

**First Regular Session  
Seventy-fifth General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO**

**INTRODUCED**

LLS NO. 25-0384.01 Shelby Ross x4510

**HOUSE BILL 25-1192**

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**HOUSE SPONSORSHIP**

**Hartsook and Bacon,**

**SENATE SPONSORSHIP**

**Bridges and Frizell,**

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**House Committees**  
Education

**Senate Committees**

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**A BILL FOR AN ACT**

101 **CONCERNING FINANCIAL LITERACY REQUIREMENTS AS A CONDITION**  
102 **OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.**

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**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>.)*

Current law encourages each school district board of education or charter school to adopt successful completion of a course in financial literacy as a graduation requirement. The bill requires successful completion of a course in financial literacy as a condition of high school graduation.

The bill requires submission of a free application for federal

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.*

student aid or a Colorado application for state financial aid as a condition of high school graduation unless an exception applies.

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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) Ensuring all Colorado high school students complete a  
5 dedicated one-semester course in financial literacy before graduation is  
6 essential to preparing students for modern adulthood;

7 (b) In collaboration with educators, administrators, policymakers,  
8 and community leaders, the Colorado department of education has  
9 developed rigorous state personal financial literacy standards and has  
10 made robust resources available to advance high-quality instruction in this  
11 vital subject area;

12 (c) Research confirms that required standalone financial literacy  
13 courses taught in the eleventh or twelfth grade deliver the greatest impact  
14 by empowering students with comprehensive financial management skills  
15 at a time when they are most ready to apply the skills;

16 (d) Research shows that education and training culminating in  
17 credentials such as industry certificates, trade school certificates,  
18 apprenticeships, associate degrees, and bachelor degrees, among other  
19 business and industry-based experiences, are necessary to earn a living;

20 (e) Completion of the federal or state financial aid applications is  
21 a key component to understanding how additional education beyond high  
22 school can be financially supported. Additionally, completion of the  
23 federal or state financial aid applications, especially while students are  
24 still in high school, supports access to different career pathway options  
25 because financial aid is often the vehicle students use to pay for tuition,

1 fees, equipment, and other expenses associated with additional training  
2 beyond high school.

3 (f) Understanding how to access career-aligned resources and  
4 supports is integral to the way students and families navigate training and  
5 educational resources, which is why the free application for federal  
6 student aid is a critical component of the state's financial literacy quality  
7 standards. Financial literacy education and Colorado's individual career  
8 and academic plan can help families understand how to obtain federal or  
9 state financial aid to support students in pursuing additional education  
10 and career training.

11 (g) In 2023, through the federal "FAFSA Simplification Act", the  
12 free application for federal student aid was simplified, reducing the  
13 number of questions from 100 to 30 and reducing the financial  
14 information needed on the application;

15 (h) In 2024, the Colorado general assembly passed the Colorado  
16 promise tax credit, which makes students who attend public institutions  
17 and have a family income of \$90,000 or less eligible for a complete  
18 reimbursement of any out-of-pocket tuition and fees paid for the student's  
19 education; however, students must fill out a federal or state financial aid  
20 application in order to qualify for the tax credit; and

21 (i) Colorado students can magnify the impact of state investments  
22 in higher education by accessing federal money to pursue postsecondary  
23 education and by earning credentials to enhance the student's  
24 income-earning potential. It is estimated that Colorado students who  
25 complete federal and state financial aid applications can leverage more  
26 than \$30 million in resources.

27 (2) Therefore, the general assembly declares it is essential to

1 ensure that prior to graduation, Colorado high school students:

2 (a) Complete a course in financial literacy; and

3 (b) Submit federal and state financial aid applications if students  
4 intend to seek postsecondary education credentials.

5 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 22-1-104.9 as  
6 follows:

7 **22-1-104.9. Teaching of financial literacy.** (1) SATISFACTORY  
8 COMPLETION OF A COURSE ON FINANCIAL LITERACY, AS DEFINED IN  
9 SECTION 22-32-135, IN THE ELEVENTH OR TWELFTH GRADE THAT  
10 INCORPORATES THE STANDARDS ON FINANCIAL LITERACY DEVELOPED BY  
11 THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION PURSUANT TO SECTION 22-7-1005 (2.8)  
12 IS A CONDITION OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF  
13 THIS STATE.

