

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
FY 2021-22 JOINT BUDGET COMMITTEE HEARING AGENDA
(Day 2 of 3)

Tuesday, January 18, 2022

1:30 pm – 5:00 pm

1:30-2:45 ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY, WESTERN COLORADO UNIVERSITY, FORT LEWIS COLLEGE

1:30-1:50 INTRODUCTIONS AND OPENING COMMENTS

Main Presenters:

- Dr. Cheryl Lovell, President, Adams State University
- Nancy Chisholm, President, Western Colorado University
- Tom Stritikus, President, Fort Lewis College

Supporting Presenters:

- Heather Heersink, CFO, Adams State University
- Dr. Henry Robinson, Vice President for Student Affairs, Adams State University
- Dr. Kent Buchanan, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Adams State University
- Dr. Peg Blake, Interim Executive Director, Marketing/PR, Adams State University
- Kevin Daniel, Executive Director of Campus Infrastructure and CIO, Adams State University
- Katelyn Smith, Athletic Director, Adams State University
- Brad Baca, Executive Vice President, Western Colorado University
- Steve Schwartz, Vice President for Finance & Administration, Fort Lewis College

1:50-2:45 INSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS

Topics:

- Requests R1 And R2 - State Support For Higher Education And Tuition Spending Authority: Page 26, Questions 1-4 in the packet
- Higher Education Financial Status and the Future of Higher Education: Page 31, Questions 5-10 in the packet
- College Affordability and Increasing Awareness About Financial Aid: Page 40, Questions 11-12 in the packet

2:45-3:00 BREAK

3:00-4:30 COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM AND LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGES

3:00-3:30 INTRODUCTIONS AND OPENING COMMENTS

Main Presenters:

- Joe Garcia, Chancellor, Colorado Community College System

- Dr. Leah L. Bornstein, President, Aims Community College
- Carrie Besnette Hauser, President & CEO, Colorado Mountain College

3:30 - 4:30 INSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS

Topics:

- Requests R1 And R2 - State Support For Higher Education And Tuition Spending Authority: Page 80, Questions 1-4 in the packet
- Higher Education Financial Status and the Future of Higher Education: Page 86, Questions 5-10 in the packet
- College Affordability and Increasing Awareness About Financial Aid: Page 97, Questions 11-12 in the packet

4:30-5:00 AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGES

4:30-4:40 INTRODUCTIONS AND OPENING COMMENTS

Main Presenters:

- Dr. Teina McConnell, Executive Director, Pickens Technical College
- Randy Johnson, Executive Director, Emily Griffith Technical College
- Dr. Allen Golden, Director, Technical College of the Rockies

4:40 – 5:00 INSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS

Topics:

- Requests R1 And R2 - State Support For Higher Education And Tuition Spending Authority: Page 80, Questions 1-4 in the packet
- Higher Education Financial Status and the Future of Higher Education: Page 86, Questions 5-10 in the packet
- College Affordability and Increasing Awareness About Financial Aid: Page 97, Questions 11-12 in the packet

ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY

C O L O R A D O

Great Stories Begin Here



WESTERN

COLORADO UNIVERSITY



FORT LEWIS COLLEGE.

Joint Budget Committee Hearing

January 18, 2022

Thanks for the opportunity to share excitement about Adams State University

Adams State University:

- ▶ *Transformational*
- ▶ *Affordable*
- ▶ *Equitable*
- ▶ *High quality*
- ▶ *Vital*

Context for Adams State University:

- ▶ *Nationally there are 118 Regional Comprehensive Universities
- ▶ *ONLY 12 are both rural AND Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI)



About Adams State University with Key Highlights

- ▶ Examples of current acceptance rates for graduates from Biology and Earth Sciences Programs
- ▶ Examples of our involvement with our San Luis Valley community
- ▶ Examples of our work to obtain external funds
- ▶ Pandemic Implications
 - ▶ Teaching face to face throughout the pandemic



Needs for Adams State University

Core minimum costs – needed above status quo

▶ SALARIES

- ▶ \$ 5 million to be competitive than our peers – first priority
- ▶ \$ 3 million needed just to get our salaries to average of peers

▶ STUDENT SUPPORT

- ▶ \$ 1 million needed to support student mental health and advising – to continue to be a student ready campus

▶ Capital Requests

- ▶ Facilities Building
- ▶ Computing Services Annex
- ▶ ERP – Digital Transformation Initiative for Rural Higher Education: A Collaboration of Adams State University, Fort Lewis College, and Western Colorado University
- ▶ Regulatory burdens add costs and impact operations



Future for Adams State University

Growth strategies

- ▶ Mechanical Engineering Bachelors – Partnership with CSU/FC
- ▶ Public Health Bachelors
- ▶ Food Studies Bachelors – very relative to our agriculture rich communities
- ▶ Social Science Bachelors in
 - ▶ Forensic
 - ▶ Pre-Law





WESTERN
COLORADO UNIVERSITY

Student Success

Positive Enrollment

- Fall 2022 enrollment +3%
- Freshmen class +13%
- URM Growth +12%

Student Centered

- Minimizing disruption with high quality on campus experience
- Increased focus on mental health
- Wellness and in classroom top priority

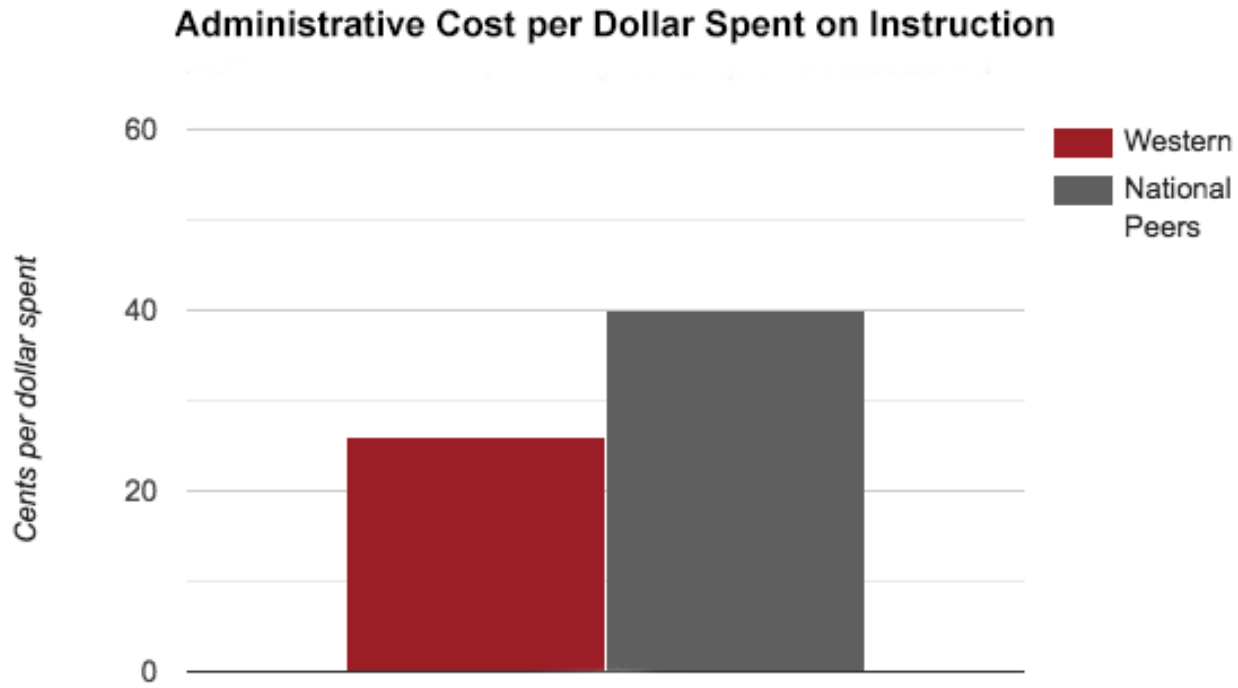


Meeting Student and Workforce Needs

- Rady School of Computer Science & Engineering – *In demand workforce talent*
- School of Graduate Studies – *Professional enhancement in Education, Environmental Management, Rural Health, among other fields*
- Each undergraduate program has a professional pathway – *Pre-health in Biology, pre-law in Politics & Government, Criminal Justice in Sociology*
- Concurrent Enrollment – *Partnerships with schools throughout the Western Slope and with DPS, serving rural communities and underrepresented populations*
- Accelerated Degree Pathways – *Reducing the time and cost of completion through portfolio of five-year master's programs, or 3+2s*
- Adult Degree Completion – *Applying Western's personalized approach to ensure persistence and completion*



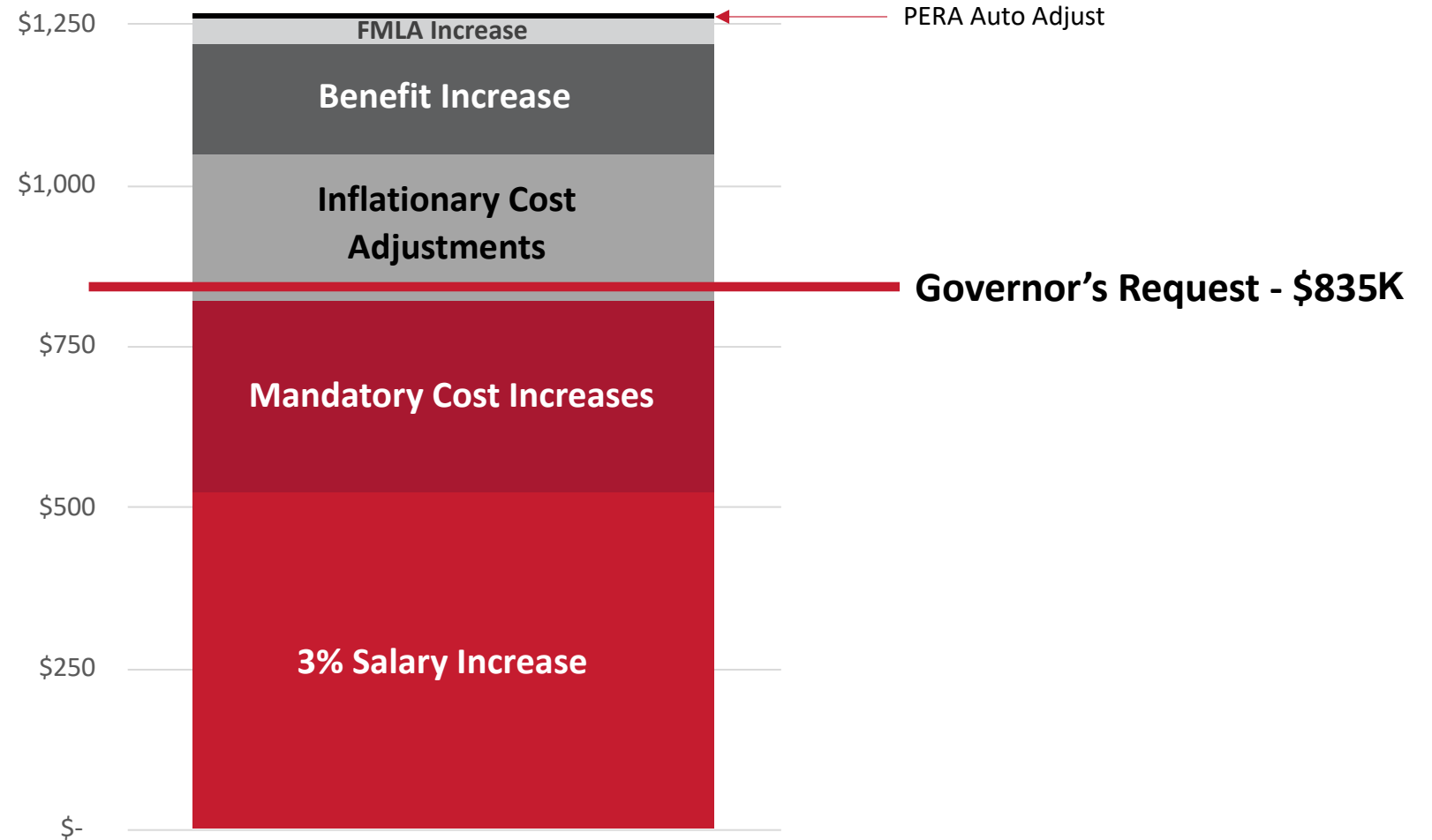
Prioritized Spending



- Consistent with our mission, we've prioritized the spending of limited dollars in the classroom
- Western spends \$0.26 on administrative costs per every dollar spent on instruction. Our national peer set (Hanover) spends \$0.40 per dollar
- 25% of core expenditures at Western are covered by state appropriations; for our peer set it is 42%

Core Minimum Cost Increases

USD 1,000's





Looking Ahead

- Phase II of Digital Transformation (\$15.7M)- student information systems
- Hurst Hall (\$4.0M) and Savage Library (\$1.8M)- laboratory expansion/updates and building systems improvements
- Campus exterior lighting project (\$1.9M)- controlled maintenance project to improve student safety



Leadership Update

- Presidential Search
 - Diverse and engaged search committee
 - Well under way with steady progress being made
- Refreshed Vision Statement
- Redefined Core Values
 - Courage
 - Growth
 - Inclusivity
 - Integrity
 - Stewardship





STUDENTS ARE AT THE CENTER OF ALL WE DO

OUR WORK MATTERS

- **Mission – Educate Students**
 - Provide a path forward
 - Often, their only opportunity
- **Racial Reconciliation through Truth and Healing**
 - Important to our institution, our state, and our nation
 - Serving our Native American students and building strong tribal relationships
- **Balancing the Pandemic with Student Success**
 - Doing all we can to provide a normal experience to students
 - Full portfolio of COVID mitigation efforts
 - Making positive permanent changes (outdoor classrooms, student services)



SUCCESS DESPITE CHALLENGES

- **Growth in Enrollment**
 - Largest first-year class in 17 years
 - Overall enrollment is strongest in last 5 years
- **National Funders Validate our Approach**
 - Mellon Foundation
 - Andy Warhol Foundation
 - RISE—Workforce training with K12
 - U.S. Economic Development Administration
 - National Institutes of Health

EFFICIENCIES & COST CUTTING

HARD DECISIONS MADE: General Fund Reductions = \$1.85M (~4.0%)

- **Personnel** - voluntary separation incentive, paused searches (faculty and staff), reduced staff through integration of services
- **Re-set Business Models** for non-core functions - *Community Concert Hall, Center of Southwest Studies*
- **Revaluated and Eliminated** Software packages, contracts, and other administrative costs
- **Realized Efficiencies in Athletics** - reduced cost support, re-prioritized sports

DRIVING TOWARD EXCELLENCE

- **Student-centered Decisions Making**
 - Reviewing and revising academic model
 - Restructured advising - moved to a faculty advisor model with embedded counselors
 - Provide for mental health challenges
- **Need Committed & Motivated Staff**
 - Faculty/exempt staff have only received raises in 2 of the last 6 years
- **Our Students, Mission & Strategic Plan Must Be Our Priority**
 - Focusing on a transformative model and strategic priorities
 - Too much cost-cutting negatively impacts students and core mission
 - If our mission is compromised, it is students who lose

FLC's BUDGET GAPS

CORE MINIMUM BASE COST

Increases Estimated
to be **\$2.2M**

Inflationary Increases Include:

*base compensation,
health life & dental, Prop 118
Paid Family Medical Leave,
insurances, PERA, utilities,
supplies, maintenance,
services, other*



DEFICIT of **\$1.49M**

*with little to no
discretionary flexibility*

GOVERNOR'S BUDGET PROPOSAL

+4.6% State Funding
to Higher Ed

**1.1%, or \$707K
overall to FLC**



FLC's OTHER 2022 PRIORITIES

- **Collaborative Joint Technology Project**
 - Partners - *Adams State, Fort Lewis College, Western Colorado*
 - Student Focused - dramatically improve experience to navigate/manage their education
 - Radically increase efficiency and effectiveness
 - Cost savings and a better product for years to come
- **Capital Renewal Project – Berndt Hall**
 - Upgrade an outdated building, eliminate deferred maintenance
 - Create a modern and inviting learning and working environment

Small Rural Schools are UNIQUE

BENEFITS

- **Serving Rural and Diverse Students** - directly address the needs of rural students, an underserved and often overlooked population
- **Individualized Instruction and Mentorship** - many students prefer and perform better in smaller classes with more one-on-one learning
- **Place-Based Learning** - tailored to the respective “backyard laboratory” of the area
- **Economic Driver for Region** - often the largest economic, intellectual and cultural engine of their region
- **Workforce** – primary opportunity for students in our region to close workforce gaps

CHALLENGES

- **Limited Opportunity for Economies of Scale** - small schools operate with “economies of scale” in reverse
- **Lack of Affordable Housing** - a major issue for students, faculty and staff
- **Disproportionately Impacted by Bad Times** - recessions, cuts in state support, shifts in employer preferences, teacher shortages, inflation, and COVID-19 impact them disproportionately, mental health access, social safety net
- **Limited Workforce Pool** - the employment pool for faculty, staff, and student internships is far more limited and often will cost more to attract

Higher Education in Colorado

Meet Workforce Needs – Close Equity Gaps – Provide Opportunity

- **COVID-19 CONTINUES to Impact Costs and Operations** - *educational modalities, wrap around services, mental health, testing and mitigations*
- **Federal Funding DID NOT Offset Impacts** - *for most institutions and many cuts made to balance budgets have not yet been restored*
- **We MUST Minimize Tuition Increases** - *recognize economic pressures that continue to face students/families*
- **Significant State Support is CRITICAL** – *to help address inflationary pressures and continue to meet our core mission of serving students*
- **Additional State Investment Needed to ADVANCE Policy Priorities** – *meeting workforce demands, erasing the equity gap, meeting master plan goals, etc.*

Colorado IHE's Collective "Ask" for FY 22-23

- **COVER** Base Core Minimum Cost Increases - *provide additional ongoing funding to cover some or all*
- **PROVIDE** Tuition Flexibility – *for base core minimum costs not covered by state funding*
- **MINIMIZE** Tuition Increases - *to ensure continued affordability and improved access*
- **ALLOCATE** \$50.0 million Base Funding into Step 1 - *support efforts to close the equity gap*

ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY

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Thank You

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Tuesday, January 18, 2022
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ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY, WESTERN COLORADO UNIVERSITY, FORT
LEWIS COLLEGE

*REQUESTS R1 AND R2 - STATE SUPPORT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION AND TUITION SPENDING
AUTHORITY*

- 1) *[Rep. McCluskie]* Discuss what you consider to be your "core minimum costs" for sustaining educational activities.

