) REPRESENTATIVES OF ORGANIZATIONS THAT REPRESENT STUDENTS IN COLORADO;

(c) REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COLORADO WORK FORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL;

(d) REPRESENTATIVES OF INDUSTRIES WITH HIGH WORKFORCE DEMAND AND GROWING INDUSTRIES IDENTIFIED IN THE MOST RECENT COLORADO TALENT PIPELINE REPORT AND ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTING THEM; AND

(e) REPRESENTATIVES SELECTED BY THE COMMISSION.

(6) UPON COMPLETION OF THE PLAN, THE COUNCIL, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE REPRESENTATIVES DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (5) OF THIS SECTION, SHALL CONTINUE TO WORK TOWARD EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR AWARDED POSTSECONDARY ACADEMIC CREDIT FOR LEARNING ACQUIRED FROM WORK-RELATED EXPERIENCE NOT OTHERWISE ADDRESSED IN THIS SECTION.

(7) BEGINNING IN THE 2022-23 ACADEMIC YEAR, UNLESS THE PLAN IS IMPLEMENTED PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE 2022-23 ACADEMIC YEAR, AN INSTITUTION SHALL ACCEPT IN AND TRANSFER WITHIN THE INSTITUTION AND TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS POSTSECONDARY ACADEMIC CREDIT AWARDED FOR WORK-RELATED EXPERIENCE FOR A COURSE THAT IS GT PATHWAYS DESIGNATED OR PART OF A STATEWIDE DEGREE TRANSFER AGREEMENT.

(8) (a) DURING THE SECOND REGULAR SESSION OF THE SEVENTY-THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN 2022, THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL REPORT TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, OR ANY SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES, REGARDING THE CREATION, ADOPTION, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN ADOPTED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION.

(b) THIS SUBSECTION (8) IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2022.

(9) (a) ON OR BEFORE MARCH 1, 2024, AND ON OR BEFORE MARCH 1 OF EACH YEAR THEREAFTER, THE COUNCIL SHALL REPORT TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, OR ANY SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES, REGARDING THE CONTINUED IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS SECTION. THE REPORT MUST INCLUDE, AT A MINIMUM:

(I) THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO WERE AWARDED CREDITS AND WHO TRANSFERRED CREDITS TO OR FROM AN INSTITUTION PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION;

(II) DATA REGARDING THE AGE AND DEMOGRAPHICS OF STUDENTS WHO WERE AWARDED CREDITS AND WHO TRANSFERRED CREDITS TO OR FROM AN INSTITUTION PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION;

(III) THE IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES OF THIS SECTION;

(IV) THE FEE ESTABLISHED AND CHARGED BY INSTITUTIONS, IF ANY, TO ADMINISTER A PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT, INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT, EXAMINATION, OR ANY COMBINATION THEREOF;

(V) THE DIRECT COSTS IMPOSED ON INSTITUTIONS TO IMPLEMENT THIS SECTION;
AND

(VI) ANY RECOMMENDED STATUTORY REVISIONS TO THIS SECTION.

(b) NOTWITHSTANDING THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 24-1-136 (11)(a)(I), THE REPORTING REQUIREMENT PURSUANT TO THIS SUBSECTION (9) CONTINUES UNTIL THE REPEAL OF THIS SUBSECTION (9).

(c) THIS SUBSECTION (9) IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2029.

SECTION 3. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-1-125, **add** (4.7) as follows:

23-1-125. Commission directive - student bill of rights - degree requirements - implementation of core courses - competency test - prior learning - prior work-related experience. (4.7) Prior work-related experience. PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-5-145.5, THE COUNCIL CREATED AND EXISTING PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-1-108.5, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE COMMISSION, SHALL CREATE, ADOPT, AND IMPLEMENT A PLAN TO DETERMINE AND AWARD POSTSECONDARY ACADEMIC CREDIT FOR WORK-RELATED EXPERIENCE.

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

Approved: July 8, 2020