14 (2) A SCHOOL DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL MAY UTILIZE ANY  
15 CURRICULUM THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OR CHARTER SCHOOL HAS ADOPTED  
16 PURSUANT TO SECTION 22-32-135, THE RESOURCE BANK CREATED  
17 PURSUANT TO SECTION 22-2-127, OR ANY OTHER ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS  
18 OR MATERIALS. ANY PROGRAMS OR MATERIALS USED IN TEACHING A  
19 COURSE ON FINANCIAL LITERACY MUST REPRESENT BEST PRACTICES AND  
20 BE DEVELOPED USING INPUT FROM EXPERTS IN THE AREA OF PERSONAL  
21 FINANCES.

22 (3) THIS SECTION APPLIES TO STUDENTS BEGINNING NINTH GRADE  
23 ON OR AFTER SEPTEMBER 1, 2025.

24 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 22-1-148 as  
25 follows:

26 **22-1-148. Free application for federal student aid - Colorado**  
27 **application for state financial aid - graduation requirement -**

1 **exception - standardized form - definitions.** (1) AS USED IN THIS  
2 SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

3 (a) "COLORADO APPLICATION FOR STATE FINANCIAL AID" OR  
4 "CASFA" MEANS THE APPLICATION TO DETERMINE STUDENT FINANCIAL  
5 NEED AND ELIGIBILITY FOR STATE FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS USING  
6 FAFSA METHODOLOGY, OR ANY SUCCESSOR FORM.

7 (b) "FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID" OR "FAFSA"  
8 MEANS THE FEDERAL APPLICATION USED TO DETERMINE STUDENT  
9 FINANCIAL NEED AND ELIGIBILITY FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID PROGRAMS,  
10 OR ANY SUCCESSOR FORM.

11 (2) SUBMISSION OF A FAFSA OR CASFA IS A CONDITION OF HIGH  
12 SCHOOL GRADUATION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF THIS STATE.

13 (3) (a) A STUDENT MAY GRADUATE WITHOUT SUBMITTING A  
14 FAFSA OR CASFA IF:

15 (I) THE STUDENT, WHO IS EIGHTEEN YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER OR  
16 IS AN EMANCIPATED MINOR, SUBMITS THE STANDARDIZED FORM CREATED  
17 PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (3)(b) OF THIS SECTION TO THE STUDENT'S  
18 SCHOOL INDICATING THAT THE STUDENT DECLINES TO SUBMIT A FAFSA  
19 OR CASFA;

20 (II) THE STUDENT'S PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN, IF THE STUDENT  
21 IS UNDER EIGHTEEN YEARS OF AGE, SUBMITS THE STANDARDIZED FORM  
22 CREATED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (3)(b) OF THIS SECTION TO THE  
23 STUDENT'S SCHOOL INDICATING THAT THE PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN  
24 DECLINES TO SUBMIT A FAFSA OR CASFA; OR

25 (III) A SCHOOL COUNSELOR OR OTHER AUTHORIZED SCHOOL  
26 PERSONNEL AUTHORIZES THE STUDENT OR THE STUDENT'S PARENT OR  
27 LEGAL GUARDIAN TO DECLINE TO SUBMIT A FAFSA OR CASFA.

1           (b) (I) NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 1, 2025, THE DEPARTMENT OF  
2 EDUCATION SHALL CREATE A STANDARDIZED OPT-OUT FORM THAT EACH  
3 SCHOOL DISTRICT IS REQUIRED TO ADOPT. THE FORM MUST ALLOW A  
4 STUDENT, IF APPLICABLE, OR A STUDENT'S PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN TO  
5 OPT OUT OF SUBMITTING A FAFSA OR CASFA PURSUANT TO THIS  
6 SECTION.

7           (II) THE STANDARDIZED FORM MUST NOT INCLUDE AN INQUIRY  
8 ABOUT WHY A STUDENT, OR A STUDENT'S PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN,  
9 DECLINED TO SUBMIT A FAFSA OR CASFA.