Adams State University:

The calculations showing mandated cost escalations account for the cost of living increases (mandated by Common Policies for classified employees), retirement contribution changes, and inflationary cost increases. The costs don't include additional investments in students. Our students need additional support when it comes to wrap around services, such as advising and tutoring, mental health services, and overall student care. We estimate that filling these needs would take an additional \$1 million. These calculations also do not account for moving the needle with salary adjustments necessary to compete in today's marketplace. In looking at our salaries compared to the salaries of similar institutions or peers, we are lagging significantly behind. Bringing our salary minimums to the average of our peers would cost approximately \$3 million additional.

Fort Lewis College:

The core minimum costs for Fort Lewis College include the need to provide competitive salaries and benefits to faculty and staff, non-discretionary items including utilities, IT needs, scholarships, contractual agreements, and operating funds for student and faculty programs and departments. Unfunded mandates resulting from policy decisions and/or legislative requirements also are considered as core minimum costs, as they entail additional staffing and operating funds to meet expectations.

- (a) Does the Governor's proposal provide sufficient funding to cover these costs?

Adams State University:

While we do appreciate a requested increase in state support, the Governor's proposal with no tuition increase leaves a large gap from just maintaining the status quo, let alone becoming more competitive as discussed in the previous answer. The Governor's request would not cover the cost of living including those mandated by Common Policies and PERA contribution rate changes and inflation.

Western Colorado University:

No. Using the Governor's requested funding increase for higher education, the allocation model would provide Western an additional \$835,000. Western's projected core minimum cost increase is \$1.3 million. Western's core minimum costs increases include:

- A 3.0% salary adjustment on all categories of employees (classified, exempt and faculty)
- A 5.3% adjustment to health, life and dental premiums
- A 3.7% inflationary adjustment on all operating budgets
- An adjustment to cover increased FMLA expenses due to Proposition 118
- An adjustment to cover the PERA automatic adjustment
- Coverage of other mandated costs increases such as IT hardware and software maintenance, subscriptions, utilities, risk management premiums, etc.

While tuition increases are not a preferred option, the Governor's request prohibits any adjustments, at least for our resident student population. Increases in nonresident tuition are not feasible given the high price elasticity of this population of students.

Fort Lewis College:

The Governor's proposed increase of 4.6% in state funding and no tuition increase is not sufficient to cover core minimum costs. The proposed increase equates to approximately \$707K new funding for Fort Lewis College. Core minimum base cost increases, which include 3% employee raises, inflationary increases of approximately 3.7%, and estimated benefits increases are estimated to be approximately \$2.2M. Taken together, the Governor's budget request would result in Fort Lewis College face a deficit of \$1.49M that the college would have to be addressed.

- (b) Are you facing workforce challenges similar to other state agencies? Discuss turnover and whether compensation is or is not meeting their needs to recruit and retain staff.

Adams State University:

Yes, it has been extremely hard to recruit and retain a high quality workforce. In FY21, 49 people departed from the University. Year to date, FY22 has had 47 departures. We are seeing a larger number of vacancies due to resignation as opposed to retirements and other predictable planned vacancies. Many of our searches over the past two years have either been open for extended periods of time or have failed to attract candidates. A contributing factor is our salaries and how far behind we lag from our CUPA peers. We have cut back on our number of employees, and now have some employees filling two or more roles. This is contributing to burnout, turnover, and compounds our workforce challenges.

Western Colorado University:

Western is facing considerable workforce challenges and our turnover rate has been higher than normal. Faculty and administrative salaries at Western lag behind peer medians and this circumstance is further challenged by the high cost of living within Gunnison County, and in particular the lack of affordable and quality housing. To try to address some of these issues, Western is pursuing a public-private partnership for the construction of workforce housing on our campus. We have also constituted a salary assessment task force that is working to identify those positions whose salaries are furthest behind peer medians. Adjustments to salaries will be recommended based on the work of the task force, although it may require phased implementation due to lack of available resources.

Fort Lewis College:

Fort Lewis College is facing many of the same challenges as other state agencies in attracting and retaining staff, which is exacerbated by the high housing costs and low inventory in the Durango market. The median home price in Durango increased 24.3% year-over-year to approximately \$535,000. Over the last year housing inventory has also dropped approximately 70% making the homes that are available more expensive and harder to secure. Positions are staying vacant longer and current salary ranges are not proving to be attractive enough to drive adequate applicant pools. Compression issues are being exacerbated by entry level salaries that are being required.

- (c) The budget data book information submitted by the institutions indicates that, statewide, about 35 percent of costs are not for salaries or benefits. What costs are included in this "other" category at your institution(s)?

Adams State University:

Included in other than salaries and benefits are all operating expenses including a wide variety of expenses. Examples include lab supplies, library materials, license fees, legal and audit, internet bandwidth, software, and other computer related expenses, supplies (office, custodial, etc), police dispatching services, utilities, and property and liability insurance.

Western Colorado University:

At Western, within our E&G fund, approximately 62% of our budget is dedicated to employee compensation. Because Western is committed to access and affordability, our next highest expenditure category is scholarships at 15%. Another 15% is spent on general operating expenses and the remaining is split between areas of student employment, utilities, professional development/travel and capital outlay, each of which constitutes around 2% of our overall budget.

Fort Lewis College:

Fort Lewis College uses 78% of the General Fund budget to cover salary and benefits. This leaves 22% for "other" costs. A larger percentage of these "other" costs are non-discretionary items that include utilities, hardware and software maintenance, insurance, audit and fee expenses, annual contracts and more. Of the remaining budgeted expenditures, approximately 13% is available for general departmental discretionary usage (i.e. supplies, travel, phone), as well as funding student needs around mental health and food insecurities, which has surfaced as an important topic through the pandemic.

- 2) *[Rep. McCluskie]* Institutions have substantial differences in the extent to which they rely on General Fund versus resident tuition versus nonresident tuition How should we take this into account in the funding formula and/or in setting resident tuition caps?

Adams State University:

Adams State is one of the institutions most reliant on state support. We are the oldest Hispanic serving institution in the State, located in Southern Colorado. Without the state support we would not be able to meet the needs of our region and serve the large population of under-represented students we serve. Adams is crucial to the economic and social well-being of our region. However, we are also very rural and isolated and unable to achieve the economies of scale other institutions in larger, more populous

areas. The majority of our students are resident students. State support is critical to us being able to serve our population. We do not have the ability to raise tuition significantly without adversely affecting our under-represented students who already struggle to make ends meet when it comes to education.

Western Colorado University:

At Western, within our E&G fund, state General Fund constitutes approximately 48% of total revenues which, like other rural institutions, is higher than most other institutions. (Including all fund sources, state General Fund represents approximately 24% of all revenues at Western.) The current funding allocation model, through the role and mission adjustment factor, modestly accounts for varying proportionalities of state support. We believe this is appropriate as it helps prevent significant annual swings in state funding allocations which can leave institutions, and particularly those more reliant on state support, financially vulnerable. Furthermore, the role and mission adjustment factor provides some predictability in annual allocations which facilitates planning.

It should not be presumed that institutions who have larger proportionalities of state General Fund have more capacity to increase tuition. Most institutions who rely more on state General Fund tend to be smaller in size and represent access points within their regions, most of which are rural. Increasing tuition compromises access and affordability for students served in these regions, often resulting in lower enrollments, and thus, tuition revenue declines.

Taken together, an institution's role and mission, the students it serves, and its location should be considerations when determining levels of state support and tuition rate increases.

Fort Lewis College:

Fort Lewis College's budget consists of approximately 25% state support and 75% tuition. The college is in the unique position of having Native American students who attend under the tuition waiver, and whose resident and non-resident tuition is reimbursed by the State of Colorado. As such, a large portion of tuition consists Native American tuition waiver funding. This funding stream results in resident tuition increases having a more moderate impact to the bottom line than would otherwise be realized.

- 3) *[Rep. McCluskie]* What efficiencies and cost savings have you been able to realize as a result of the pandemic? To what extent are these savings one-time versus ongoing?

Adams State University:

We have gained efficiencies in having almost all of our employees equipped to work from home when needed. We have converted processes to more efficient electronic processes with regard to handling of documents, contracts, and other records. We are utilizing more digital signing. We have equipped many of our classrooms with technology allowing for hybrid learning. We have laptops and hotspots available for students to check out as needed. Having more virtual statewide meeting has allowed us to be more efficient with both employee time and travel costs. However, some travel is starting to come back, and we do expect much of the travel to return. These technology investments have been made possible due to the federal COVID relief funds. However, the technology will need to be replaced at the end of its useful life.

Western Colorado University:

In FY 2020-21, Western reduced expenditures by \$1.5 million in order to offset reductions in state support and projected enrollment declines. This included reducing faculty staffing by 6.0 FTE, furloughing senior staff, cutting budgets in operations (\$600,000), professional development and travel (\$250,000) and capital outlay (\$200,000.) Very few of these reductions are sustainable long-term. In fact, Western has reestablished approximately \$700,000 of these cuts in the FY 2021-22 budget in order to restore critical functions that support student success, and we expect the need to restore the majority of the remaining cuts in the coming years.

A common misperception is that the pivot to online educational delivery reduced costs both in the short and long term. In spring of 2020, we had to invest a significant amount of money in IT systems and hardware as well as in faculty training. Because we were successful in delivering course work online, we are now finding that our students demand both modalities. While they vastly prefer to be in person, they want the option to take some coursework online. This 'hybrid' model of delivery has not only necessitated the maintenance and expansion of online technologies, but it has increased faculty workload.

Fort Lewis College:

Fort Lewis College significantly reduced its budget at the onset of the pandemic in anticipation of enrollment declines. Total General Fund budget cuts – consisting of both one-time and permanent reductions – totaled approximately \$1.85M (4%). Examples of efficiencies and cost savings include:

- Personnel actions: voluntary furlough/pay reduction, separation incentive
- Paused personnel searches (faculty and staff), paused subscriptions
- Eliminated redundant software package
- Significantly reduced travel expenditures/furloughed travel-related staff
- Re-set business models for non-core functions (ex., Community Concert Hall, Center of Southwest Studies)
- Realized efficiencies in Athletics (reduced cost support, re-prioritized sports)
- Integration of services - restructured select operations (academic and support), combined related positions, and integrated functions where appropriate.
- Similar measures take in the Auxiliary Fund operations

Restructurings are generally permanent cost savings and often include the integration of new services. Whether these cost saving measures will be temporary or permanent will depend on many factors, including length of the pandemic and enrollment trends. Much of the one-time savings are being reinvested in strategic initiatives that should result in additional enrollment and increased efficiencies, as well as improved student retention and graduation rates. As students are at the focus of the organization, Fort Lewis College always strives to use any additional funding or savings to maximize the benefit to the student.

- 4) *[Rep. McCluskie]* I don't think we've done enough yet to highlight the purpose of the funds added in FY 2021-22 through "Step 1" components of the funding model, such as money added based on retention of underrepresented minorities. Do you have suggestions about targeting and assessing the use of these funds going forward?

Adams State University:

We appreciate targeting funding for underrepresented minorities as this is a large portion of our student population. For funds to be truly targeted in Step 1, they should be above covering our mandated and inflationary increases. If not, institutions are forced to cut existing programs and services that are critical for student success. Also, the manner in which funding is allocated in step one

can make significant increases in which student populations are served with additional funding. Volume driven allocations do not help the smaller, regional schools, even when the majority of our population is in the under-represented categories intended to be helped. We just simply do not have the numbers the larger institutions do. However, many of these under-represented students served by institutions like Adams are place bound and would not be served at all if not by Adams State. We believe it is important that any targeted funding take into consideration these factors.

Western Colorado University:

For FY 2021-22, Step 1 funding was provided to institutions to advance our work on closing the equity gap. The allocation of these dollars was largely based on enrollment of underserved and first-generation populations, with only 25% of the funding allocated based on retention of these populations. At Western, our allocation of Step 1 funding was approximately \$680,000, and we used these dollars to buy-down tuition, initiate a first-generation scholarship program, and support the expansion of services in areas of student mentoring, academic tutoring and advising, and mental health services.

In order to achieve continual and consistent progress in addressing the equity gap, the state must continue to invest in this area through Step 1 of the funding formula. The joint funding request agreement signed by all governing board CEOs recommends a \$50 million investment. The allocation methodology increases the amount distributed via retention from 25% to 35%. Going forward, the legislature should consider 1) continued increased investment in this initiative and 2) increased weighting on the retention metric to ensure institutional accountability toward student success outcomes.

It is important to note that increased investment through Step 1 should only be made after adequate funding is provided through Step 2 to cover core minimum cost increases.

Fort Lewis College:

Underrepresented minorities benefit from more intrusive advising and personalized contact, so it would behoove the state to invest in programs that are designed to meet these students needs and help them navigate the higher education system. The needs of at-risk students are different than those of other students. Fort Lewis College has developed early warning systems and additional supports to address those needs, such as the "Academic Hub Space". This Hub is a new model of integrated academic retention programming with tiered levels of support for students. Fort Lewis College also created a Circle Back Initiative, a program to engage with students who seek to take time off or leave the college for a few years, creating sustained connections with the students and providing alternatives to stopping out. More funds to expand these programs would be directly beneficial to the retention of these students. Simply adding additional funding that does not directly target support programs designed to address the needs of the targeted population will not prove to be as beneficial as might otherwise be the case.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCIAL STATUS AND THE FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

- 5) *[Rep. McCluskie/Sen. Rankin]* Discuss your most notable enrollment trends thus far through the pandemic.
 - (a) Who have you lost? Who have you gained? For example: first-generation, low-income, undergraduate v. graduate, resident v. nonresident? Particular majors?

Adams State University:

We have seen a decrease in our undergraduate degree seeking population. Non-residents and Pell-eligible/low-income students have been the primary drivers of these decreases. We have seen growth in our graduate student enrollment, and in particular, our graduate Counselor Education program. We have also had some growth in our high school concurrent population. We have held steady with regard to Hispanic students, first generation students, and the number of regional students (from the San Luis Valley).

Western Colorado University:

For a host of reasons, including the global pandemic, postsecondary enrollment has declined nearly 8 percent across the country the last two years. Between Fall 2020 and Fall 2021, Western experienced a 2.1 percent growth in total degree seeking headcount across its undergraduate and graduate programs. Undergraduate enrollment alone grew 2.8 percent in this period, while graduate programs were flat. Notable are female undergraduate enrollment which grew by 4 percent, mostly driven by a 33 percent increase in first-time enrolled females. Aided by an institutionally supported First Generation Scholarship, Western's undergraduate first-generation students increased by 5.4 percent between Fall 2020 and Fall 2021.

The segment of students that Western had difficulty retaining however are those with expected family incomes below \$5,000 - it is these same students whose unmet need were the highest.

Fort Lewis College:

Fall 2021 data shows a 17.8% growth in first time students with a 39.4% increase in first generation students, a 14.5% increase in students of color, a 15.4% increase in low income students and a 6.3% increase in Colorado residents. Overall, the college saw a total enrollment increase of 2.84%, which exceeding expectations. Retention remains an area of concern and focus for the college, with a 3.7% decline in total students continuing from 2020 to 2021. Preliminary analysis and anecdotal evidence indicate that the pandemic is having a significant impact on the retention rate. The "Circle Back program" focuses on recapturing students who had previously attended Fort Lewis College and early indicators are showing promising results with an increase of 79.55% in returning students from fall 2020 to fall 2021.

- (b) What are you expecting for FY 2022-23?

Adams State University:

While it is still early in the recruiting process for us for FY 2022-23, we are hoping to maintain our current enrollment levels.

Western Colorado University:

Western is optimistic about enrollment for FY 2022-23. To start, the Enrollment division has a YOY goal of +10% for first-time freshman and transfer students. Achieving that goal will require the team to adopt several important operational efficiencies, be nimble and creative, while increasing Western's human-centered relational approach with students and families coupled with a significant scaling of the use of technology in outreach and cultivation.

