



Fiscal Note

Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado’s Legislature

SB 26-080: CRADLE TO CAREER GRANT PROGRAM CREATION

Prime Sponsors:

Sen. Coleman; Simpson
Rep. Lukens

Fiscal Analyst:

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Fiscal note status: The revised fiscal note reflects the introduced bill, as amended by the Senate Local Government & Housing Committee.

Summary Information

Overview. Conditional upon the receipt of sufficient gifts, grants, and donations, the bill creates a grant program to provide education and workforce readiness support to children and youth that create opportunities for economic mobility from poverty.

Types of impacts. The bill is projected to affect the following areas on a beginning in FY 2026-27:

- State Revenue
- State Expenditures
- School Districts

Appropriations. For FY 2026-27, the bill requires an appropriation of \$903,782 to the Department of Human Services, if sufficient gifts, grants, and donations are received. See State Appropriations section.

**Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts**

Type of Impact	Budget Year FY 2026-27	Out Year FY 2027-28
State Revenue (Gifts, Grants and Donations)	\$903,782	\$1,042,227
State Expenditures (Gifts, Grants and Donations)	\$903,782	\$1,042,227
Transferred Funds	\$0	\$0
Change in TABOR Refunds	\$0	\$0
Change in State FTE	0.8 FTE	1.0 FTE

Timing of revenue and expenditures may occur in later years if gifts, grants, and donations are received in later years. State expenditures only occur if sufficient gifts, grants, and donations are received, and will vary if a different amount of revenue is received.

**Table 1A
 State Revenue**

Fund Source	Budget Year FY 2026-27	Out Year FY 2027-28
General Fund	\$0	\$0
Cash Funds (Gifts, Grants, and Donations)	\$903,782	\$1,042,227
Total Revenue	\$903,782	\$1,042,227

**Table 1B
 State Expenditures**

Fund Source	Budget Year FY 2026-27	Out Year FY 2027-28
General Fund	\$0	\$0
Cash Funds (Gifts, Grants, and Donations)	\$886,161	\$1,020,201
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0
Centrally Appropriated	\$17,621	\$22,026
Total Expenditures	\$903,782	\$1,042,227
Total FTE	0.8 FTE	1.0 FTE

Summary of Legislation

Conditional on the receipt of sufficient gifts, grants, and donations, the bill creates the Cradle to Career Grant Program in the Department of Human Services (CDHS). The program provides grants to local governments, local education providers, institutions of higher education, tribes, and nonprofits to connect children and youth with educational and extracurricular programming and other social services to improve education and workforce readiness outcomes.

Grant recipients may use money received through the program for the following purposes:

- family stability supports including housing, child care, nutrition, health care, and public safety interventions;
- supports and services for children and youth with disabilities;
- educational enrichment opportunities;
- work-based learning opportunities;
- developing shared data systems that track student progress; and
- leveraging additional federal, local, or private funding for poverty reduction.

Program Administration

The bill creates the five-member Cradle to Career Advisory Council within the CDHS. The CDHS must collaborate with the council to develop program guidelines and certain criteria for awarding grants. Applicants for grants must comply with certain regulations, require its employees to complete a criminal history record check, and include the following information:

- a community economic mobility needs assessment;
- a proposal of partnership with community entities; and,
- a proposal that details how the money will be used to promote mobility from poverty.

The council must approve grant applications, which the CDHS will award. Each grant is for a period of four years, with grant recipients eligible to apply for a one- or two-year extension. If sufficient funding is received, the CDHS must award at least two grants by July 1, 2027. CDHS may approve grantees to work with subcontractors and nonprofit organizations.

The CDHS must develop performance indicators to assess economic mobility outcomes for grant recipients. Beginning October 1, 2028, grant recipients must report on performance indicators to CDHS, as well as additional information on the total number of individuals served, demographic information, and a description of services provided. CDHS must report on program outcomes to the General Assembly by December 31, 2028, and each year thereafter, until the program sunsets on September 1, 2033.

Cash Fund

The bill creates the Cradle to Career Grant Program Cash Fund in the State Treasury to consist of gifts, grants, or donations, interest and income earnings, and any other money that the General Assembly may appropriate or transfer. The fund is subject to annual appropriations. In FY 2026-27, the bill prohibits the General Assembly from appropriating General Fund to the fund. In future years, the General Assembly may appropriate General Fund as long as the appropriation does not exceed 50 percent of the total gifts, grants, and donations received in the prior year.

