

Second Regular Session
Seventy-fifth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

ENGROSSED

*This Version Includes All Amendments Adopted
on Second Reading in the House of Introduction*

LLS NO. 26-0696.01 Lindy Schaible x4215

SENATE BILL 26-170

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Coleman,

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Bacon,

Senate Committees

Education
Appropriations

House Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 **CONCERNING CREATING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY HOW TO EXPAND**
102 **ACCESS TO EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR COLORADO**
103 **STUDENTS.**

Bill Summary

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

The bill creates the access to opportunity task force (task force) to study and report on how to expand access to effective public schools to address opportunity gaps. The bill requires the task force to report its findings and recommendations to the education committees of the house of representatives and the senate, the governor, the state board of

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

SENATE
Amended 2nd Reading
April 29, 2026

education, the commissioner of education, and the department of education on or before January 1, 2027. The task force will only conduct a study and prepare a report if the department of education receives sufficient gifts, grants, and donations.

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

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3 **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add 22-1-151** as
4 follows:

5 **22-1-151. Access to opportunity task force - creation -**
6 **members - duties - report - definitions - repeal.**

7 (1) AS USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE
8 REQUIRES:

9 (a) "DEPARTMENT" MEANS THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
10 CREATED AND EXISTING PURSUANT TO SECTION 24-1-115.

11 **(b) "OPPORTUNITY GAPS" MEANS DISPARITIES IN STUDENTS'**
12 **ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DISPARITIES IN ACADEMIC**
13 **OUTCOMES, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, ACHIEVEMENT, GROWTH,**
14 **GRADUATION RATES, AND POSTSECONDARY READINESS, EXPERIENCED BY**
15 **GROUPS OF STUDENTS BASED ON FACTORS SUCH AS RACE, SOCIOECONOMIC**
16 **STATUS, GEOGRAPHY, DISABILITY STATUS, AND ENGLISH LEARNER STATUS.**
17 **SUCH DISPARITIES MAY BE INFLUENCED BY DIFFERENCES IN ACCESS TO**
18 **NECESSARY SUPPORTS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM,**
19 **HIGH-QUALITY INSTRUCTION, STABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS, AND**
20 **QUALIFIED EDUCATORS, AS WELL AS BY SCHOOL, DISTRICT, AND**
21 **STATE-LEVEL POLICIES AND PRACTICES.**

22 (c) "RURAL PUBLIC SCHOOL" MEANS A PUBLIC SCHOOL IN
23 COLORADO THAT THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINES IS RURAL BASED ON THE

1 GEOGRAPHIC SIZE OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL'S SCHOOL DISTRICT AND THE
2 DISTANCE FROM THE NEAREST LARGE, URBANIZED AREA, AND THE TOTAL
3 STUDENT ENROLLMENT OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT IS SIX THOUSAND FIVE
4 HUNDRED OR FEWER STUDENTS.

5 (d) "STATE BOARD" MEANS THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
6 CREATED AND EXISTING PURSUANT TO SECTION 1 OF ARTICLE IX OF THE
7 STATE CONSTITUTION.

8 (2) THE ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY TASK FORCE IS CREATED IN THE
9 DEPARTMENT TO STUDY HOW TO EXPAND ACCESS TO EFFECTIVE PUBLIC
10 SCHOOLS AND PRACTICES FOR EVERY COLORADO STUDENT.

11 (3) THE ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY TASK FORCE CONSISTS OF
12 MEMBERS APPOINTED AS FOLLOWS:

13 (a) THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE SHALL APPOINT THE
14 FOLLOWING MEMBERS:

15 (I) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE STATE BOARD;

16 (II) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF A COMMUNITY
17 ORGANIZATION WITH A FOCUS ON CLOSING OPPORTUNITY GAPS;

18 (III) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A METRO DENVER SCHOOL LEADER AT
19 A COLORADO PUBLIC SCHOOL WITH A DEMONSTRATED TRACK RECORD OF
20 MEANINGFULLY NARROWING OPPORTUNITY GAPS; AND

21 (IV) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF A STATEWIDE
22 ORGANIZATION THAT REPRESENTS EDUCATORS;

23 (b) THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES SHALL
24 APPOINT THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS:

25 (I) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A SCHOOL LEADER AT A RURAL PUBLIC
26 SCHOOL;

27 (II) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF A STATEWIDE

1 ORGANIZATION THAT REPRESENTS TEACHERS;

2 (III) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF A STATEWIDE
3 PARENT ORGANIZATION THAT FOCUSES ON EDUCATION POLICY AND
4 CLOSING OPPORTUNITY GAPS; AND

5 (IV) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF AN
6 ORGANIZATION THAT WORKS DIRECTLY WITH OR AT A FACILITY SCHOOL.