Fort Lewis College:

As of January 2022, Fort Lewis College is expecting some growth in first year enrollment with growth happening in all areas of underrepresentation (ex. first generation, students of color)

as well as Colorado residents. Anticipated total enrollment is expected to remain stable or increase slightly.

- 6) [Rep. McCluskie/Sen. Rankin/Sen. Moreno] Discuss your financial situation in FY 2021-22 and what you anticipate for FY 2022-23.
- (a) Do you expect to grow or shrink?

Adams State University:

We anticipate our financial situation to remain steady. We have made some significant cuts over the past few years, but are also at a point where we have to make some investments in order to recruit and retain staffing needed to serve our students. However, we are doing this very carefully and methodically so that we do not over-commit our resources.

Western Colorado University:

Regarding Western's financial outlook, much will be dependent on enrollment. As mentioned above, should we meet our targets for first-time freshman and transfer students and we maintain or improve our retention rates, it is very likely that our budget will grow and we will be able to invest more into programs that support student success. Our ability to meet these enrollment goals will be greatly enhanced by increases in state support sufficient enough to minimize or eliminate the need for tuition increases. Western students are highly sensitive to tuition increases, particularly now as they continue to deal with the economic impacts of COVID. Should we have to increase tuition to cover core minimum cost increases, it will not only compromise our ability to grow enrollment but it may result in enrollment declines.

Fort Lewis College:

Fiscal year 2021-22 is proving to be stable financially for Fort Lewis College, due to both a 2.84% increase in overall student enrollment compared to the prior year couple with the budget cuts that were made in anticipation of a COVID related decline in enrollment. Current projections anticipate stable or slight growth in FY 2022-23. The strategic plan initiatives are bearing fruit and it is expected that these efforts and results will continue. Furthermore, a new reserve plan was recently approved by the Board of Trustees which requires FLC to hold 25% in reserves in any given year. This policy will ensure that the college is able to weather uncertain times and allow investment of funds in strategic areas that will ultimately benefit the community and the state. In alignment with statewide goal, college areas of focus include workforce development and the expansion of the health sciences that will help address significant needs across the state.

- (b) To what extent are you relying on one-time federal funding and/or institutional resources this year?

Adams State University:

One-time funding has allowed us to backfill lost revenue. In FY2021, we backfilled \$4.5 million, and expect to backfill approximately \$2 million in FY22. That backfill will no longer be available in FY23.

Western Colorado University:

Western's E&G budget for FY 2021-22 includes \$2.1 million in HEERF III (ARPA) federal funding, institutional share. This represents approximately 5.5% of the total budget. Because

this is one-time funding, Western will have to replace this revenue with a permanent source or will need to reduce expenditures, with a large impact, by an equivalent amount in FY 2022-23.

Fort Lewis College:

The federal funds have been very useful to Fort Lewis College, offsetting costs directly related to COVID. The pandemic has not yet ended, and it is necessary to continue to use any remaining federal funding this year to cover salaries/benefits for those working on COVID related initiatives beyond their primary position. Additionally, these funds will allow the college to continue providing alternative resources for learning beyond just in the classroom. Fort Lewis College is utilizing institutional funding to invest in the college with students at the center (with resources for previously noted initiatives such as the Circle Back program, Welcome Teams provided to new first year students, the Academic Hub, etc.), as well as creating a Sophomore Summer Bridge Program, which targets both high-achieving students and students with academic developmental needs. Finally, the college is re-investing funding into classroom and lab support, classroom updates, increasing student experiential learning opportunities through undergraduate research funds, and has created a professional development and training position to assist all employees of the college.

- (c) How has your institution used its HEERF funds? Have you used the funds to support auxiliary enterprises that are usually self-sustaining? Have federal requirements limited your ability to effectively deploy any of the funds?

Adams State University:

Of the \$4.5 million in backfilled lost revenue, approximately \$2.5 million was in auxiliary funds that are usually self-sustaining. We have had enough eligible lost revenue that we have not been limited in our ability to effectively deploy any of the funds.

Western Colorado University:

Western has used federal HEERF funds in a couple of ways. The first tranche, provided in spring 2020, was used to replenish revenue losses within the auxiliary programs that had to refund money when students were sent home. Funds provided through HEERF II and HEERF III (ARPA) have been used within the E&G fund to offset revenue losses due to enrollment declines and state appropriation cuts.

The most significant challenge in deploying these resources has been the delays in guidance provided by the US Department of Education, particularly related to the student aid portions of HEERF. There has also been an administrative burden associated with the onerous reporting requirements which significantly impacts smaller institutions with limited staff.

Fort Lewis College:

Fort Lewis College received approximately \$9million in HEERF funding. The college spent the funds in the following manner:

- \$4.6m (51%) to cover lost revenue/non-tuition, from summer conferences, the Campbell Child Development Center, room & board, food service (Sodexo) capital that was not realized, etc. These areas represent auxiliary enterprises that were impacted by COVID.

- \$2.9m (32%) spent on campus safety & operations, including payroll for all COVID related personnel, cleaning, and testing; outdoor classrooms and IT supplies.
- \$620K (7%) to cover lost revenue/tuition, due to the college not being able to raise tuition for FY21-22.
- \$530K (6%) spent on off campus housing, including hotel & IT charges for students with COVID or needs for quarantine/isolation.
- \$365K (4%) spent on additional equipment/software to enable distance learning and classroom technology.

The allowable federal cost categories were broad enough that Fort Lewis college could utilize the funds where they were needed most.

(d) Will you carry forward one-time funds into FY 2022-23?

Adams State University:

We are not carrying forward any funds into FY2022-23 with the intent to balance with one time funds.

Western Colorado University:

No. All federal funds for COVID relief to support institutional impacts will be expended by the end of FY 2021-22.

Fort Lewis College:

Fort Lewis College is currently anticipating spending all the federal HEERF funds. Fort Lewis College will carry forward some institutional funds, with the understanding that the pandemic is not yet over, and additional unexpected costs will be incurred and need to be covered. Fort Lewis College will always make decisions in the best interest of students. These one-time funds will be targeted to the strategic plan, in alignment with state-wide goals, while also focusing on mental, physical and academic support for students.

7) [*Sen. Moreno*] Statewide, enrollment has declined most severely among first-generation and low-income students.

(a) Are you deploying or do you expect to deploy particular strategies to attract these students back?

Adams State University:

Yes, we are actively deploying strategies to attract first-generation and low-income students back. We have been working to revise our financial aid packaging strategy with a goal of covering tuition for all Pell-eligible Resident students. We are engaged with state initiatives to support low-income applicants such as free application days. Additionally, we are utilizing COSI Finish What You Started funds to re-engage stopped out students.

Western Colorado University:

Western has adopted several novel practices to help attract (and retain) first-generation and low-income students. Those include: developing genuine partnerships with not-for-profits across Colorado who work directly with these populations; creating a first-generation scholarship to offset the cost of attendance; conceiving and implementing a Spanish financial aid night; developing family friendly financial one-pagers, in both Spanish and English;

building a dynamic team of recruiters who are bilingual and first-generation and low-income themselves, among others.

Fort Lewis College:

Fort Lewis College's Strategic Plan identifies retention as a strategic area of emphasis within the strategic plan. In order to meet or exceed the stated goals, Fort Lewis has implemented integrated support systems and tracking structures via the Skyhawk Station, as well as enhancing student success and inspiration via the new Academic Hub. These approaches, unique to FLC, blend assistance in the "business of being a student" with multi-tiered academic interventions for students who are tracked by the Academic Care Team. These initiatives have been launched in the 2021 and 2022 calendar years and are driving toward results identified in the strategic plan (including increasing first year to sophomore retention rate to 75% within 5 years, closing the gaps in retention, persistence, and graduation rates among all student demographics to within 5 percentage points within 5 years).

- (b) If you are carrying forward one-time balances into FY 2022-23, do you expect to use one-time fund balances for this purpose?

Adams State University:

Adams State is not anticipating using one-time funds to balance in FY2022-23.

Western Colorado University:

We are not expecting to carry forward any one-time balances into FY 2022-23. All of Western's federal allocations will be expended by end of this fiscal year.

Fort Lewis College:

See response to question Part d of previous response about use of one-time funds.

- 8) [*Sen. Rankin/Rep. McCluskie*] What is your governing board doing to adapt to changing environment, demographics, or workforce needs? What have you already done? What are you planning to do?

Adams State University:

Our governing board monitors our changing demographics with a detailed dashboard showing enrollment by various demographic types over time. They actively review the dashboard on a regular basis, and are updated with what we are doing to adapt. We have added or revised programs to address workforce needs. Most recently, we added a Mechanical Engineering program in partnership with Colorado State University. We are also implementing a Public Health program and B.A.s in Social Sciences with an emphases in Forensics and Pre-Law.

Western Colorado University:

With respect to the changing environment and workforce needs, Western has been carefully strategic with new programming development to prepare students for the changing environment and workforce needs. Most prominently in the past five years, we have developed a partnership program with the University of Colorado, Boulder, to offer University of Colorado bachelor's degrees in either Mechanical Engineering or Computer Science on the Western Colorado University campus in Gunnison. The partnership program has exceeded initial enrollment projections; after two cohorts, the program has roughly 200 students currently enrolled.

Western's native Computer Science program has doubled in size to 102 majors and 33 minors in four years, making it our fastest growing major. The major includes specializations in cybersecurity, software engineering, data analytics, and web design: with these carefully selected emphases, graduates in these areas will be trained to take on the changing workplaces of the future.

In addition to these growing undergraduate programs, Western's graduate programming is addressing workforce needs with a focus on professional degrees. Among the highlights in this area, our largest graduate program, Education, which comprises over 40% of our 400+ graduate student enrollment; the program has received three awards aimed at alleviating the rural teaching shortage. Our second largest graduate program, the Masters in Environmental Management, recently submitted alumni survey data that demonstrated that over 90% of alumni are employed in the environmental field. Our third largest program, still relatively new, is our fastest growing: the first of its kind in the nation, Outdoor Industry MBA, which prepares individuals to become industry leaders in Colorado's \$9.6 Billion outdoor industry, with 55 enrolled. Our newest graduate program, the Masters in Behavioral Science with an emphasis in Rural Community Health, is aimed at serving the physical and mental health needs of rural communities. Graduates will be prepared to contribute at a high level in many organizations including government entities, nonprofits, healthcare and other service-oriented organizations, community foundations, planning agencies and public-private partnerships.

With respect to demographic changes in Colorado, high school students are becoming more diverse, with fewer financial resources than in the past. Western is proactively addressing these trends in several ways. First, we have developed the largest Concurrent Enrollment (CE) program among four-year schools in the state to assist students in matriculating to higher education while reducing the cost of their education. Western's CE program has 1,243 enrolled, growth of ~400% from 5 years ago or ~40% from 1 year ago. Western's CE relationship with Denver Public Schools (DPS) has allowed us to provide higher educational services to a more diverse student body; new scholarship opportunities have been and are in the process of being developed for first-generation college students, including high-achieving underrepresented populations, to encourage DPS students to matriculate to Western. To create a more inclusive environment for a more diverse student body, Western has included diversity, equity, and inclusion goals in its strategic plan, and is currently seeking to hire a Vice President of Inclusivity to lead these initiatives in cooperation with the campus shared governance, including the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee.

Among Western's most current initiatives to serve both workforce needs and a more diverse Colorado, we have developed transfer programming with community colleges—2+2+1 Masters pathways—for accelerated Masters Degrees. This academic year, eleven such agreements have been put in place with Red Rocks Community College and Colorado Mountain College.

Finally, Western has created a new a new online Adult Degree Completion (ADC) program to assist with workforce needs at lower costs to students. Currently in its first year, the ADC program has received ~\$700,000 State of Colorado COSI funds to provide ~50 scholarships and “wrap-around” services to the some 750,000+ Coloradoans who started college, but were unable to complete their degrees. In conclusion with respect to academic programming, all of Western's 22 undergraduate majors have professional pathways—from pre-health programming within Biology to prelaw within Politics and Government to Criminal Justice within Sociology.

[Fort Lewis College:](#)

The Fort Lewis College Board of Trustees adopted the Strategic Plan in February 2019, in order to guide future decisions and areas of focus as the college charts a course to student success, fiscal sustainability and academic excellence. This strategic plan also helps the college to stay on track in times of uncertainty, such as the pandemic over the last two years. The areas of emphasis identified in the plan - including students at the center, knowledge as action and community and regional relationships - stay consistent, even amid the pandemic. Although some of the actions taken have changed, the ultimate goals remain the same. With that in mind, the Board of Trustees is moving forward with the following to secure Fort Lewis College's position of being a premier rural institution:

- The implementation of the Academic Hub (referenced above)
- The initiation of the Circle Back Program (referenced above)
- Peer mentoring program to help welcome new students onto campus over the summer and first semester in conjunction with the First Year Launch program (aimed at increasing retention of first year students)
- The Fort Lewis Promise, which guarantees free tuition to any student who is admitted with a family income of less than \$60,000
- The recently announced mortgage assistance program to help employees in purchasing homes in the Durango area (recruitment and retention of faculty/staff)

9) *[Rep. McCluskie]* Provide an update on how your institution(s) are using the COSI funding for “finish what you started” funds.

Adams State University:

Adams has been working to recruit eligible students for the “finish what you started” program through outreach, recruiting, and marketing. We have utilized postcards, email, and calling to reach students. However, since this grant was just approved on December 1, 2021, we are early in the process. We have also been working to recruit eligible students for our “back to work” COSI funded program. Students were identified via a student survey and we are working with our local Workforce Center to address needed credentials.

While COSI funds are appreciated, there is administrative cost associated with applying for and administering these grants within the grant parameters that do limit our ability.

Western Colorado University:

Western is using its \$528,900 in FWYS funds to support students within our Adult Degree Completion (ADC) program. Launched this past fall, our ADC program offers online degree completion options for adult learners. Our program participants are part of the estimated 750,000+ “some college, no degree” adults who make their home in Colorado. Through this program, we intend to extend our strong reputation of providing individualized attention and wraparound services to online adult learners, increasing the likelihood of persistence and completion.

To grow enrollment and support students within this program, we have allocated nearly \$400,000 of the grant award towards scholarships. The remaining amount will be used to support the hire of a student/academic advisor and student recruitment and outreach.

Fort Lewis College:

The plans to use COSI funds are currently being implemented at Fort Lewis College with finalization of student applications for the spring semester. Along the guidelines of the COSI funding, most of the funding will be used to directly support students. Part of the funding will be utilized on growing

the newly initiated Circle Back program. This program will counsel/advise/track students who are planning to stop-out, work with students to determine options for remaining enrolled, create an online program to keep students connected to the College, and do tribal outreach to create credit bearing projects for students while they are off campus.

- 10) [Staff] Are there recommendations from HB 21-1330 Task Force that, if implemented, will help you in making related adjustments to changing demographics and workforce needs? Are there recommendations that cause you concern?

Adams State University:

Adams would like to see a focus on equity, especially when meeting the needs of underserved and underprepared students. These students need additional resources both in ways of student aid and in wrap around services to ensure success. Providing additional support to address workforce development and provide opportunities would be very helpful, especially if funding was attached as direct allocations as opposed to grants.

Western Colorado University:

Western supports the recommendations outlined in the 1330 final report and recognizes the importance of better alignment of educational and workforce needs. While we agree that the recommendations serve as “an interconnected set of initiatives,” there are some that we feel will immediately help Western better understand and serve the needs of our students. Recommendation #1—Innovation and Scaling Partnership Grants—drives collaboration and provides the opportunity to extend and scale best practices throughout the state. At Western, we are a proven leader in partnerships, highlighted by our joint engineering program with CU-Boulder. Incenting more and stronger collaborations among institutions of higher education will not only better serve the needs of our students and regions but has the potential to minimize unnecessary and costly duplication of effort. Further, this recommendation will provide Western access to funding that will allow us to provide better and more comprehensive wraparound services for our students, a critical need in supporting student success.

Recommendation #2—Enhance Transparency of Postsecondary and Workforce Data—will assist Western in improving stewardship of the programs we offer. A statewide student success database with an initial focus on providing internal users access to “actionable student success metrics” will help us improve programming and better support student needs and expectations.

Western remains concerned about the long-term sustainability of all the recommendations which is why implementation of Recommendation #6—Create a Strategic Talent Finance Plan—will be critical. Most, if not all, of the report’s recommendations, if implemented, will have downstream financial and/or staffing impacts. For institutions like Western where constraints in both financial and human resource are real, we will not be able to successfully implement or support these initiatives if additional funding is not available or provided.

Fort Lewis College:

Recommendations contained within the Task Force report have the potential to address the state's changing demographics and workforce needs. For instance, Fort Lewis College was showcased in the report for its work with the Southwest Collaborative, which provides opportunities to high school students via postsecondary pathways. However, most, if not all, of the HB 21-1330 recommendations will require significant financial and personnel investments from institutions. A main concern,

therefore, entail the state's ability and willingness to provide the funding necessary to enact these recommendations. Without the financial support of the state, the only other funding source available to the institutions to implement the Task Force recommendation is tuition. However, raising tuition will negatively impact enrollment, as well as the target demographic that the recommendations are intended to serve.

COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY AND INCREASING AWARENESS ABOUT FINANCIAL AID

11) [*Sen Rankin*] Based on the experience of your institution(s), how do scholarships and other types of aid affect the enrollment and retention of underrepresented students (first-generation, low-income, underrepresented minorities, etc.)? Does more support increase participation? Retention?

Adams State University:

We have seen better success rates with underrepresented students who have had larger financial aid awards. Often, this aid is through a combination of aid types. We continue to look for ways to better break down the data to answer this question, but it does appear that more support increases participation, retention, and overall student success. The funds most recently provided for emergency aid to students (Project Success, CAREs, HEERF, for example) have also helped students succeed.

Western Colorado University:

Consistent with the national literature, students and families expect more of their total cost of attendance (TCOA) to be discounted, and cost is becoming more of a concern for families. A recent RNL (Ruffalo Noel Levitz) report indicated that 88% of families noted a financial aid package was important in their decision regarding attending a particular institution. The College Board reminds that while a maximum Pell Grant covered 42% of TCOA (or 99% of T&F) in 2000, today it covers 29% of TCOA (or 60% of T&F). In Colorado alone, families are now expected to pay ~70% of their tuition (or 30% covered by the state). At Western we have observed a negative effect between enrollment demand and tuition – in other words, the higher our tuition, the less students we have historically enrolled. Similar with retention – our modeling reveals that students at 100% of Pell or below, many of whom are first-generation, have substantially higher amounts of unmet need and are also those that require additional financial resources to persist through to completion.

Fort Lewis College:

Scholarships and other types of aid play a significant role in helping attract, enroll and retain students, especially Fort Lewis Colleges' first-generation, low income and traditionally underrepresented students. Because federal and state need-based aid programs are often not enough to cover the student's financial need, scholarships play a critical role in helping make college possible, especially for the most at-risk populations. Research shows that minority students are often more loan adverse than other students and without a sound financial aid package, they may forego enrolling in higher education.

Fort Lewis College recently developed the FLC Equity Scholarship to support underrepresented students with a four-year scholarship of \$2,000 per year (\$8,000 total) to specifically address and support historically underrepresented students. While last year was the first year offering the scholarship, the college was very excited to support first generation, students of color, queer and trans students and those with disabilities through this scholarship program.

Furthermore, the college's institutional scholarship program - used for helping attract and retain meritorious students – is a renewable, rather than a one-time award, so that students will have secure funding for eight semesters, and not just their first year. Being able to plan and know future terms can aid in retaining students. Lastly, Fort Lewis has created the FLC Tuition Promise program which supports low income Colorado students and ensures that tuition will be covered.

While aid is a critical factor in retaining students in these populations, it is but one of many factors that student consider in their decision to remain in collage. Pinpointing a single reason for retention or non-retention is very difficult, as many other factors come into play in students' decision to stay, including academic offering, wellbeing and social support service, extra-curricular opportunities, etc. Finally, early intervention is key and is a significant focus of the work currently happening on campus.

12) [Staff] Respond to the staff recommendation that the State should identify what can be said about the costs of postsecondary education for low income students across the state, as the foundation of a public education campaign about college affordability.

(a) Do you agree with JBC Staff that the perception of unaffordability is itself a problem?

Adams State University:

Yes, we agree that the perception of unaffordability is a part of the problem.

Western Colorado University:

Yes, it is a (one) problem.

Fort Lewis College:

Fort Lewis College acknowledge the cost of higher education can be out of reach for many low-income students and the perception of affordability is problematic.

(b) If so, what is the best way to address this?

Adams State University:

The State can message the benefits of postsecondary education for low income students by using facts such as the return on investment of a college degree and the value of the increased salary over a person's lifetime. The State can also market the availability of Pell grants and Colorado Student Grants to low income resident students. With the availability of this support, a student from a family of four making \$50K or less would have full tuition covered.

Western Colorado University:

Increasing state appropriations to lessen the cost burden on students is the best way to address perceptions of unaffordability. Over time, if institutions do not have to raise tuition to cover core minimum cost increases and advance initiatives around student equity and success, the sticker price becomes more affordable and the less institutional resource we have to put towards scholarships. Beyond this, a coordinated campaign that educates students and families on the resources available at the federal, state, and institutional level to buy down tuition may be a productive alternative.

Fort Lewis College:

Fort Lewis College has taken proactive steps to increase awareness about 1) what the actual cost of attendance is (most low income students over estimate how much the total cost may be) and 2) the programs that can assist students in funding their education. For instance, as noted above, Fort Lewis College recently instituted the "FLC Tuition Promise," which covers the cost of tuition for any admitted Colorado resident whose family income is \$60,000 or less.

In order to address other need, such as food insecurity, that may be a barrier for low income students, Fort Lewis College operates a food pantry, as well as helps students enroll in the SNAP program. These efforts have earned the college the Hunger Free and Healthy Minds designation, showing a commitment to student wellness and affordability.

Fort Lewis has a strong tradition of keeping tuition rates affordable. The tables below highlight tuition rates for both resident and non-resident students, as well as providing comparisons to other Colorado peer institutions. Fort Lewis College has kept tuition rates flat over the past 3 years for both resident and non-resident students. Also of note, FLC's resident tuition is the lowest among the state peer institutions.

	Resident			Non-Resident	
<u>Year</u>	Amount	<u>% Change</u>		Amount	% Change
2013-14	5,232	9.0%		16,072	0.0%
2014-15	5,544	6.0%		16,072	0.0%
2015-16	5,856	5.6%		16,072	0.0%
2016-17	6,360	8.6%		16,072	0.0%
2017-18	6,720	5.7%		16,872	5.0%
2018-19	7,056	5.0%		17,712	5.0%
2019-20	7,056	0.0%		17,712	0.0%
2020-21	7,056	0.0%		17,712	0.0%
2021-22	\$ 7,056	0.0%		\$ 17,712	0.0%

<u>Year</u>	<u>Resident Tuition</u>		<u>Mandatory Fees</u>		<u>Room & Board</u>		<u>Total</u>
2013-14	5,232		1,691		9,030		15,953
2014-15	5,544		1,709		9,300		16,553

2015-16	5,856	1,745	9,580	17,181
2016-17	6,360	1,745	9,790	17,895
2017-18	6,720	1,889	10,142	18,751
2018-19	7,056	2,001	11,506	20,563
2019-20	7,056	1,815	11,704	20,575
2020-21	7,056	1,839	11,858	20,753
2021-22	\$ 7,056	\$ 1,949	\$12,012	\$ 21,017
One Year Change	0.00%	6.00%	1.30%	1.13%

	Tuition & Fees	Tuition & Fees	Room and Board
	Resident	Non-Resident	
<u>Colorado Peer Institutions</u>			
University of Colorado (UCB)	\$12,466	\$38,284	\$15,220
Adam State University	9,560	21,296	8,916
Colorado Mesa University	9,437	23,163	11,168
Colorado State University	11,814	30,535	10,787
Colorado State University: Pueblo	10,664	18,862	10,930
Fort Lewis College	8,896	19,552	11,858
University of Colorado – Colorado Springs	10,480	25,600	10,920
University of Northern Colorado	10,062	22,320	11,310
Western State Colorado University	10,646	22,430	9,874
PEER AVERAGE (EXCLUDING UCB & FLC)	\$10,380	\$23,458	\$10,558
PERCENT OF AVERAGE	85.7%	83.3%	112.3%

History of Tuition & Fees Comparisons	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21
Colorado Institutions								
(%) of Average								
Resident	92.9%	87.3%	86.6%	86.1%	86.8%	88.9%	88.8%	85.7%
Non-Resident	94.3%	87.7%	83.8%	79.8%	80.4%	82.6%	82.2%	83.3%

(c) Are you willing/interested in collaborating (and asking your financial aid directors to collaborate) to identify common facts and messaging that would apply across Colorado's public higher education institutions?

Adams State University:

Yes, we would enthusiastically participate in a collaboration along these lines.

Western Colorado University:

Yes. A coordinated statewide campaign presents the best opportunity for success. To do this most effectively will require the contributions of talent and expertise from all institutions.



COLORADO
COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

*We're Changing The
Way Colorado Goes to College.*

Joint Budget Committee Hearing

Joe Garcia, CCCS Chancellor | Jan. 18, 2022



**Colorado's economic recovery runs
through its community colleges.**



COLORADO
COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

Workforce Training and Retraining

CCCS is the Partner of Choice for workforce training.

We help companies build apprenticeships and develop custom employee trainings to meet their talent needs.



- **100+** industry partners
- **450 customized trainings** created annually for employers
- **4,000+ new and incumbent workers trained annually**
- **Over \$4 million saved** in employee training costs

Workforce Training and Retraining

CCCS is the only community college system in the nation that houses, manages, and approves all levels of CTE programs statewide that are funded by Federal Perkins dollars.



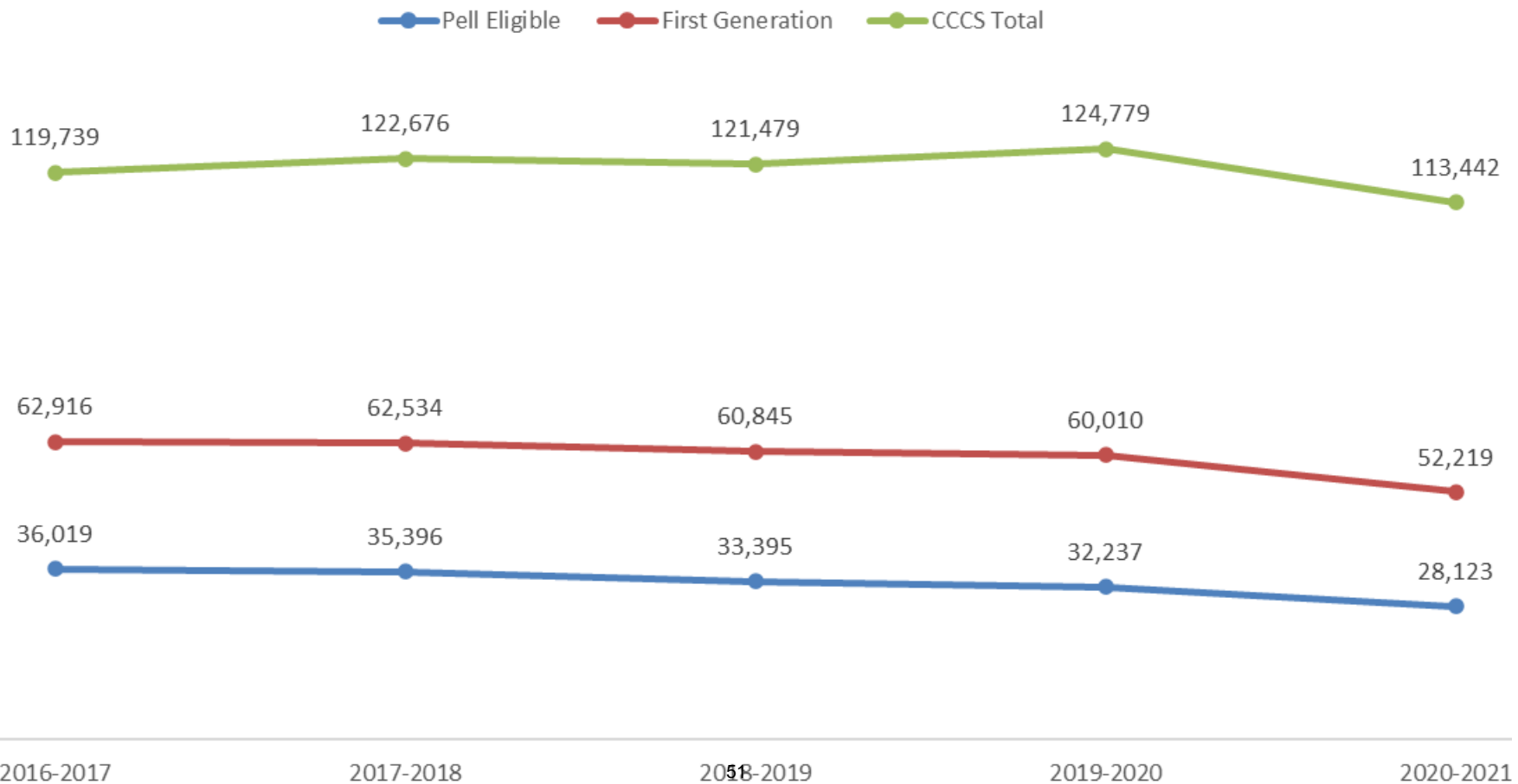
- **Over 200,000** students served annually (k-12 + college)
- **15** industry-aligned career cluster to choose from
- **24,000+** certificates and degrees awarded annually
- **76%** of graduates work in a field related to their CTE study

Serving Today's Student



Recapturing Enrollment and Closing Attainment Gaps

Headcount by Academic Year



The Stakes

Recapturing enrollment comes at a crucial time for Colorado.

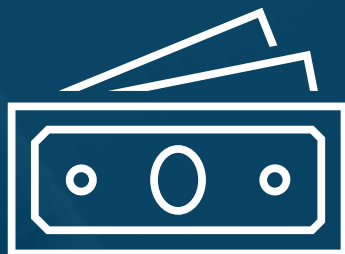


- **Retiring workforce** across Colorado
- **Population growth** among groups that are historically underrepresented in higher education
- **More jobs than ever** require certificates, degrees or training

How You Can Help

Workforce Training and Retraining

Fund



The Colorado
institutions of higher
education funding
request



CCCS's three capital
construction
requests
&
rural consortium
IT request

How You Can Help

Recapturing Enrollment and Attainment Gaps

Fund



The Colorado institutions
of higher education
funding request

Closing Equity Gaps

Colorado's equity populations are the fastest growing demographic groups in our K-12 system.



Q & A

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COLORADO AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGES

JOINT BUDGET COMMITTEE PRESENTATION
JANUARY 2022

ABOUT AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGES

- **Career and Technical Education**

Secondary & Post Secondary
Certificates

- We have the highest efficiency measures (**Completion**) of any colleges in Colorado. (The next closest is school of Mines). Unlike our peers, we are also measured and accredited by **Placement** (who gets jobs) and **Licensure** numbers.
- All three of us have numerous industry partners for all of our programs (the level of industry and community involvement is another requirement unique to ATC's).
- Our existence (because of accreditation) is based on us being able to successfully achieve these measures!

WAIT LISTS

Emily Griffith

Automotive Collision	7	Automotive Services	49
Barbering	49	Cosmetology	56
Dental Assisting	23	Esthetician	52
Multimedia Video	11	Medical Assisting	39
Nurse Assisting	At Capacity	Phlebotomy	16
Video Production	11	Pharmacy Technician	9

Pickens

Automotive	11	Esthetician	49
Dental	31	HVAC	30
Cyber	22	Medical Assisting	31
Cosmetology	At Capacity	LPN	At Capacity
Diesel	19	Welding	45

Technical College of the Rockies

Esthetician	17	Cosmetology	19
Police Academy	5	EMT	4

Additional funding recommendation - uses

Governor Polis has recommended appropriating \$1.7 million each year for the next two years for ATC's.

With this additional funding, we are planning on:

Eliminating all student loans (no student attending an ATC will have a loan).

Continuing to work towards free tuition for all students who qualify for financial aid (we are currently about \$1500 away on average for most of our programs).

Work to address wait lists. (Create additional sections, hire instructors, etc.)

Coordinating to work together to be able to share programs, instructors, resources, and equipment where appropriate (Water Quality Management, for example).

SUPPORTING CCHE MASTER PLAN GOALS

Increase credential attainment

- This is all that we do! We have continued to increase the number of credentials earned each year, even through the pandemic.

Eliminate equity gaps

- **A total of 41% of the ATCs are represented by underserved populations.**
- Hispanics make up 32% of our total population

Improve student success

- We celebrate industry partnerships, professional training, and workforce development opportunities.

Increase affordability and accessibility

- Expand capacity to affordable post-secondary programs across the state. (\$1500 is the average out-of-pocket cost)

What our STUDENTS say:

Adrian - Auto Service Student:

"Going into the [auto service] program was one of the best decisions I ever made in my life and I don't regret it one bit. I implore anyone who is interested in auto service or any of the other programs Emily Griffith offers to go there before anywhere else."

Caterina - Cosmetology Student:

"It's very helpful that Pickens gave me the opportunity to take this program while still in high school. It is going to benefit me very much and give me a head start to my career."

Debbie - GED & Accounting Student:

"There was so much support and opportunity," explains Debbie why she chose to come to our school. "There's so much value for your money."

Chris - Architectural Computer-Aided Drafting & Design Student :

"I have been to several colleges, and I really appreciate the fact that everything that we do here at TCR is what we need to enter the industry. You have no fluff and never waste our time."

THANK YOU

**Thanks for your support of the
Area Technical Colleges
and
Career & Technical Education
in Colorado!**

Questions for us?

EST.
1967

 **Aims**
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

All in.



We focus on being student-ready ...

not on students being college-ready.