State Revenue

The bill is expected to increase state revenue from gifts, grants, and donations to the Cradle to Career Program Cash Fund. The bill specifies that at least \$900,000 must be received to implement the program, and the fiscal note assumes that about \$1.0 million is required in FY 2027-28 and ongoing to cover administration expenses and grant awards. At the time of writing, no sources of funding have been identified. Gifts, grants and donations are not subject to the state's TABOR revenue limit.

State Expenditures

Conditional on the receipt of sufficient gifts, grants, and donations, the bill increases state expenditures in the CDHS, paid from the Cradle to Career Program Cash Fund. The fiscal note assumes \$900,000 in state expenditures in FY 2026-27 and \$1.0 million in FY 2027-28 and ongoing, as listed in Table 2 and discussed below; however, actual expenditures will depend on the total and timing of gifts, grants, and donations received. The bill also minimally impacts institutions of higher education, the Governor’s Office, the State Treasurer, and the Department of Personnel and Administration.

**Table 2
 State Expenditures
 Department of Human Services**

Cost Component	Budget Year FY 2026-27	Out Year FY 2027-28
Personal Services	\$64,733	\$80,916
Operating Expenses	\$1,024	\$1,280
Capital Outlay Costs	\$7,000	\$0
Grants	\$813,404	\$938,005
Centrally Appropriated Costs	\$17,621	\$22,026
Total Costs	\$903,782	\$1,042,227
Total FTE	0.8 FTE	1.0 FTE

Department of Human Services

Staff

The CDHS will require 1.0 FTE Grants Specialist to develop grant policies, provide program oversight, develop the grant application process, review applications, and support the council. Standard operating and capital outlay costs are included, and costs are prorated in FY 2026-27 to assume a September 2026 start date.

If the amount of gifts, grants, and donations received are larger than the amounts listed in Table 1A, more staff will be needed to distribute additional grants to qualifying entities. This adjustment will be handled through the annual budget process.

Grants

Assuming that administrative costs make up 10 percent of total expenditures, the fiscal note assumes that about \$813,000 will be available as grants in FY 2026-27, and about \$938,000 in FY 2027-28 and ongoing.

Institutions of Higher Education

Institutions of higher education that choose to apply for and receive grant funding will have increased revenue and expenditures to provide additional services, supports, and education opportunities to low-income youth and families.

Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions

Workload will minimally increase for the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions to make the required appointment under the bill. This work can be accomplished within existing appropriations.

Cash Fund Creation – Departments of Personnel and Treasury

Workload will increase for the Departments of Personnel and Administration and Treasury to manage and perform accounting for the cash fund created in the bill. While no appropriation is required at this time, these departments may seek additional funding through the annual budget process based on the cumulative impact of all cash funds created through legislation.

Centrally Appropriated Costs

Pursuant to a Joint Budget Committee policy, certain costs associated with this bill are addressed through the annual budget process and centrally appropriated in the Long Bill or supplemental appropriations bills, rather than in this bill. These costs, which may include employee insurance, supplemental employee retirement payments, indirect cost assessments, and other costs, are shown in Table 2 above.

School Districts

Similar to higher education institutions, school districts that choose to apply for and receive grant funding will have increased revenue and expenditures to provide additional services, supports, and education opportunities to low-income children, youth, and families.

Effective Date

The sections of the bill that create the grant program and its associated cash fund take effect 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed. The effective date for the remainder of the bill, including administration of the grant program and all reporting requirements takes effect if CDHS receives at least \$900,000 and notifies the Revisor of Statutes.

State Appropriations

Assuming gifts, grants, and donations are received as estimated in this fiscal note, the bill requires an appropriation of \$903,782 from the Cradle to Career Program Cash Fund to the Department of Human Services, and 0.8 FTE.

If a differing amount of revenue is received than estimated, CDHS may request adjustments to its spending authority through the annual budget process. Timing of expenditures may occur in later years. If sufficient gifts, grants, or donations are not received, the program will not be implemented.

State and Local Government Contacts

Education	Human Services
Governor's Office	Personnel
Higher Education	Treasury