7 (c) THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES MINORITY LEADER SHALL
8 APPOINT THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS:

9 (I) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A SCHOOL LEADER AT A PUBLIC SCHOOL
10 IN SOUTHERN COLORADO WITH A DEMONSTRATED TRACK RECORD OF
11 MEANINGFULLY NARROWING OPPORTUNITY GAPS;

12 (II) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF A STATEWIDE
13 ORGANIZATION THAT REPRESENTS SUPERINTENDENTS; AND

14 (III) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A SCHOOL TEACHER IN A COLORADO
15 PUBLIC SCHOOL CLASSROOM WITH A DEMONSTRATED TRACK RECORD OF
16 MEANINGFULLY NARROWING OPPORTUNITY GAPS;

17 (d) THE SENATE MINORITY LEADER SHALL APPOINT THE
18 FOLLOWING MEMBERS:

19 (I) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF A STATEWIDE
20 ORGANIZATION THAT FOCUSES ON EDUCATION POLICY AND CLOSING
21 OPPORTUNITY GAPS;

22 (II) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF A STATEWIDE
23 ORGANIZATION THAT REPRESENTS EDUCATORS WITH A PARTICULAR FOCUS
24 ON EDUCATION POLICY AND CLOSING OPPORTUNITY GAPS; AND

25 (III) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A SCHOOL LEADER AT A COLORADO
26 PUBLIC SCHOOL THAT IS A COMMUNITY SCHOOL AS DEFINED IN SECTION
27 22-32.5-103 AND THAT HAS A DEMONSTRATED TRACK RECORD OF

1 MEANINGFULLY NARROWING OPPORTUNITY GAPS;

2 (e) THE GOVERNOR SHALL APPOINT THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS:

3 (I) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE GOVERNOR'S
4 OFFICE;

5 (II) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF A STATEWIDE
6 ORGANIZATION THAT REPRESENTS CHARTER SCHOOLS;

7 (III) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A SCHOOL LEADER AT A PUBLIC SCHOOL
8 IN NORTHERN COLORADO WITH A DEMONSTRATED TRACK RECORD OF
9 MEANINGFULLY NARROWING OPPORTUNITY GAPS; AND

10 (IV) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A RECENT GRADUATE OF A COLORADO
11 PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL WITH A DEMONSTRATED TRACK RECORD OF
12 MEANINGFULLY NARROWING OPPORTUNITY GAPS; AND

13 (f) THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION, OR THEIR DESIGNEE, SHALL
14 APPOINT ONE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DEPARTMENT WHO FOCUSES ON
15 ADDRESSING OPPORTUNITY GAPS.

16 (4) THE APPOINTING AUTHORITIES SHALL MAKE THEIR INITIAL
17 APPOINTMENTS TO THE TASK FORCE NO LATER THAN JULY 1, 2026.

18 (5) EACH MEMBER OF THE TASK FORCE SERVES AT THE PLEASURE
19 OF THEIR RESPECTIVE APPOINTING OFFICIAL. IF A TASK FORCE VACANCY
20 OCCURS, THE ORIGINAL APPOINTING AUTHORITY SHALL, WITHIN FOURTEEN
21 DAYS AFTER THE VACANCY, APPOINT A NEW TASK FORCE MEMBER WHO
22 SATISFIES THE MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS OF THE VACATED SEAT.

23 (6) TASK FORCE MEMBERS DO NOT RECEIVE COMPENSATION OR
24 REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENSES.

25 (7) (a) THE TASK FORCE SHALL ALLOW FOR REMOTE
26 PARTICIPATION IN EACH MEETING OF THE TASK FORCE.

27 (b) THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION, OR THEIR DESIGNEE, SHALL

1 CONVENE THE FIRST MEETING OF THE TASK FORCE NO LATER THAN ONE
2 MONTH AFTER THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION, OR THEIR DESIGNEE,
3 HAS DETERMINED THAT THE TASK FORCE HAS RECEIVED AN AMOUNT OF
4 GIFTS, GRANTS, AND DONATIONS SUFFICIENT TO BEGIN ITS WORK
5 DESCRIBED IN THIS SECTION OR JULY 31, 2026, WHICHEVER IS LATER.