2020-21 ANNUAL REPORT DATA

8,397
STUDENTS

57%
FEMALES

43%
MALES

AVERAGE CLASS SIZE
15:1
STUDENT TO FACULTY



CREDENTIALS SOUGHT

GRADUATION OUTCOMES

AFTER GRADUATION

4,406
SEEKING DEGREES

33%
DEGREES

82%
EMPLOYED

626
UNDECLARED

67%
CERTIFICATES

38%
EMPLOYED IN RELATED FIELD

407
CERTIFICATES

11%
UNEMPLOYED NOT-SEEKING

TAKING COURSES IN

70%
GENERAL EDUCATION

61%
CAREER & TECHNICAL

7%
BASIC EDUCATION

53%
CONTINUING EDUCATION

40.33%
IDENTIFY AS RACIALLY OR ETHNICALLY DIVERSE

52.5%
OF OUR STUDENTS ARE FIRST-GENERATION

1,249
GRADUATES

We expand access to education.

We organize our academic offerings in six areas — pathways — that connect interests to careers. Whatever path is ultimately chosen, it will pay off in the end.

Agriculture and Energy

AGRICULTURE

AgriBusiness Management
Animal Science
Horticulture
Precision Agriculture
Production Ag & Crops
Production Ag Mechanics
Soil and Crop Sciences

ENERGY

Oil and Gas Technologies

Business

Accounting
Advanced Office Specialist
Business
Computer Programming
Customer Service & Leadership
Cyber Security Specialist
Database Administration
Web Developer
Management
Marketing
Network Analyst
Mobile Apps
Real Estate
Small Business Management
Word Processing

Education and Human Services

EDUCATION

Early Childhood Education
Infant & Toddler Teacher

HUMAN SERVICES

Psychology
Public Health
Sociology

Health Careers, Criminal Justice and Public Safety

HEALTH CAREERS

Healthcare Readiness & Professionalism
Introduction to Allied Health
Mammography Technologist
Medical Clinical Assistant
Medical Preparation
Nurse Aide
Phlebotomy Technician
Nursing
Sterile Processing Technician
Radiologic Technology
Surgical Technology

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Criminal Justice
Police Studies



PUBLIC SAFETY

Emergency Medical Responder
Firefighter
Paramedic

Arts, Communication and STEM

ARTS

Animation
Art History
Graphic Design
Music
Studio Art
Web Design

COMMUNICATION

Audio Production
English
French
Journalism
Philosophy
Radio Production
Spanish
Video & Television Production

STEM

Anthropology
Biology
Chemistry
Geography
Geology
History
Mathematics
Physics

Technical Sciences and Skilled Trades

AUTOMOTIVE

Brakes
Electrical
Automotive Collision Technician
Automotive Service Technician
Automotive Transmission
Damage Appraisal
Diesel Automotive
Electrical
Heat & Air Conditioning
Manual & Drive Transmission
Steering & Suspension
Upholstery

Aviation

Air Traffic Control
Commercial Pilot
Drone Pilot
Flight Instructor
Multi-Engine Airplane
Private Pilot Airplane
Single-Engine Airplane

Construction

Carpentry
Construction Site Management
Green/Sustainable Building
Project Estimating

ENGINEERING

Engineering Technology
Computer Aided Drafting

INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY

Applied Technology
Industrial Technology
Manufacturing Technician

WELDING

Arc Welding
Metal Cutting & Gouging
Metal Fabrication
Pipe Welding
Welding Technology

200+
DEGREE AND
CERTIFICATE
PROGRAMS
OFFERED

For a more comprehensive look at our programs, go to www.aims.edu.

We meet students where they are ...

responding to their needs.

2020-21 CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT PROFILE

AIMS
PARTNERED
WITH
44
HIGH
SCHOOLS

2,971
STUDENTS

456
AWARDS

25,523
CREDITS
ATTEMPTED

8.2
AVERAGE CREDITS
EARNED

COMPLETION RATE

98.2%
AIMS OFF-CAMPUS
(HIGH SCHOOL)

98%
ON AIMS CAMPUS


98%
ONLINE


96.3%
REMOTE

OFFERINGS, PATHWAYS AND DEGREES

- Guaranteed Transfer Pathway Courses
- Automotive Collision Repair
- Technology A.A.S.
- Carpentry Certificate
- Liberal Arts A.A. & A.S.
- Early Childhood Education Certificate

 **51%**
STUDENTS

 **48%**
STUDENTS

 **1%**
STUDENTS

46%
IDENTIFY AS
RACIALLY OR
ETHNICALLY
DIVERSE

40%
FIRST-
GENERATION



Aims will continue to expand partnerships and pathways, primarily in northern Colorado.

Aims Community College is committed to fostering a campus (and online) environment that is welcoming, accepting and grants equitable access to all students, faculty, and staff of the College.

No matter what, we're in this together.

#AimsCCFamily

VISION

**First Choice:
The Recognized Leader in Learning and Student Success**

MISSION

Provide knowledge and skills to advance quality of life, economic vitality, and overall success of the diverse communities we serve.

PURPOSE

Build a stronger community.

GREELEY
FORT LUPTON
LOVELAND
WINDSOR
ONLINE

aims.edu

 **Aims**
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

All in.

COLORADO MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

Snapshot for the Joint Budget Committee

January 18, 2022

Carrie Besnette Hauser, Ph.D.
President & CEO

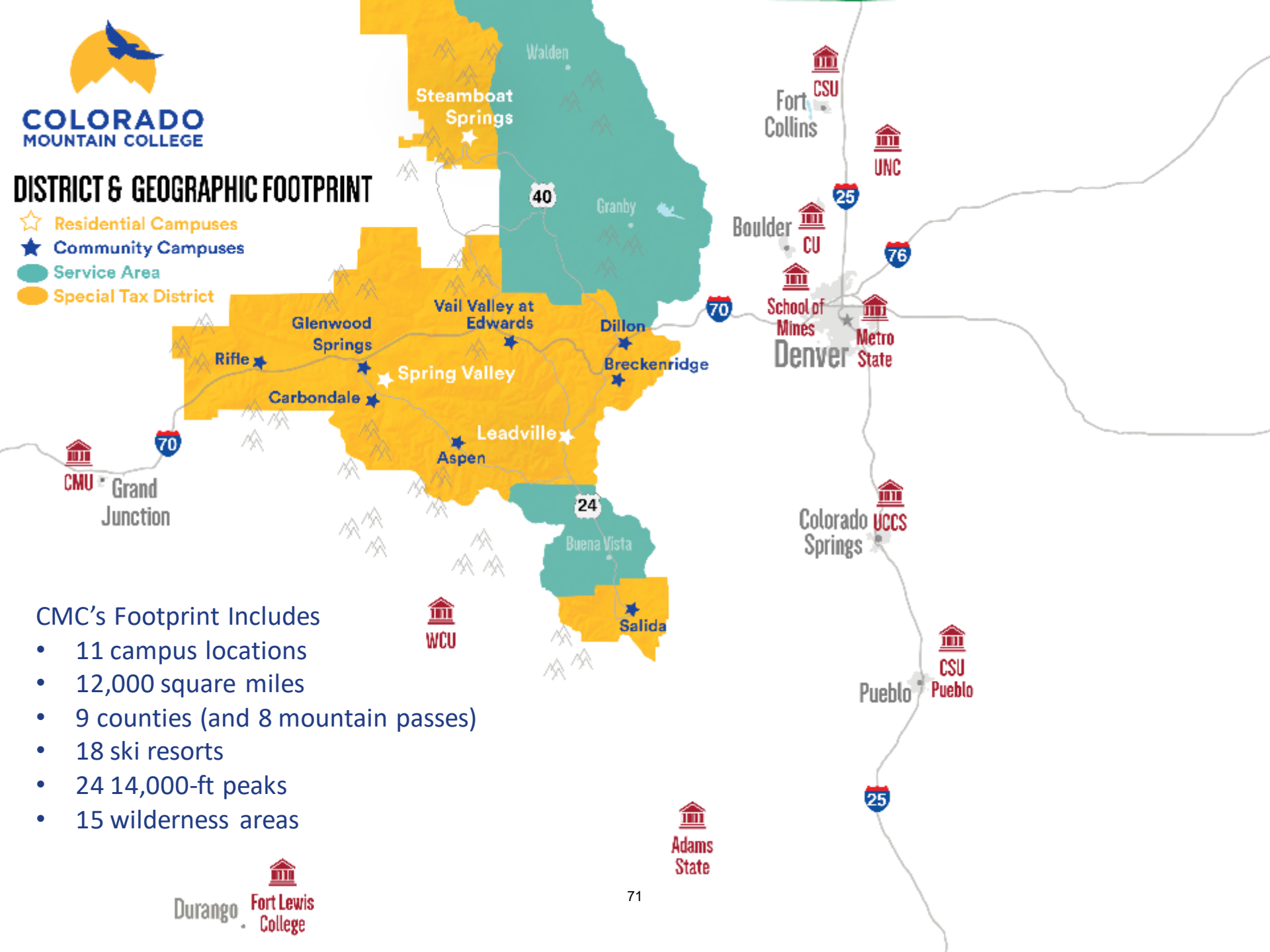
www.coloradomtn.edu
cbhauser@coloradomtn.edu
[@CMCPresident](https://twitter.com/CMCPresident)



COLORADO MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

DISTRICT & GEOGRAPHIC FOOTPRINT

- ☆ Residential Campuses
- ★ Community Campuses
- Service Area
- Special Tax District



CMC's Footprint Includes

- 11 campus locations
- 12,000 square miles
- 9 counties (and 8 mountain passes)
- 18 ski resorts
- 24 14,000-ft peaks
- 15 wilderness areas

Durango Fort Lewis College

COLORADO MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

A S N A P S H O T



COLORADO
MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

- **Dual-Mission, Local District, Hispanic Serving Institution;** Elected Board of Trustees
- **Enrollment:** approximately 15,000 (28% Latino, 64% First Generation College)
- **Tuition Classification:** 81% local; 12% In-state; 7% Non-resident
- **2020-21 Operating Budget:** \$70M
- **Capital investments** since 2011: \$90M (CMC receives none from state)
- **Unique Programs:** Avalanche Science, Ski Area Operations, Ski & Snowboard Bus.
- **Bachelor's Degrees:** Ecosystem Science & Stewardship, Education, Leadership & Management, Human Services, Nursing, Sustainability Studies

CMC'S PATH THROUGH COVID



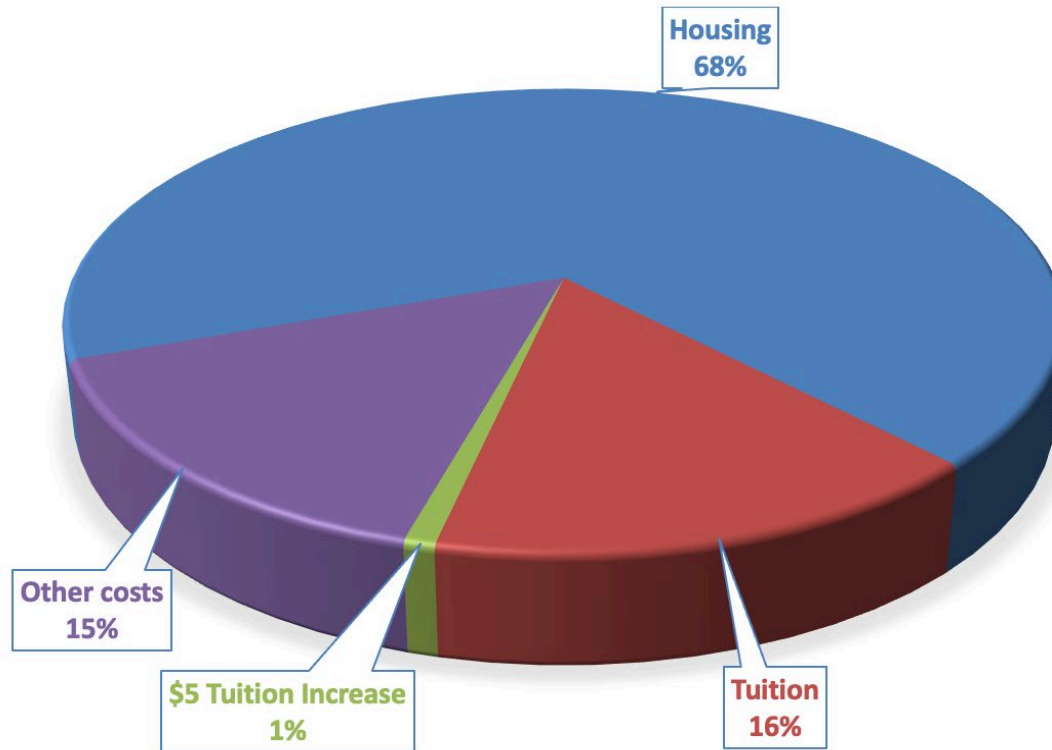
CURRENT ENVIRONMENT



CARES ACT FUNDING

	HEERF - Student	HEERF - Institutional & SIP	CRF (Pass-through from State)
Direct Payments to Students	\$2,913,568	\$66,332	-
Reimburse Housing	-	\$668,730	-
Lost Revenue - Academic	-	\$2,840,381	-
Lost Revenue - Auxiliary	-	\$2,132,492	-
Economic Support	-	-	\$3,388,105
Equipment Facilitating Distance Learning	-	-	\$1,039,115
Other Expenses (i.e. PPE, Campus Safety)	-	\$271,410	\$340,986
Total Expended to Date	\$2,913,568	\$5,979,345	\$4,768,207
Remaining Allocation	\$2,134,812	\$1,291,796	-
Total Granted	\$5,048,380	\$7,271,141	\$4,768,207

COST OF ATTENDANCE



Tuition Classification	Tuition Rate (per credit)	All-Inclusive Books (per credit)	Technology Fee	Annual Tuition & Fees (based on 30 credits)
In-District	\$90	\$25	\$50 flat rate per semester	\$3,550
Service Area	\$180	\$25		\$6,250
In-State	\$190	\$25		\$6,550
Out-of-State	\$466	\$25		\$14,830



INVESTING IN THE FUTURE



COLORADO MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

A S N A P S H O T



COLORADO
MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

FACTS + FIGURES

- ▶ Dual mission, local-district college with elected board of trustees
- ▶ Enrollment: Approximately 15,000 students
- ▶ 136 programs, from specialized certificates and associates to bachelor's degrees
- ▶ Concurrent enrollment: Over 2,200 high school students
- ▶ 40% of CMC's credit students earn a certificate or degree every year
- ▶ 2020-21 operating budget: \$70 million
- ▶ Capital and infrastructure investments since 2011 (funded entirely by college and private philanthropy with no state funding): \$90,980,905
- ▶ CMC's Latino enrollment has doubled in six years to 28%, qualifying the college to be approved for federal Hispanic Serving Institution status.

All enrollment figures from CMC Institutional Research Department, 2019–2020

GEOGRAPHIC FOOTPRINT

- ▶ 11 campus locations + administrative offices and Morgridge Commons meeting space
- ▶ 9 counties (and 8 mountain passes)
- ▶ 12,000 square miles ▶ 15 wilderness areas
- ▶ 24 14,000-ft peaks ▶ 18 ski resorts



MOST AFFORDABLE BACHELOR'S DEGREE in Colorado

– Colorado Department of Higher Education, 2019–20 Tuition & Fees Report

A FEW RECENT HIGHLIGHTS

▶ Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI)

With nearly 28% Latino student enrollment, CMC is the only HSI in Colorado's mountain resort region. After meeting several performance objectives to grow and retain CMC's Latino student population, the college received the U.S. Department of Education's Hispanic Serving Institution designation in spring 2021. Among the benefits, the new status makes CMC eligible for additional sources of federal grants, which support all students at the college.

▶ Dual Mission Designation

For over a decade, CMC has offered an intentional mix of career and academic programs matched to the economic and workforce needs of its mountain resort communities. To recognize its unique and blended approach, CMC pursued and received official designation as a "dual mission" institution at the beginning of 2021. The classification identifies higher education institutions that offer bachelor's degrees in addition to certificates and associate degrees, offering students a range of seamless educational pathways. CMC joins an estimated 400 dual mission institutions nationwide and is the first of its kind to be reflected in Colorado state law.

▶ Graduates Rally

Despite, or perhaps because of, the way teaching and learning evolved during COVID-19, CMC's graduation rates stayed steady, and even soared. In 2020, students from every campus gathered together for one large, live virtual commencement. And in 2021, the college graduated one of the largest classes in its history.

▶ \$5 Million in Grants

The U.S. Department of Education awarded CMC a \$2.125 million, five-year grant in 2020 to bolster the college's nursing, law enforcement and career-focused programs. In early 2021, the Colorado Department of Higher Education awarded CMC a \$2.9 million grant. In partnership with Colorado Northwestern Community College, the funds are connecting 54 high schools and thousands of students to college courses, establishing the largest network of high-tech classrooms in Colorado.

