

Second Regular Session
Seventy-fourth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. 24-1153.01 Anna Petrini x5497

HOUSE BILL 24-1446

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

McLachlan and Hartsook,

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Buckner and Pelton B.,

House Committees
Education

Senate Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 CONCERNING IMPROVING RESOURCES FOR SCIENCE EDUCATORS.

Bill Summary

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

The bill requires the department of education to develop and offer a free, optional professional development program (program) to enhance pedagogy around research-based Colorado academic standards in science. The program must include instruction on interventions for students who are below grade level or struggling in science, children with disabilities, and students who are English language learners. The program must create incentives for teacher participation by offering ongoing professional development credit toward licensure renewal. The program prioritizes

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.

professional development for eligible science teachers in rural school districts and small rural school districts.

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

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

4 (a) Access to high-quality, evidence-informed science instruction
5 means that students will develop an in-depth understanding of content,
6 develop key skills, and be prepared to fill the workforce needs of the
7 state;

8 (b) In 2018, the Colorado state board of education adopted the
9 Next Generation Science Standards, a set of research-based academic
10 standards designed to give local educators flexibility while holding
11 students to higher performance expectations in science;

12 (c) The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted Colorado public schools'
13 ability to measure student progress in science and implement supports for
14 the transition to the Next Generation Science Standards;

15 (d) State assessment results in 2023 showed low proficiency in
16 science among students in fifth, eighth, and eleventh grades;

17 (e) Educators are the most important in-school support for
18 improving student outcomes in science; and

19 (f) All teachers, regardless of their duration of time in the
20 classroom, deserve access to high-quality professional development
21 opportunities that align with the Next Generation Science Standards.

22 (2) The general assembly finds, therefore, that action is required
23 to better equip educators to deliver high-quality, evidence-informed
24 science instruction.

25 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 22-2-146.8 as

1 follows:

2 **22-2-146.8. Department of education - improving science**
3 **outcomes - teacher professional development - report - appropriation**
4 **- legislative declaration - definitions. (1) AS USED IN THIS SECTION,**

5 UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

6 (a) "CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES" HAS THE SAME MEANING AS SET
7 FORTH IN SECTION 22-20-103.

8 (b) "COLORADO ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR SCIENCE" MEANS
9 EVIDENCE-INFORMED STANDARDS FOR STUDENT LEARNING IN SCIENCE AS
10 ADOPTED BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

11 (c) "ELIGIBLE TEACHER" MEANS A PERSON WHO IS LICENSED
12 PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 60.5 OF THIS TITLE 22 OR IS AUTHORIZED PURSUANT
13 TO SECTION 22-60.5-111 TO TEACH AND WHO IS EMPLOYED BY A LOCAL
14 EDUCATION PROVIDER IN THE STATE TO PROVIDE SCIENCE INSTRUCTION.
15 "ELIGIBLE TEACHER" ALSO INCLUDES AN EDUCATOR WHO IS EMPLOYED BY
16 AN INDIAN TRIBE OR TRIBAL ORGANIZATION IN THE STATE TO PROVIDE
17 SCIENCE INSTRUCTION.

18 (d) "EVIDENCE-INFORMED" MEANS A PROGRAM OR PRACTICE IN
19 SCIENCE THAT RELIES ON PEER-REVIEWED EVIDENCE TO ESTABLISH A BASIS
20 FOR ACCELERATING LEARNING. "EVIDENCE-INFORMED" INCLUDES
21 EVIDENCE-INFORMED CURRICULA, INTERVENTIONS, ACCELERATION
22 STRATEGIES, AND ASSESSMENT OPTIONS.

23 (e) "LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER" MEANS A SCHOOL DISTRICT, A
24 CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZED BY A SCHOOL DISTRICT PURSUANT TO PART
25 1 OF ARTICLE 30.5 OF THIS TITLE 22, A CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZED BY
26 THE STATE CHARTER SCHOOL INSTITUTE PURSUANT TO PART 5 OF ARTICLE
27 30.5 THIS TITLE 22, OR A BOARD OF COOPERATIVE SERVICES CREATED AND

1 OPERATING PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 5 OF THIS TITLE 22 THAT OPERATES
2 MORE THAN ONE PUBLIC SCHOOL.

3 (f) "RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT" MEANS A SCHOOL DISTRICT IN
4 COLORADO THAT THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINES IS RURAL BASED ON THE
5 GEOGRAPHIC SIZE OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT AND THE DISTANCE OF THE
6 SCHOOL DISTRICT FROM THE NEAREST LARGE, URBANIZED AREA.