6 (c) AT OR BEFORE THE FIRST TASK FORCE MEETING, THE PRESIDENT
7 OF THE SENATE SHALL APPOINT THE TASK FORCE CHAIR AND THE SPEAKER
8 OF THE HOUSE SHALL APPOINT THE TASK FORCE VICE-CHAIR. THE CHAIR OF
9 THE TASK FORCE SHALL CONVENE THE TASK FORCE MEETINGS AFTER THE
10 FIRST MEETING. THE TASK FORCE SHALL MEET AT LEAST FOUR TIMES AND
11 SHALL COMPLETE ITS DUTIES NO LATER THAN JANUARY 1, 2027.

12 (8) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL CONTRACT WITH AN INDEPENDENT
13 THIRD-PARTY ENTITY TO FACILITATE TASK FORCE MEETINGS, ASSIST IN
14 CONDUCTING THE STUDY REQUIRED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (10) OF
15 THIS SECTION, AND PREPARE A WRITTEN REPORT SUMMARIZING THE
16 STUDY'S FINDINGS AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE
17 ISSUED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (12) OF THIS SECTION. THE
18 INDEPENDENT THIRD-PARTY ENTITY MUST BE A PREAPPROVED VENDOR
19 FROM THE DEPARTMENT'S PRICE AGREEMENT LIST.

20 (9) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PROVIDE INFORMATION AND STAFF
21 SUPPORT, OTHER THAN THE STAFF SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE
22 THIRD-PARTY ENTITY DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (8) OF THIS SECTION, TO
23 THE TASK FORCE AND THIRD-PARTY ENTITY UPON THE REQUEST OF THE
24 TASK FORCE CHAIR TO THE EXTENT NECESSARY FOR THE TASK FORCE TO
25 COMPLETE ITS DUTIES DESCRIBED IN THIS SECTION. THE DEPARTMENT
26 SHALL PROVIDE THE THIRD PARTY SECURE ACCESS TO DATA CURRENTLY
27 COLLECTED BY THE DEPARTMENT TO ALLOW THE THIRD PARTY TO

1 COMPILE, ANALYZE, AND PROVIDE TO THE TASK FORCE THE DATA
2 NECESSARY TO CONSIDER THE ISSUES DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (10) OF
3 THIS SECTION.

4 (10) THE STUDY CONDUCTED BY THE TASK FORCE MUST CONSIDER:

5 (a) THE CURRENT STATE OF OPPORTUNITY GAPS ACROSS
6 COLORADO, IDENTIFYING WHERE GAPS ARE GEOGRAPHICALLY MOST
7 PREVALENT AND PERSISTENT, AND THE DISAGGREGATED SUBGROUPS OF
8 STUDENTS MOST IMPACTED BY THE GAPS;

9 (b) THE COLORADO PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS WITH A
10 DEMONSTRATED TRACK RECORD OF CLOSING OPPORTUNITY GAPS BASED
11 ON ACADEMIC OUTCOMES AS A NECESSARY STARTING POINT, WITH THE
12 UNDERSTANDING THAT OPPORTUNITY GAPS ARE INFLUENCED BY MULTIPLE
13 FACTORS AND THAT THE TASK FORCE MAY CHOOSE TO CONSIDER
14 ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF DATA THAT EMPHASIZE STUDENT SUCCESS AND
15 WELL-BEING;

16 (c) THE PROGRAMS, STRATEGIES, PRACTICES, AND CONDITIONS,
17 INCLUDING, BUT NOT NECESSARILY LIMITED TO, CONDITIONS OF POLICY,
18 RESOURCE ALLOCATION, COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT, SCHOOL
19 PHILOSOPHY, AND SCHOOL CLIMATE, OF THE SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS
20 IDENTIFIED IN SUBSECTION (10)(b) OF THIS SECTION THAT MOST
21 CONTRIBUTE TO SUCCESS IN CLOSING OPPORTUNITY GAPS;

22 (d) THE NONFINANCIAL BARRIERS THAT PREVENT EFFECTIVE
23 SCHOOLS AND PRACTICES FROM BEING REPLICATED AND EXPANDED
24 ACROSS COLORADO AND WHAT POLICY CHANGES ARE NECESSARY TO
25 REMOVE THOSE BARRIERS WITHIN EXISTING RESOURCES;