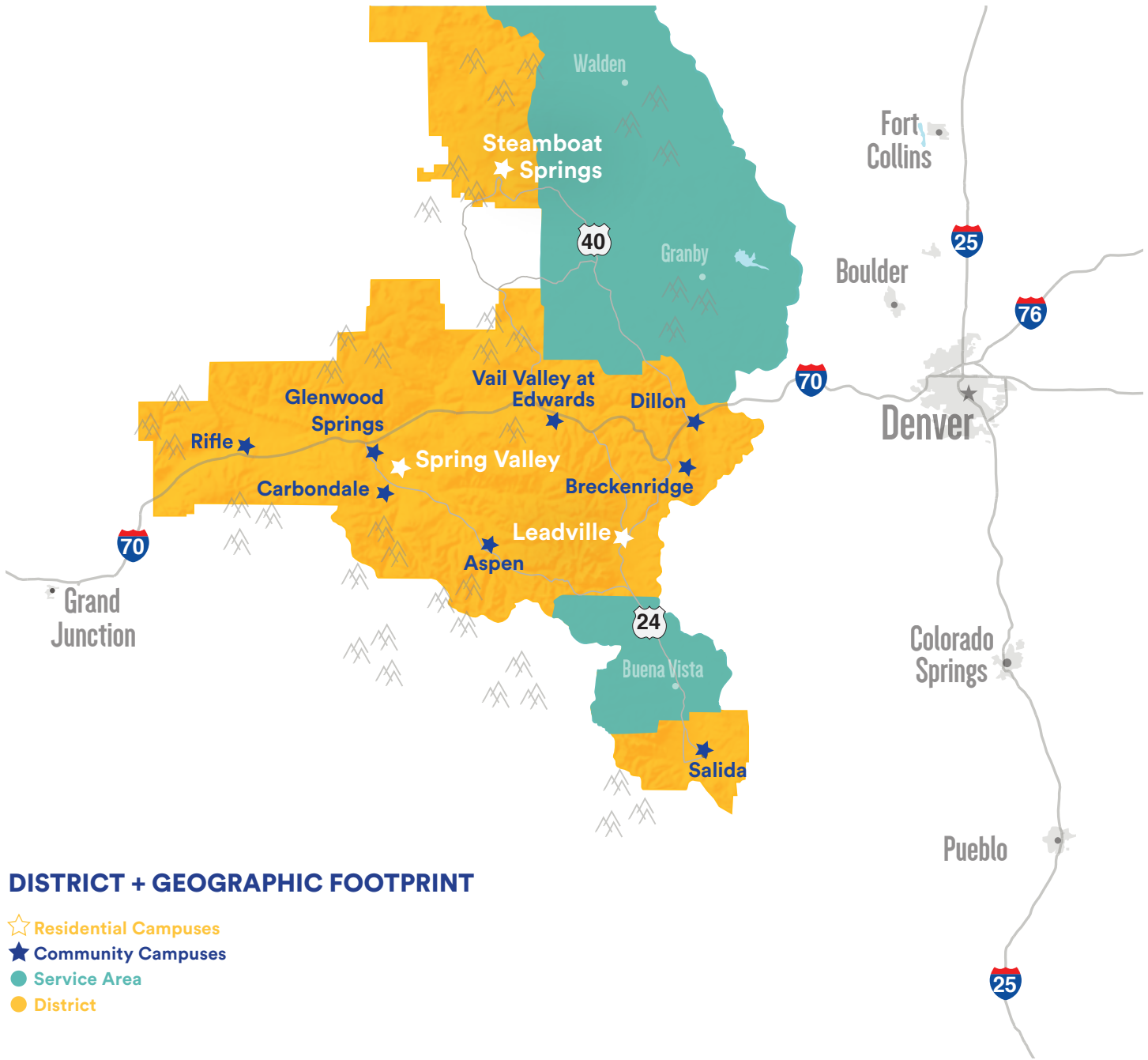
▶ New Programs

Since 2018, CMC has added a second law enforcement academy in Breckenridge, expanded its nursing program in Steamboat Springs, and launched a professional-level avalanche science certification program. In Fall 2021, the college also added new programs in addiction counseling and pharmacy technician training. Two new Bachelor of Science degrees, one in ecosystem science and stewardship, and the other in human services, debut in Fall 2022.

▶ Housing Crunch

Exacerbated by the pandemic, the cost and availability of housing has become an ever-increasing hurdle for CMC students and local employers. To address this challenge, CMC's Board of Trustees approved \$40 million in 2021 to build new housing units at four of its campus locations. While these contributions won't solve the housing crisis, CMC strives to be part of win-win solutions and partnerships in its local communities.

WHERE TO FIND CMC



DISTRICT + GEOGRAPHIC FOOTPRINT

- ☆ Residential Campuses
- ★ Community Campuses
- Service Area
- District



COLORADO
MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

www.ColoradoMtn.edu / 800.621.8559 / joinus@coloradomtn.edu



COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM, AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGES, LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGES

REQUESTS R1 AND R2 - STATE SUPPORT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION AND TUITION SPENDING AUTHORITY

- 1) *[Rep. McCluskie]* Discuss what you consider to be your "core minimum costs" for sustaining educational activities.

Colorado Community College System:

Our core minimum costs for sustaining educational activities include salary increases for employees (we generally try to provide the same percentage salary increase for our non-classified employees that the General Assembly approves for classified employees); health, life, and dental insurance increases (we are not provided funding separately for these like other state departments); mandatory increases in employer PERA contributions (we are similarly not provided funding for this like other state departments); paid family medical leave costs; and inflationary increases for operating expenses, such as information technology and utilities.

Area Technical Colleges:

The three Area Technical Colleges (Emily Griffith Technical College, Pickens Technical College, and the Technical College of the Rockies) all have a very focused mission of providing Career and Technical Education that is intended to provide our students with the skills and knowledge needed to enter the workforce. Because of this mission, we do not require any courses other than core content for our programs. We do not have any electives or general education classes. All of our courses are integral to the programs they are part of. We have a similar approach to our campuses. We have very limited student life opportunities, with no housing options, no sports teams, and nothing that is not needed to support our mission of getting students into the workforce.

This streamlined, focused approach means that we are all operating on the "core minimum cost" model currently. If we have any additional funding, we incorporate it into supporting our students through additional financial support, we use it to open additional sections of high-demand programs, and we use it to try to better meet the workforce needs of our communities. We will never build new football stadiums or research facilities.

All three ATC's have had consistently escalating costs in numerous areas, including energy bills, difficulties with recruiting and retaining qualified staff, and maintaining our facilities. Because of many years of deferred maintenance and no capital construction dollars, our decisions to consistently defer maintenance (replacing roofs, for example), may end up being very costly moving forward.

All three ATC's have been able to continue to succeed and slowly grow with existing funding. Our aging campuses mean that we all have a long list of deferred maintenance projects. Not having capital construction dollars means that we have been unable to build any new buildings to better meet the needs of our students. We truly do operate on a bare bones, core minimum cost model on an annual basis.

Aims Community College:

The core minimum costs for Aims are related to salary and benefits, statutorily required PERA auto adjustments, new statewide paid family leave act as well as inflationary cost increases in operating expenditures and utility costs.

- (a) Does the Governor's proposal provide sufficient funding to cover these costs?

Colorado Community College System:

No, the Governor's proposal is only sufficient to cover less than half of our core minimum costs, which include salary increases for employees; health, life, and dental insurance increases; mandatory increases in employer PERA contributions; paid family medical leave costs; and inflationary increases for operating expenses.

Area Technical Colleges:

The Governor's Budget request has two components for the ATCs.

Under Request R-1, the Area Technical Colleges would receive a base increase of 4.6 percent (\$689,527) under the higher education budget request. This funding would allow us to address inflationary needs on our campuses - inflationary salary increases - but not much else.

For the ATCs, the Governor has also requested an additional \$1.7 million General Fund for FY 2022-23 and FY 2023-24 through Budget Request BA - 1. These additional funds, if approved, will provide some welcome additional dollars that will be utilized to better meet our student needs. We will use these dollars to **address waitlists and to reduce costs to students**. Currently the average student at one of our colleges has approximately \$1500 in out-of-pocket expenses. This funding will help lower this amount. With this funding, we are planning on having **no student loans at any of our three colleges**. In an age of skyrocketing student debt, having an entire college system not offer student loans is a pretty amazing accomplishment. We also plan on using some of these funds to explore partnership opportunities between the three ATC's to allow us to share programs, resources, and even staff when appropriate. This will help us change the impact we can have on the lives of our students all over the state.

While these additional dollars are very appreciated, they will not help us address our facilities challenges. Long lists of deferred maintenance items and a need for new structures to better meet the needs of our community exist at all three colleges, and this funding will not help us address those growing challenges.

Aims Community College:

As a local district college, Aims is funded with property tax mill levies like a school district. As a result, a significant portion of our funding comes from mills levied on assessed property valuations within our taxing district that includes residential, commercial, industrial and the production of oil and gas. As assessed values change due to changing economic conditions, the college has seen fluctuations, particularly in oil and gas. Aims continues to monitor assessed valuations, be fiscally prudent, and maintain reserves to manage changing economic conditions.

As one of the two local district community colleges in Colorado, Aims receives the average increase or decrease in General Fund appropriations that all state funded higher education institutions receive.

Colorado Mountain College:

While Colorado Mountain College expects to have sufficient resources in 2022-23 to cover “core minimum costs” which includes the Governor’s +4.6% proposal, CMC is funded differently compared to other postsecondary institutions. Local property taxes, which account for nearly 70% of the college’s general fund revenues, have grown above inflation over the past year. This will enable CMC to absorb the very high increases in personnel costs expected in 2022-23. Additionally, CMC is technically exempt from the state’s plan to hold tuition flat; we anticipate increasing tuition rate slightly according to the CMC Board of Trustee’s longer-term revenue plan. Importantly, we have seen the “core minimum cost” increases expected among the majority of state institutions and believe that, overall, the Governor’s proposal is likely insufficient to cover those expenses across all institutions in an environment of declining enrollments and dramatically increasing inflation.

- (b) Are you facing workforce challenges similar to other state agencies? Discuss turnover and whether compensation is or is not meeting their needs to recruit and retain staff.

Colorado Community College System:

Yes, much like the rest of higher education, CCCS faces significant workforce challenges and turnover rates that departing employees are indicating (via our exit surveys) as primarily due to compensation. In addition, positions have sat vacant for longer, requiring multiple and longer search processes, often resulting in few applicants. When we have viable candidates, they are competing for multiple positions and receiving offers for greater salary than we can support.

Area Technical Colleges:

Workforce challenges have greatly impacted our ability to meet the needs of our students. Many of our instructors come from sectors that are offering large incentives to their employees. Our instructors from programs such as Nursing, Respiratory Care, etc. are often recruited to leave with promises of pay that we are not able to match, due to our limited salary schedules. TCR was forced to close their Practical Nursing program because of an inability to hire instructors. Recruiting and retaining a qualified workforce has been a growing challenge for all three colleges, and the impact has been felt by students and communities.

Aims Community College:

Aims’s challenges have been consistent with what other institutions of higher education are experiencing. Aims continues to struggle to fill positions in career and technical education faculty—particularly allied health and aviation. With the shortages in many of those areas, instructors can make significantly more money in the industry than they can as an instructor. This was an issue before the pandemic that has been exacerbated. Information technology is another area where hiring is challenging. Overall, the recruitment pools for some positions have seen fewer applicants. Rising housing costs in Northern Colorado also continues to contribute to a challenging hiring market.

Colorado Mountain College:

CMC adopted a nationally benchmarked compensation plan several years ago. Since that time, the college has not struggled to fill vacant positions from a purely compensatory standpoint. The major challenge in the mountain region is the extreme cost and limited supply of housing. So, CMC's compensation is very competitive compared to peer institutions, but is insufficient for some employees moving into the region for the first time, especially those with families.

CMC faces the same market-based challenges as any similarly complex organization, including state agencies. We face more competition filling positions with requisite skills/experiences that are transferrable among a variety of organizations and sectors, such as IT, budget/finance, fund-raising and maintenance. However, CMC is enjoying very strong hiring success among positions that are unique to higher education and without direct substitute industries, such as faculty, academic administrators, research librarians, and certain student affairs professionals.

- (c) The budget data book information submitted by the institutions indicates that, statewide, about 35 percent of costs are not for personnel or benefits. What costs are included in this "other" category at your institution(s)?

Colorado Community College System:

These other costs include utilities, information technology costs (contracts and equipment), grounds/maintenance/security/custodial, and general operating costs.

Area Technical Colleges:

ATC's incur costs for supplies, equipment and services to offer and maintain Career and Technical Education programs. Many of our programs require very specialized, expensive equipment. All of our programs require some type of specialized equipment and supplies, something that is unique to the three ATC's as well.

Aims Community College:

For Aims, 31% of costs are not for personnel or benefits. Contained in this expenditure category, Aims would have operational costs that include utilities, operational and instructional supplies, contracted services, maintenance, custodial and information technology equipment and software/maintenance subscriptions to maintain classroom, labs and offices.

Colorado Mountain College:

"Other" non-personnel costs at Colorado Mountain College include institutional debt, energy, technology (software and hardware), maintenance and capital, contracts, travel and professional development, insurance, legal fees, institutional financial aid, and the like. Overall, non-personnel costs at CMC comprise 23% of the college's general fund budget.

- 2) [Rep. McCluskie] Institutions have substantial differences in the extent to which they rely on General Fund versus resident tuition versus nonresident tuition How should we take this into account in the funding formula and/or in setting resident tuition caps?

Colorado Community College System:

CCCS believes is important to continue to prioritize getting funding into Step 1 of the funding formula in order to provide targeted funding for specific state policy goals. In addition to the relative resident vs. non-resident tuition revenue mix among governing boards, it is also important to note that a 1% tuition rate increase generates very different dollar amounts per student depending on an institution's

base tuition rate. For a full-time student and using published rates, a 1% resident tuition increase generates an extra \$46 per student at CCCS vs. \$166 at the School of Mines, for example. A \$166 increase in CCCS resident tuition would equate to a 3.6% resident tuition rate increase.

Area Technical Colleges:

None of the three ATC's have ever had a significant number of nonresident students, so this question does not really apply to us.

Aims Community College:

In Aims's current fiscal year budget, tuition covers approximately 12% of our education and general expenditures, state appropriation 15% and local mill levy revenue 73%. Our 12% tuition revenue comes from student tuition of which 65% is in-district, 27% out-of-district and 8% out-of-state students. Aims has not had a tuition increase since 2012.

Depending on the level of support the state is able to provide, institutions need to have a level of flexibility to determine the level of tuition increase each need. Currently, Aims is reviewing a long-term tuition strategy that would help to ensure our revenue streams have a level of diversification that is appropriate to meet the changing economic climate, particularly in the oil and gas industry.

Colorado Mountain College:

While CMC is largely outside of this discussion, on behalf of the higher education sector, we would advocate that the JBC never assumes that \$1 in state aid is equal to \$1 in tuition. That's fuzzy math. The reality is that, for most institutions, tuition comprises 60-to-70 percent of all revenues. So, if overall costs increase by, say, 4.6%, and state funding also increases by 4.6%, the net effect is that state funds only accounted for, say, 1.5% of all costs increases (30% of the overall change), leaving the institution to manage the balance. For most institutions, this requires tuition increases. The following illustration might help explain this issue.

If total costs to educate an FTE at a particular college are, say \$10,000 per year, and costs increase by 4.6%, the overall new costs of educating that FTE are \$10,460. If state funds account for 30% of overall revenues, then the net delta for the institution is \$322 per FTE (that is, \$460 increase minus a +4.6% state funding, or \$138 = \$322 net increase). If enrollments remain the same, tuition will also have to be increased by 4.6% in order to break even with expenses. If enrollments decline, tuition may need to increase even further to meet ongoing increases in operating expenses. Or, if inflation is actually higher than 4.6%, tuition rates may need to increase even more. The only way to "reduce" tuition increases below a +4.6% rate would be to artificially cap or "freeze" inflation in the institutions, thus violating the very principle used to justify the increase in the first place.

- 3) *[Rep. McCluskie]* What efficiencies and cost savings have you been able to realize as a result of the pandemic? To what extent are these savings one-time versus ongoing?

Colorado Community College System:

Due to the gap in state and federal revenue compared to base costs and increased costs brought on by the pandemic, CCCS has had to reduce costs through hiring freezes, lay-offs, deferring maintenance, cancelling service contracts, reducing or delaying the purchase of equipment and supplies, reducing travel and professional development, and eliminating or consolidating academic programs.

In addition, we are working to be more efficient by sharing resources amongst campuses and at the Auraria Higher Education Center, optimizing space and taking advantage of “hoteling”, using energy performance contracts, switching from paper to electronic workflows and approvals, and restructuring to find staff efficiencies and consolidating positions where possible.

While some of the efficiencies will be ongoing, the cost savings are generally things that will be more one-time in nature. Given our relative funding compared to our peer institutions nationally (CCCS is 67% below our peers in total state and local appropriations according to the Hanover study), we already are fairly efficient in how we operate.

Area Technical Colleges:

All CTE industry specific conferences, as well as continuing education and professional development offerings, were offered remotely during the pandemic, and travel was eliminated. We believe that there is great value earned by attending in-person conferences and training, so we do not anticipate this savings as continuing into the future. Even these limited savings came with a caveat. All three colleges had to make significant investments in technology to allow us to better participate in these virtual professional development opportunities, so the savings were very limited. We were unable to identify any other cost savings that emerged out of the pandemic. One other quick note - all three ATC’s have very limited administrative personnel, and unlike the other systems in the state, we have no designated system personnel. Because of this, there were no savings to be realized by eliminating travel during the pandemic.