7 (g) "SMALL RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT" MEANS A SCHOOL DISTRICT
8 IN COLORADO THAT THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINES IS RURAL BASED ON
9 THE GEOGRAPHIC SIZE OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT AND THE DISTANCE OF THE
10 SCHOOL DISTRICT FROM THE NEAREST LARGE, URBANIZED AREA AND THAT
11 ENROLLS FEWER THAN ONE THOUSAND STUDENTS IN PRE-KINDERGARTEN
12 THROUGH TWELFTH GRADE.

13 (h) "STANDARD" HAS THE SAME MEANING AS SET FORTH IN
14 SECTION 22-7-1003.

15 (2) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL CONTRACT WITH A COLORADO
16 INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE
17 "PROCUREMENT CODE", ARTICLES 101 TO 112 OF TITLE 24, TO MAKE
18 AVAILABLE NO LATER THAN THE BEGINNING OF THE 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR
19 A FREE, OPTIONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM HOSTED ON A
20 REGIONAL BASIS AROUND THE STATE THAT IS DESIGNED TO ENHANCE
21 PEDAGOGY AROUND THE COLORADO ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR SCIENCE.
22 THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM MUST:

23 (a) BE DESIGNED TO ENHANCE STUDENT INSTRUCTION AROUND THE
24 COLORADO ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR SCIENCE, INCLUDING COVERAGE
25 OF THE SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING PRACTICES, DISCIPLINARY CORE IDEAS,
26 AND CROSS-CUTTING CONCEPTS PROVIDED BY THE STANDARDS;

27 (b) INCLUDE EVIDENCE-INFORMED INTERVENTIONS AND

1 STRATEGIES TO GROW AND ACCELERATE STUDENT PROFICIENCIES IN
2 SCIENCE TO HELP STUDENTS WHO ARE BELOW GRADE LEVEL OR
3 STRUGGLING IN SCIENCE, CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES, AND STUDENTS
4 WHO ARE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS;

5 (c) INCLUDE, BUT NEED NOT BE LIMITED TO, CONTENT ALIGNED
6 WITH COLORADO ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR SCIENCE, WHICH INCLUDE
7 CULTIVATION OF SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY AND BEST PRACTICES;

8 (d) INCENTIVIZE ELIGIBLE TEACHER PARTICIPATION BY OFFERING
9 ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CREDIT TOWARD LICENSURE
10 RENEWAL PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 60.5 OF THIS TITLE 22;

11 (e) BE STRUCTURED TO GIVE LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS AND
12 TEACHERS PLANNING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES
13 SUFFICIENT TIME TO PURSUE ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
14 CREDIT TOWARD LICENSURE RENEWAL PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 60.5 OF THIS
15 TITLE 22; AND

16 (f) PRIORITIZE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR ELIGIBLE
17 TEACHERS IN RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND SMALL RURAL SCHOOL
18 DISTRICTS IF DEMAND EXCEEDS PROGRAM CAPACITY.

19 (3) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 30, 2027, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL
20 REPORT TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF
21 REPRESENTATIVES AND THE SENATE, OR THEIR SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES,
22 AND THE STATE BOARD ON THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE TEACHERS,
23 DISAGGREGATED BY LICENSE TYPE AND LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER,
24 WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
25 CREATED IN THIS SECTION.

26 (4) (a) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY DECLARES THAT, FOR PURPOSES
27 OF SECTION 17 OF ARTICLE IX OF THE STATE CONSTITUTION, A

1 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM TO ENHANCE PEDAGOGY AROUND
2 THE COLORADO ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR SCIENCE IS AN IMPORTANT
3 ELEMENT IN IMPLEMENTING ACCOUNTABLE PROGRAMS TO MEET STATE
4 ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND MAY THEREFORE RECEIVE FUNDING FROM THE
5 STATE EDUCATION FUND CREATED IN SECTION 17 (4) OF ARTICLE IX OF
6 THE STATE CONSTITUTION.

7 (b) FOR THE 2024-25 BUDGET YEAR, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
8 SHALL APPROPRIATE THREE MILLION DOLLARS FROM THE STATE
9 EDUCATION FUND TO THE DEPARTMENT. ANY MONEY APPROPRIATED
10 PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION THAT IS NOT EXPENDED PRIOR TO JULY 1,
11 2025, REMAINS AVAILABLE FOR EXPENDITURE FOR THE SAME PURPOSE IN
12 THE 2026-27 BUDGET YEAR WITHOUT FURTHER APPROPRIATION. AT THE
13 END OF THE 2026-27 BUDGET YEAR, THE MONEY THAT IS UNEXPENDED OR
14 UNENCUMBERED REVERTS TO THE STATE EDUCATION FUND.

15 **SECTION 3. Act subject to petition - effective date.** This act
16 takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the
17 ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly; except
18 that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V
19 of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this
20 act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take
21 effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in
22 November 2024 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the
23 official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.