26 (e) STATES AND NEW APPROACHES TO SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLING
27 THAT HAVE DEMONSTRATED PROMISE AND SUSTAINED PROGRESS IN

1 CLOSING OPPORTUNITY GAPS AND WHAT POLICIES AND PRACTICES HAVE
2 ENABLED THEM TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN CLOSING OPPORTUNITY GAPS; AND

3 (f) HOW COLORADO CAN REDESIGN ITS EDUCATION SYSTEM TO
4 BETTER SUPPORT INNOVATION, CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT, AND
5 FUTURE-READY LEARNING MODELS WHILE MAINTAINING ACCOUNTABILITY
6 FOR ACADEMIC OUTCOMES.

7 (11)(a) THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IS THAT THE COST
8 OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS SECTION IS FUNDED ENTIRELY BY GIFTS,
9 GRANTS, AND DONATIONS AND THAT FURTHER GIFTS, GRANTS, AND
10 DONATIONS CONTINUE THROUGHOUT THE COURSE OF THE STUDY. THE
11 GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHALL NOT APPROPRIATE MONEY FROM THE GENERAL
12 FUND FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS SECTION.

13 (b) THE DEPARTMENT MAY ACCEPT AND EXPEND GIFTS, GRANTS,
14 OR DONATIONS FROM PRIVATE OR PUBLIC SOURCES TO IMPLEMENT THIS
15 SECTION. THE TASK FORCE SHALL NOT IMPLEMENT THIS SECTION UNLESS
16 THE DEPARTMENT RECEIVES AN AMOUNT OF GIFTS, GRANTS, AND
17 DONATIONS THAT THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION, OR THEIR DESIGNEE,
18 DEEMS NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THIS SECTION. WITHIN THIRTY DAYS
19 AFTER RECEIPT OF A GIFT, GRANT, OR DONATION, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL
20 POST ON ITS WEBSITE THE SOURCE AND AMOUNT OF THE GIFT, GRANT, OR
21 DONATION RECEIVED IN SUPPORT OF THE TASK FORCE.

22 (c) THE STUDY AND WRITTEN REPORT DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTIONS
23 (10) AND (12) OF THIS SECTION ARE CONTINGENT ON MONEY BEING
24 AVAILABLE TO CARRY OUT THE STUDY AND THE WRITTEN REPORT. IF
25 MONEY IS NOT AVAILABLE FOR THE TASK FORCE OR FOR THE THIRD-PARTY
26 ENTITY DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (8) OF THIS SECTION TO CARRY OUT THE
27 DUTIES REQUIRED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION, THE TASK FORCE OR THE

1 ENTITY IS NOT REQUIRED TO CARRY OUT ITS DUTIES. A CONTRACT WITH A
2 THIRD-PARTY ENTITY CONTRACTED WITH PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (8)
3 OF THIS SECTION THAT PROVIDES SERVICES RELATED TO FACILITATION AND
4 THE STUDY AND WRITTEN REPORT IS CONTINGENT ON GIFTS, GRANTS, AND
5 DONATIONS BEING AVAILABLE FOR THAT PURPOSE.

6 (12) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2027, THE TASK FORCE SHALL
7 SUBMIT A WRITTEN REPORT WITH FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO
8 THE EDUCATION COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND
9 THE SENATE, OR THEIR SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES; THE GOVERNOR; THE
10 STATE BOARD; THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION; AND THE DEPARTMENT.
11 THE WRITTEN REPORT MUST INCLUDE A MINORITY REPORT IF ONE IS
12 REQUESTED BY A MEMBER OF THE TASK FORCE. IF THE FIRST MEETING OF
13 THE TASK FORCE IS NOT UNTIL AFTER JULY 31, 2026, THE DEADLINE TO
14 COMPLETE THE WRITTEN REPORT REQUIRED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION
15 MUST BE ADJUSTED TO ALLOW FIVE MONTHS BETWEEN THE FIRST MEETING
16 AND THE WRITTEN REPORT DEADLINE.

17 (13) THIS SECTION IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2027.

18 **SECTION 2. Safety clause.** The general assembly finds,
19 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate
20 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety or for appropriations for
21 the support and maintenance of the departments of the state and state
22 institutions.