Aims Community College:

From a cost standpoint, the expenditure category where Aims has seen the most savings has been in travel, as most national and regional conferences and training opportunities have been delivered remotely or cancelled. We anticipate these costs to go back to normal levels as conference and training opportunities resume. The use of remote technology will continue to add a level of time efficiency for operational meetings and providing remote services for students.

Colorado Mountain College:

During the pandemic, the college postponed a number of traditional expenses, including salary savings (due to a hiring freeze and, later, staff reductions), lower energy usage, substantially reduced travel and mileage, and little or no professional development. The college also enjoyed reduced costs for health care insurance, as fewer employees used hospitals for routine and planned services.

Most of these adjustments were temporary. Ongoing savings are somewhat marginal and include: (a) one-time rate increases foregone (for health insurance premiums), which will lessen overall costs in the longer-term and (b) modifications to course offerings, which now more often include online and hybrid sections, which are more likely to operate with larger class sizes, thus decreasing the overall number of course sections needed.

- 4) *[Rep. McCluskie]* I don't think we've done enough yet to highlight the purpose of the funds added in FY 2021-22 through "Step 1" components of the funding model, such as money added based on retention of underrepresented minorities. Do you have suggestions about targeting and assessing the use of these funds going forward?

Colorado Community College System:

We think it is important to continue to provide funding through Step 1 for first generation, low income, and underrepresented minority students, which will demonstrate the State’s continuing commitment to these key policy goals and to the CCCS mission, since we serve the largest number of these populations within the State’s higher education system. Without this continued support, the all higher education institutions and the Department of Higher Education will not be able to meet the first two goals in the Higher Education Master Plan (Colorado Rises) of increasing credential completion and erasing equity gaps.

Area Technical Colleges:

The Area Technical Colleges have traditionally had great success with recruitment and retention of underrepresented minorities. All three ATC’s are only allowed to keep our accreditation status by achieving a high rate of Completion (percentage of students who finish our programs), Placement (percentage of students who go to work in the industry matching their credential), and Licensure (percentage of students who earn the appropriate license necessary to work in their chosen field). Our CPL rates of underrepresented minority students have been high. Moving forward, additional funding sources such as COSI’s Finish What you Started will allow us to better support students who are at risk of not completing their program.

Aims Community College:

Aims serves a student population that identifies over 40% as racially or ethnically diverse and over 52% of our students are first-generation. We support continued funding in “Step 1” that helps institutions provide the instructional and student support services to ensure students in these demographics are successful.

Colorado Mountain College:

Colorado Mountain College does not fully participate in the funding formula, so it would be inappropriate for the college to share strong opinions here. However, CMC would argue that any base-building, across-the-board investments by the legislature intended to boost improvements for particular populations should be applied universally and not targeted to particular campuses. In effect, across-the-board enhancements in steps 1 & 2 should not be limited to certain colleges based on their funding models. Increased state investments should reach all potential students at public colleges and universities, regardless of the institution at which they are enrolled. Moreover, CMC has no objections to campuses seeking one-time, base-building funding for targeted enhancements or to address known shortfalls, though doing so may not always be feasible through the existing funding formula structure.

HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCIAL STATUS AND THE FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

- 5) *[Rep. McCluskie/Sen. Rankin]* Discuss your most notable enrollment trends thus far through the pandemic.
 - (a) Who have you lost? Who have you gained? For example: first-generation, low-income, undergraduate v. graduate, resident v. nonresident? Particular majors?

Colorado Community College System:

Mirroring national trends, our Fall 2021 total enrollment is down 2.5% after being down 7.9% in Fall 2020. In particular, the pandemic has disproportionately impacted certain student demographic groups who are not accessing higher education. Also in line with national trends, Colorado’s Community College System has seen continued enrollment drops in Fall 2021 for low income students compared to moderate + income students (7.5% loss compared to 3.0%

gain) and first generation students compared to non-first-generation students (3.3% loss compared to 3.3% gain).

Area Technical Colleges:

The three ATC's have seen a small decrease in non-traditional student enrollment in the trades. We credit this to the inability to offer Open Houses, individual tours and in-person recruiting in the local high schools. Non-traditional students often need additional support and counseling to enroll in programs historically not representative of their demographics. Additionally, some pandemic-related safety requirements (cohorting, for example), have made it difficult for us to provide the same level of support and to connect students together as much as we have done in the past. All of these factors have impacted students who may be at risk of not completing. These at-risk students often are first-generation and low-income.

Aims Community College:

Aims has fewer full-time, out of state, and new students now compared to pre-COVID. Our numbers for non-traditional students have also slightly decreased. All other student population groups have remained stable. Our concurrent enrollment numbers continue to grow, however, a large majority of our CTE (career and technical education) programs have maintained enrollment through the pandemic and continue to have strong enrollment demand.

Colorado Mountain College:

The most sizeable enrollment declines were among (a) first-time, traditionally aged students (18-19 year-olds), (b) English-as-a-second-language students, and (c) older adults (over 45), who often enrolled in non-credit courses. CMC's retention rate among degree-seeking students actually improved during the pandemic, suggesting that enrolled students were increasingly satisfied with the college's programming and services. And, the retention of Latino students improved, though an increasing share of these students are female, so a gender difference is observable. However, following broad national trends, CMC saw the attrition of male students of every age and ethnicity, though the attrition of white male students exceeded that observed among Latino male students. Though we do not have complete information to fully understand the causes of this phenomenon, recent research from national sources suggests that declines in male enrollments are primarily attributable to forced reductions in certain CTE courses in programs historically favored by males students, such as the skilled trades, due to shifts to online and remote learning modalities.

(b) What are you expecting for FY 2022-23?

Colorado Community College System:

We are hopeful that we can stabilize enrollment for FY 2022-23. However, given the continued uncertainty around the pandemic, it is difficult to project how enrollment will be affected next fiscal year. Nationally, overall high school graduation numbers and academic success rates suggest that the number of college ready graduates from high school will continue to decline at rates that will further reduce college enrollment rates.

Area Technical Colleges:

The three ATC's all have experienced a continually growing demand for our programs. While this is a blessing in times of declining enrollment in many of our IHE peers, it is also a stark reminder that we are unable to meet the demand of our students and our communities to

provide quality CTE and help meet industry needs. Our potential students continue to become aware of the growing skilled workforce deficit and the opportunities that are present, and they want to enter our programs to be trained or retrained, in order to enter the workforce as skilled, licensed and well-compensated employees.

Aims Community College:

Aims is expecting continued growth in concurrent enrollment and high demand CTE programs.

Colorado Mountain College:

Next year, CMC expects slow, gradual recovery of new enrollments coupled with increases in completion and credit loads per student. These improvements will be enabled by the college's offering more courses via technology and the launching of several new degree programs. CMC's enrollments will not likely grow dramatically as a result of a red-hot employment market. Nearly all CMC students work full-time. As a result, when the labor market is very strong, education can be a lower priority for individuals enjoying the benefits of a strong economy.

- 6) *[Rep. McCluskie/Sen. Rankin/Sen. Moreno]* Discuss your financial situation in FY 2021-22 and what you anticipate for FY 2022-23.

Aims Community College:

Aims's budget for FY 2021-22 has been stable, and we are projecting a stable budget for FY 2022-23. As a local district college, a significant portion of our funding comes from mill levies assessed on property valuations within our taxing district. As assessed values change due to changing economic conditions, the college has seen fluctuations. Aims continues to monitor assessed valuations, be fiscally prudent, and maintain reserves to manage changing economic conditions.

- (a) Do you expect to grow or shrink?

Colorado Community College System:

Our financial situation in FY 2020-21 and 2021-22 has been buoyed by federal funding and (in FY 22) a General Fund infusion, which resulted maintaining a stable composite financial index at year end of FY 21. For FY 2022-23, given the drop in federal funding and uncertainty around enrollment, there is likely to be a negative gap between revenues and expenses without additional state support and/or the ability to increase tuition.

Area Technical Colleges:

We anticipate the growing demand for our programs to provide a consistent amount of tuition revenue. The Governor's budget proposal will provide some much-appreciated additional funding for institutions that will allow us to continue to meet CCHE Master Plan goals. Unanticipated capital expenses that may become necessary after years of deferred maintenance are one omnipresent potential threat to our financial health. Enrollment at all three ATC's is projected to continue to grow for FY 2022-23.

Aims Community College:

Aims's Fall 2021 enrollment slightly exceeded our pre-pandemic enrollment levels. We are anticipating Spring 2022 enrollment trend to continue to be at or slightly above pre-pandemic levels

Colorado Mountain College:

CMC's operating revenues will grow in 2022-23 due to increasing valuation of properties in its tax district. Also, CMC anticipates increasing its tuition by \$5 per credit hour, which will slightly moderate losses in net tuition revenue due to declining enrollments.

- (b) To what extent are you relying on one-time federal funding and/or institutional resources this year?

Colorado Community College System:

For FY 2021-22, CCCS projects using \$63.4 million in one-time federal funding as well as \$3.5 million in institutional reserves in order to sustain educational activities. This represents approximately 8.7% of total projected expenditures for FY 2021-22.

Area Technical Colleges:

While the three ATC's have all used the one-time federal funds to enhance our safety protocols and to purchase technology necessary for remote learning in order to allow us to remain operational, we have also passed on the majority of these funds directly to students. We have paid off student balances and provided direct reimbursements to many students. We have also used some institutional fundings to help get us through the pandemic. We anticipate being able to emerge from the pandemic not needing to utilize one-time federal funding and institutional resources moving forward.

Aims Community College:

With stability in our current operating budgets, Aims has not had to rely upon institutional resources, reserves or one-time federal funding to meet on-going operational needs.

Colorado Mountain College:

CMC's reliance on one-time federal funding is minimal. Stimulus funds were used to address shortfalls caused by the pandemic, but have not been applied to structural challenges or revenue shortfalls that preceded the pandemic.

- (c) How has your institution used its HEERF funds? Have you used the funds to support auxiliary enterprises that are usually self-sustaining? Have federal requirements limited your ability to effectively deploy any of the funds?

Colorado Community College System:

CCCS has used the HEERF funds primarily for revenue recovery and to support COVID-related educational impacts in the areas such as instruction, academic support, and student services--as well as for more general expenses related to the pandemic, such as PPE and additional cleaning and sanitizing. A small portion has been used to support auxiliary programs, such as food services, but CCCS has much smaller auxiliary enterprises compared to other higher education institutions.

Area Technical Colleges:

All three ATC's have used HEERF funds to make our campuses safer, healthier, and able to continue to operate remotely when needed. In addition, we have passed on many HEERF funds directly to our students in an attempt to eliminate any potential barriers to their success. We have not used any HEERF funds to support auxiliary enterprises. While federal requirements for these one-time funds have been restrictive, we all have been able to effectively utilize these funds to benefit our students.

Aims Community College:

For Aims, approximately 50% of HEERF funding received has been used as direct financial aid grants to students. Other uses of HEERF funds have included student debt relief, increased technology enhancements in classrooms and labs, purchase of laptop computers for student use, additional safety and sanitation measures, tuition revenue recovery and enhanced student services. The enhanced services include additional mental health counseling and direct outreach to students who dropped out in order to offer guidance to help them continue their educational journey.

Aims has a very limited auxiliary operations consisting of a small campus bistro and several coffee carts. HEERF funds in the amount of \$209,000 were used to recover lost revenue from these operations. Federal requirements have not limited our ability to effectively deploy any of the funds.

Colorado Mountain College:

CMC used its HEERF institutional funds to address revenue shortfalls directly related to the pandemic, including those in auxiliary enterprises, such as losses in net tuition revenue, student housing and contracts for food services. HEERF student funds were allocated to eligible students with demonstrated need according to a standard formula based on registration intensity. Initially, ED's interpretations of the CARES Act uses and purposes were obtuse and difficult to follow; the result was unnecessary delays. Later, actions by the new administration clarified the purposes and intentions of these dollars, greatly easing implementation.

(d) Will you carry forward one-time funds into FY 2022-23?

Colorado Community College System:

We do not anticipate carrying forward one-time institutional funds into FY 2022-23 at this time, but some of these funds may carry forward into FY 2022-23 depending on the timing of spending and the availability of goods and services.

Area Technical Colleges:

We do anticipate carrying forward one-time funds into FY 2022-23, primarily to continue to provide additional financial support for our students.

Aims Community College:

Aims does not anticipate carrying over any one-time funds into FY 2022-23.

Colorado Mountain College:

CMC always carries operating revenues forward in the form of reserves. These reserve accounts are used for a variety of one-time investments, such as capital construction,

maintenance, IT infrastructure, new academic programs, and the like. Because CMC is excluded from the state capital development process and does not participate in the state intercept program, the college must maintain healthy reserves to manage its very significant physical infrastructure without assistance from the state.

- 7) *[Sen. Moreno]* Statewide, enrollment has declined most severely among first-generation and low-income students.

Colorado Mountain College:

This statement doesn't reflect enrollment patterns at CMC. Enrollments among diverse and lower-income degree-seeking students did not decline dramatically differently compared to "majority" students. In fact, we have evidence to suggest that enrollments among CMC's Latino students were stronger than for other groups. The college has observed increases in unsuccessful course outcomes among its diverse students, but this phenomenon is more likely related to internal systems than the pandemic, per se. Nevertheless, enrollments among ESL students declined very dramatically during the pandemic, though these enrollments are not observable in most DHE reports.

- (a) Are you deploying or do you expect to deploy particular strategies to attract these students back?

Colorado Community College System:

Here are some examples of the mix of strategies occurring at our colleges. Not all colleges are doing each, but it's a sampling of the strategies across our system:

- Summer bridge programs to help new students get acclimated, connected to resources, and to foster a sense of community and belonging – minimizing summer melt and help them to understand college navigation
- Assigning coaches to defined student cohorts for outreach and support (e.g. Dakota Promise with School District 2).
- Increasing the number of advisors to ensure access for schedule planning and registration.
- New Online Orientation for new students convenient for students' busy schedules.
- Intentional efforts to bring back stopped-out students, with advisors contacting students, helping to identify why they left, and working to eliminate barriers that would impact their return or future completion.
- Targeted programs that offer free textbooks available for fall 2021, spring 2022 and summer 2022 or bus passes to help with transportation needs.
- "Single Stop" services available to connect students who have housing and food insecurities (and other personal challenges) with community resources.
- Providing virtual mental health services to extend counseling services to more students.

Area Technical Colleges:

We all plan on utilizing COSI's Finish What you Started (FWYS) funding, in addition to any leftover HEERF funds, to help us to market recruitment efforts and provide support specifically for first-generation and low-income students.

Aims Community College:

Yes, Aims has an enrollment recovery team, primarily comprised of part-time temporary staff, who are reaching out to previously enrolled students in an effort to help them get re-enrolled. We have also offered scholarships and tuition incentives to new and continuing students.

Colorado Mountain College:

Yes, CMC is developing a most robust, comprehensive approach to awarding need-based aid for low- and moderate-income students.

- (b) If you are carrying forward one-time balances into FY 2022-23, do you expect to use one-time fund balances for this purpose?

Colorado Community College System:

We do not anticipate carrying forward significant one-time institutional funds balances into FY 2022-23.

Area Technical Colleges:

Yes, as mentioned in our previous answer.

Aims Community College:

While Aims will not be carrying any one-time HEERF funds forward into FY 2022-23, we are planning to continue our out-reach efforts to students who dropped out during the pandemic.

Colorado Mountain College:

Yes, in part. CMC is exploring ways to use revenue reserves to provide ongoing financial aid to enrolled students. These plans will be finalized in May or June.

- 8) [*Sen. Rankin/Rep. McCluskie*] What is your governing board doing to adapt to changing environment, demographics, or workforce needs? What have you already done? What are you planning to do?

Colorado Community College System:

- Colleges are working with New American populations by providing contextualized ESL Training to individuals who may have experience in other countries and need ESL training to join the workforce (e.g. CCD Pre-Apprenticeship providing contextualized ESL for health careers)
- Colleges are working to expand business engagement efforts to enhance work-based learning (apprenticeship, internships etc.) and business engagement to provide opportunities for customized training, and non-credit.
- Colleges are working to develop new programs or expand existing programs to meet emerging or growing workforce needs as highlighted in the Talent Pipeline report. This includes expansion in healthcare, engineering, IT/cyber security, teacher preparation, clean energy, construction, and aerospace fields.
- Colleges are expanding efforts in Prior Learning Assessment to align with industry-recognized and non-degree credentials.
- Colleges are exploring options for different schedules, and modalities to reach new audiences and populations.
- Colleges are working with NGO/Intermediaries to bring programming into new communities' programs are approved based on the labor market data projections in the needs

assessment process, we had community and learner voice panels to ensure we were adding new programs to college and district goals as well as planning for closures of programs not meeting needs.

- The system is implementing a new online consortium that builds on existing strengths at our colleges and CCCOnline. This consortium will focus on the needs of adult learners and provide fully online/remote certificates and degrees across the state.
- The system is implementing a rural college consortium aimed at linking our rural campuses across the state to share quality courses, programs, and services.
- The system is implementing a Colorado Skills Institute aimed at offering high quality, easily access non-credit training and credentials.