10          (III) THE STANDARDIZED FORM MUST INCLUDE A NOTIFICATION  
11 THAT FILLING OUT THE FORM DOES NOT PREVENT THE STUDENT FROM  
12 SUBMITTING A FAFSA OR CASFA IN THE FUTURE.

13          (IV) A PUBLIC SCHOOL SHALL NOT MAKE THE STANDARDIZED  
14 FORM AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND LEGAL GUARDIANS UNTIL  
15 THE FAFSA OR CASFA IS OFFICIALLY OPEN FOR THE APPLICABLE SCHOOL  
16 YEAR.

17          (4) ANY MONEY APPROPRIATED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF  
18 EDUCATION FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS SECTION MAY BE USED FOR  
19 THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES:

20           (a) THE MAINTENANCE OF A FINANCIAL AID RESOURCE BANK AND  
21 FINANCIAL AID TRAINING PROGRAMS;

22           (b) STIPENDS FOR SCHOOL COUNSELORS TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL  
23 AID TRAINING TO STUDENTS AND STUDENTS' FAMILY MEMBERS; AND

24           (c) COLLABORATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER  
25 EDUCATION IN ITS EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN THE WEB-BASED FINANCIAL AID  
26 COMPLETION TOOL TO TRACK THE SATISFACTORY SUBMISSION OF A  
27 FAFSA OR CASFA AND CONDUCT STUDENT OUTREACH PURSUANT TO

1 SECTION 23-3.3-106.

2 (5) THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
3 SHALL MAINTAIN STRICT STANDARDS FOR STUDENT DATA PRIVACY  
4 RELATED TO THIS SECTION AND SHALL NOT PUBLICLY REPORT INDIVIDUAL  
5 STUDENT DATA OBTAINED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION FOR ANY PURPOSE.

6 (6) THIS SECTION APPLIES TO STUDENTS GRADUATING DURING THE  
7 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR AND EACH SCHOOL YEAR THEREAFTER.

8 **SECTION 4.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-32-135, **amend**  
9 (4) as follows:

10 **22-32-135. Financial literacy curriculum - definition.**

11 (4) PURSUANT TO SECTION 22-1-104.9, each school district board of  
12 education is ~~further encouraged~~ REQUIRED to adopt ~~successful~~  
13 SATISFACTORY completion of a course in financial literacy as a graduation  
14 requirement.

15 **SECTION 5.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-3.3-106, **amend**  
16 (2)(a)(III), (2)(a)(IV), and (2)(b)(II); and **add** (2)(a)(V) as follows:

17 **23-3.3-106. Technology to support FAFSA and CASFA -**  
18 **definitions.** (2) (a) The department shall use technology to assist in  
19 increasing the number of students who complete the FAFSA and CASFA  
20 forms. On or before September 15, 2023, the department shall develop a  
21 tool kit and training outlining web tools and resources for use by higher  
22 education administrators, middle and high schools, and nonprofit  
23 organizations that support the completion of FAFSA and CASFA forms.  
24 The tool kit must include free resources, including:

25 (III) Information for students who are the first in their family to  
26 attend college and how to navigate financial aid resources and application  
27 processes; ~~and~~

1 (IV) Public information available through state or federal entities;

2 AND

3 (V) A USER GUIDE AND GETTING STARTED GUIDE.

4 (b) The information in the tool kit must be:

5 (II) Updated annually for educators and nonprofit organizations  
6 to support students and families in SUBMITTING COMPLETED FAFSA OR  
7 CASFA FORMS PURSUANT TO SECTION 22-1-148 AND IN developing  
8 individual career and ~~education~~ ACADEMIC plans pursuant to sections  
9 22-32-109 (1)(oo) and 22-30.5-525 and career-connected strategies, such  
10 as work-based learning in support of financial literacy education and  
11 completion of the financial aid forms.

12 **SECTION 6. Act subject to petition - effective date.** This act  
13 takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the  
14 ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly; except  
15 that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V  
16 of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this  
17 act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take  
18 effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in  
19 November 2026 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the  
20 official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.