Area Technical College:

All three ATC's are exploring the ability to modify some of our programs in order to be able to offer hybrid programs. All three of our colleges have to apply for and get permission from our accrediting agency (the Council on Occupation Education) in order to do so. As part of our accreditation, we are all required to closely monitor workforce needs in our community on an annual basis and make adjustments as needed. We will continue to modify program offerings as needed to ensure that we are able to maximize our potential to meet workforce needs and offer credentials in careers that are both high-demand and high-wage.

Aims Community College:

Aims adaptations:

Workforce Needs:

- Creating a business and industry advisory board to better identify high demand areas of training and employment.
- Establishing and offering more open enrollment styled training options to better meet the needs of small and medium-sized companies.
- Working to establish high demand short-term skill training certificates.
- Applying to offer a BAS in Public Safety in order to meet a growing change in the industry that requires degrees for promotional positions.
- Many CTE programs have already created numerous stackable certificates leading to degrees.
- Aims Automotive Programs are guided by an Industry and Community Advisory Committee that provides current and future needs/trends.
- Aims Automotive Programs have created a Career Pathway Exposure Experience that engages students at all three levels of elementary, middle, and high school to the Transportation Automotive Pathways.

Changing Environment:

- Offering more sections that are hybrid, remote or online.
- Researching the possibility to expand our concurrent enrollment and career academy opportunities.
- Exploring how we might expand internship opportunities for our criminal justice students.
- Aims Automotive Programs have provided guidance and recommendations on facility planning and remodel, curriculum development and instructor training, for a number of regional and national educational institutions.

Demographics:

- Engaging and/or hosting career fairs and inviting agencies to visit our classes to discuss career opportunities and employment requirements.

- Hosting an annual Xplore program for all of the Public Safety programs to introduce our programs to high school age students.

Additional plans:

- Expansion of Automotive Programs to accommodate access for Weekend Degree seeking students.
- Expansion to other non-STEM schools within the Aims District.
- Work with School Districts to create detailed pathway courses that begin in the middle schools and progress through the secondary levels.
- Researching a Bachelor's of Science in Nursing Program in order to meet this increasing regional and national industry need.
- Continue collaborations with our healthcare industry in order to assist with training for immediate needs.

Colorado Mountain College:

CMC exists to support the needs of rural, resort mountain communities. So, yes, adapting to changing needs in the communities served by the college is constant and routine. However, during the pandemic specifically, the college initiated several critical initiatives under CMC Responds: Today, Tomorrow, Together. The first included waiving tuition, books and fees for 2020 Summer credit classes for new or returning students who qualified as in-district, in-state students who took credit courses in spring 2020, and displaced workers due to COVID-19 public health orders who lived in the CMC district. The college also offered complimentary business consulting/training for local businesses affected by the pandemic and a special condensed Introduction to Hospitality Supervision series given the extreme impact on this industry. Last year, CMC worked on legislation that allows us to offer in-district tuition rates to local employers that hire CMC students and pay for their tuition. As we say in our district, “our students are our workforce just as our workforce are our students.”

In terms of the future, CMC borrowed \$40 million in June 2021 to construct apartment-style student housing with below market rent prices at four of its campuses so that we can address the difficulty many students have finding a place to live. Breckenridge, Edwards at Vail Valley, Spring Valley at Glenwood Springs and Steamboat Springs were selected based on anticipated student demand, escalating housing scarcity in these high-cost mountain resort communities and the availability of CMC-owned land in these locations. The apartments will be designed primarily for upper-division students who reside and work in mountain communities year-round and are finishing their degrees.

Additionally, CMC's investment in three new high-fidelity simulation laboratories will enable our nursing program to offer a high-quality educational experience in the most efficient manner. Students can complete up to 50% of their clinical hours in the simulation lab, reducing the need for costly travel

to distant training sites and allowing us significantly increased capacity to grow future enrollments in these programs.

Finally, due the college's "dual mission" status, the college continues to invest in a broad range of academic programs needed to meet the diverse needs of mountain communities, such as the new Bachelor of Science in Ecosystem Science & Stewardship, and has seen rapid growth of the Workforce Diploma Pilot Program (WDPP), another pathway to earning a high school diploma, which positions students on the path for success in college and the workforce.

- 9) *[Rep. McCluskie]* Provide an update on how your institution(s) are using the COSI funding for "finish what you started" funds.

Colorado Community College System:

Our colleges are actively tracking down, contacting, and reengaging former students to come back to college using the "finish what you started" grant funding. These students are eligible for scholarships based on their full or part-time status in order to aid them in completing their credential. In addition, the "finish what you started" funds have been used to hire student success coaches at the colleges who assist with recruiting and engaging former students and provide individualized student programming, academic and career support, and resource navigation throughout the students' time at the college.

Area Technical Colleges:

All three ATC's plan on utilizing COSI "Finish What you Started" funding to provide additional support for first-generation and low-income students. While we are differing slightly in our approach, all three colleges are planning on passing some of this funding directly to students, all of us plan on utilizing this funding to increase our student support services, and all of us plan on increasing our marketing to first-generation and low-income students.

Aims Community College:

Aims was one of the first community colleges in the state to hire a COSI Coordinator and begin marketing, admitting, and serving COSI participants. Along with one FT Coordinator, our COSI dollars are mostly being used for student scholarships and support programming.

Colorado Mountain College:

CMC received \$983,646 for the three-year Finish What You Started project term. (Note: the term "Finish What You Started" was actually acquired from a program of the same name operating at CMC.) Currently, in its first year, \$200,000 is being offered to eligible students as direct student aid. The remaining funds, \$127,882, are being utilized for student success efforts such as student programming, activities, and staff. CMC is serving both eligible First Time Students and students with Some College/No Degree.

- 10) *[Staff]* Are there recommendations from HB 21-1330 Task Force that, if implemented, will help you in making related adjustments to changing demographics and workforce needs? Are there recommendations that cause you concern?

Colorado Community College System:

- (a) We are supportive of the 6 top Tier 1 recommendations from HB21-1330 taskforce. We believe the first 5 recommendations are in line with work already underway and therefore,

would support and/or accelerate our work. The first recommendation would provide dollars that could accelerate our efforts. The second recommendation, when implemented, would streamline data sharing across state agencies. Data sharing currently is cumbersome at best. We embrace the 3rd recommendation because traditional measures of success don't always capture the entire mission of community and technical colleges. Recommendations 4 and 5 are completely aligned with the work we do already and for the plans we have in the future. And, Recommendation 6 is a must if we are to meet the goals of the higher education statewide strategic plan.

(b) None of the 6 top recommendations cause concern. However, later in the draft report there are additional, tier 2 recommendations. Recommendations around aligning/combining state agencies and various higher education governing boards do raise concerns for us. While philosophically they might make some sense, practically they would take a lot of time away from more important initiatives and priorities.

Area Technical Colleges:

We were active in the HB 21-1330 Task Force and are very excited about many of the recommendations. We believe that #4 - Developing Stackable Credentials/Work-Based Learning Pathways is a particularly exciting approach that would help us better meet the needs of a changing workforce. We have specialized in offering short-term credentials and have advocated for articulation of our credentials to other IHE's, including the development of clearly defined career pathways, for years. We do not have any concerns with any of the recommendations, other than the general concern of follow-through and how results will be measured.

Aims Community College:

Aims would offer the following:

- With underemployment having the highest numbers among underserved, underrepresented and minority groups, it means many are working one or multiple jobs. With Colorado having one of the highest costs of living in the country, many from this targeted group will not have the flexibility to participate in upskilling without wrap-around services that provide living wage stipends.
- It is critical to close the equity gap, and it needs to be a holistic societal approach, not simply given to higher education with a mandate to fix it.
- There is concern that the one-time cash infusion may not be significant enough to create the measured outcomes that will be expected. This will have an impact on credit and non-credit future programming to address high need occupations.
- Will there be funds created that business and industry can tap into to increase employer sponsored opportunities for students enrolling into credit or certificate-based programming that can be geared to the minority and underserved populations?

Colorado Mountain College:

The 1330 recommendations, if implemented, could help the state more accurately communicate the good work underway at the state's colleges and universities. The proposed regional grants program could help launch several new initiatives, but tying them to "matching" funds from the private or philanthropic sector could slow implementation or unintentionally advantage densely populated regions. Overall, CMC would encourage the state to ensure that rural students are not at a disadvantage for funding support due to the size of the schools/colleges they attend or the communities in which they live. To accomplish fairness for these students, CMC advocates that

funding for specific initiatives be allocated in a manner that does not unintentionally advantage residents of urban areas. Finally, CMC was glad to see that a discussion on service areas was added to the 1330 agenda, albeit as an add-on and at the end of the year. Nevertheless, we were encouraged by the discussion that took place in December, as there seemed to be broad agreement that service areas may have reached a point of obsolescence. With this in mind, CMC is hopeful that the CCHE will act on adjustments to its service area policy early in 2022. And, funds for regional partnership grants proposed in the 1330 report could be used to effectively build partnerships for the benefit of communities underserved by the historical policy structure.

COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY AND INCREASING AWARENESS ABOUT FINANCIAL AID

11) [*Sen Rankin*] Based on the experience of your institution(s), how do scholarships and other types of aid affect the enrollment and retention of underrepresented students (first-generation, low-income, underrepresented minorities, etc.)? Does more support increase participation? Retention?

Colorado Community College System:

(a) We know the following from our 2020 survey of applicants and recent non-enrolled students: With the exception of the ‘Other’ category, the most common (22.8%) reason given for not registering for the fall semester were concerns about how to pay for college. A greater percentage of applicants (35%) gave this as a reason for not registering than did current students (14.5%). There were also notable gender differences, with women having more concerns than men about paying for college. And, Hispanic applicants expressed more concern about paying for college than other demographic groups.

(b) We feel that more financial support both through scholarships and state funding does increase the participation and retention of first generation, low income, and underrepresented minority students. In addition to state and federal financial aid, we want to reiterate the importance of providing funding in Step 1 of the funding formula for first generation, low income, and underrepresented minority students. These Step 1 funds are vital for the enrollment and retention of these student populations.

Area Technical Colleges:

ATC Response: First-generation and low-income students in particular often see college as an unaffordable dream. Stories that they have heard from unsuccessful friends or peers who did not complete college but were still saddled with large student loans discourage them from even thinking about attending college. The ATC’s are uniquely positioned to be the first system in the state **to not offer any student loans**. Because of this, every dollar that we can offer through scholarships or grants is crucial in our ability to recruit and retain underrepresented students. Our continued growth throughout the recent challenges of a pandemic reflects the effectiveness of our approach. All three ATC’s have continued to provide as much financial assistance and keep our costs as low as possible, in an effort to make training to enter a high-demand, high-wage career a realistic goal for all students, especially those who have traditionally been underrepresented in higher education.

Aims Community College:

Scholarships and similar types of aid have proven to be effective in promoting enrollment growth at Aims. Many of our students have been financially impacted by COVID, and some of the financial incentives have kept higher education affordability within reach. Our first-generation students often underestimate the total cost of college (fees, books, commuter costs, etc.). At the same time, many potential students do not realize how affordable a two-year college option is. Aims has an enrollment

recovery team, primarily comprised of part-time temporary staff, who are reaching out to previously enrolled students in an effort to help them get re-enrolled. We have also offered scholarships and tuition incentives to new and continuing students.

Colorado Mountain College:

Scholarships and ongoing financial aid play an important role in supporting low-income and underrepresented individuals. This is a fact. These types of aid are generally more influential in engaging new enrollments than retaining existing ones, but financial aid is critical to all needy students, of course. However, it is not the only way to reach them.

At CMC, the enrollment of low-income and underserved individuals is a complicated story, as most of the students at the college work full-time, often for healthy wages. So, prima facie, appearances are that CMC students are less “needy.” This isn’t true at all, as anyone who lives in mountain communities understands. The costs of living in mountain communities is so extreme, that traditional methods of demonstrating need can be unreliable. And, the most significant cost in mountain towns is not tuition, but housing.

To more effectively “modernize” the effectiveness of financial aid in Colorado, CMC would encourage the JBC to explore ways to more effectively reach part-time and year-round adult students and to provide equivalent financial aid on a 12-month calendar, instead of a 9-month one. Also, Colorado could adjust its aid assumptions to accommodate the extreme costs of living in certain communities, which would improve the effectiveness of state-based financial supports for targeted populations. Finally, if colleges could apply a certain percentage of aid dollars to support individuals in non-credit programs, such as ESL or certain workforce programs, we could reach more students across a broader spectrum of programs.

- 12) [Staff] Respond to the staff recommendation that the State should identify what can be said about the costs of postsecondary education for low income students across the state, as the foundation of a public education campaign about college affordability.

Area Technical Colleges:

The ATC’s have long been the best Return on Investment of any dollars provided to IHE’s, as well as the dollars that students themselves spend on higher education. We continue to offer the lowest tuition rates and have worked hard to be able to make our education attainable without any student loans. We are in full support of all public education campaigns that include ATC’s as a low-cost, high-quality option for students looking to change their lives.

- (a) Do you agree with JBC Staff that the perception of unaffordability is itself a problem?

Colorado Community College System:

CCCS agrees that the perception of unaffordability is a problem for low income students, and we think it is important to provide funding to provide those students with access to higher education.

Area Technical Colleges:

Yes. Many students, particularly those from groups that have traditionally been underrepresented in higher education, see college as an unrealistic, unaffordable option. We

have worked hard to market to students to provide them with the knowledge that they can attend and be successful in college, but this is an ongoing effort.

Aims Community College:

Yes, many individuals assume they must take out loans and go into debt in order to attend college. Only a small percentage of Aims's student population has to take out loans.

Colorado Mountain College:

"Unaffordability" has always been a perceptual challenge for higher education; economists call this "price sensitivity." So, too, has incorrect post-graduate earnings estimates, which has led to a willingness to take on more debt than may be advisable for some. In spite of this, public education in Colorado IS affordable and IS a very strong investment in an individual's human capital. In general, the price sensitivity among Coloradans is modest compared to other states. The proof of this is in the very high college-going rates among Colorado high school graduates over the past 20 years despite rapidly increasing tuition prices in the state. Perceptions can be positively influenced. This is indeed something the state could address.

(b) If so, what is the best way to address this?

Colorado Community College System:

Provide funding through the funding formula or otherwise for institutions to target low income students so they have access to affordable educational options coupled with the wrap around services they need to successfully enroll and complete a credential.

Area Technical Colleges:

We have advocated numerous times, including at the HB 21-1330 task force, for an updated ROI list that would include all credentials and degrees. This would provide accurate information to all potential students in Colorado regarding how much they can expect to pay for any higher educational pursuit, as well as the number of jobs in that field and the expected earnings that they would have if they chose that particular credential. This would allow students and their families to make informed decisions and understand that higher education is attainable to them after all.

Aims Community College:

- Promote the affordability of two-year colleges.
- Provide data on the low number of students that take out loans at two-year colleges.
- Promote that with the affordable tuition and aid that is available, working to help support family and going to college at the same time is possible.
- Demonstrate to students how the short-term investment in two-year and four-year degrees increase earning power over an entire career, often resulting in better working conditions and other benefits (paid time off, better working hours, health insurance, etc.). There are so many benefits to receiving a college education in addition to earning power.

Colorado Mountain College:

The costs of college, including student debt, gets far too much attention in the headlines. Crises sell newspapers, and emotional headlines increase readership volume. For example, tuition rate increases always make it into headlines; but, when CMC actually lowered its tuition

rates several years ago, nary a word was mentioned. Despite this, the reality is that the ROI on higher education continues to be very, very strong for the vast majority of college graduates. This message needs to be the centerpiece of the discussion. The state and the legislature should invest in promoting the high affordability and significant returns on investments for college degrees and credentials of all kinds. Businesses in the state know this already, which is why they argue for more and better education, and are less concerned with tuition rates. The state may not have the resources to adequately buy down tuition prices, but it can actively promote the extremely positive outcomes of college and the overall affordable—and very high quality—nature of Colorado’s public postsecondary system.

- (c) Are you willing/interested in collaborating (and asking your financial aid directors to collaborate) to identify common facts and messaging that would apply across Colorado's public higher education institutions?

Colorado Community College System:

We would be happy to have our financial aid directors collaborate to identify common facts and messaging. However, given the complexities of each institution’s financial aid processes, the common facts and messaging may have to be expressed at a very high level to be consistent, which may dilute its impact from a messaging and marketing standpoint

Area Technical Colleges:

Most definitely. We all have worked hard to collaborate with other institutions of higher education, from community colleges to universities, on numerous initiatives, including articulation agreements. We would be very supportive of common messaging and would love to participate.

Aims Community College:

Yes, Aims would be interested in this collaboration.

Colorado Mountain College:

Yes, of course, but financial aid directors aren’t marketing directors. Financial aid professionals can share what they hear, but, more often, the people that need to be reached are those that aren’t in college at all. So, any approach should include significant attention to the perspectives of those not otherwise enrolled. These individuals are the ones that have convinced themselves college isn’t worth the expense. Luckily, attitudes can be influenced.