



Higher Education

During the 2018 legislative session, the Colorado General Assembly considered measures related to higher education. Specifically, the legislature considered measures regarding the transfer of credit, student admissions, teacher preparatory programs, and military experience and workforce readiness.

Transfer and Admission Requirements

The General Assembly considered bills concerning degree transfers and student admissions at institutions of higher education. *Senate Bill 18-069* requires institutions of higher education to cover the cost of certain lower-division courses taken by students who transfer under statewide degree transfer agreements. Statewide transfer agreements between public institutions of higher education allow students who complete specified 60-credit hour associate degrees to enroll as juniors at four-year institutions with no more than 60 credit hours remaining for a bachelor's degree. Under the bill, institutions may only require an eligible student to complete lower-division courses if the courses are part of the student's major and the course would not require the student to take additional credit hours to complete the degree. Any lower-division courses required by the institution that result in a student exceeding the 60-credit hours must be paid for in full by the institution.

Senate Bill 18-101 expands eligibility for Colorado State University-Global Campus, which offers online degree programs under the purview of the governing board of Colorado State University, to include first-time freshman students who are Colorado residents and are under 23 years of age.

Senate Bill 18-206 allows public research institutions of higher education to adjust enrollment ratios so that the schools are able to enroll additional nonresident students at a higher tuition rate. In addition to adding the University of Northern Colorado and Colorado School of Mines to the list of eligible research institutions, the bill standardizes the calculation for public research institutions in the following ways:

- requires the research institutions to admit 100 percent of academically qualified Colorado first-time freshman students;
- reduces the various percentages of enrollment so that in-state students make up no less than 55 percent of total enrollments at each research institution, with the exclusion of international students and students solely enrolled in online courses; and
- increases the cap on international students enrolled at an eligible research institution to 15 percent of total student enrollment.

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Teacher Preparation Programs

The General Assembly passed three bills regarding programs in higher education aimed at increasing the number of students seeking degrees in the field of education. *House Bill 18-1189* creates the Teacher Residency Expansion Program in the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to contract with up to three institutions of higher education and up to three alternative teacher program providers that each operate a teacher residency program to expand those programs on a pilot basis. The teacher residency program is a preparation program that includes a minimum of one year of classroom apprenticeship that integrates theory and practice.

House Bill 18-1002 creates a teacher fellowship program for candidates in an approved teacher preparation program who agree to teach in a rural school district after graduation. CDE is charged with identifying geographic areas, subject areas, and grade levels in which there is a shortage of qualified teachers. Qualified rural local education providers (LEPs) with demonstrated financial and hiring needs may enter into an agreement with an institution of higher education to create a one-year fellowship for higher education students. Up to 100 teaching fellows per year can receive a \$10,000 stipend, of which half is paid by the Colorado Department of Higher Education (DHE) and half by the institution of higher education. Selected fellows are expected to complete their teacher preparation program and any requirements for a teaching credential during the one-year fellowship, and, if offered a teaching position, must commit to at least two years of employment. The fellow must repay the stipend if he or she does not accept an offer of employment from the LEP or complete the two years of teaching.

House Bill 18-1309 makes several changes to state law related to programs to address a statewide teacher shortage. The bill requires CDE and DHE to create the framework for a Grow Your Own Educator Program. The framework must include the following components:

- a student enrolled in an institution of higher education with 36 or fewer credit hours remaining to complete a degree program;
- employment for the student, under a teacher of record license, at a district or school for a position for which there is a critical teacher shortage;
- the requirement that the institution of higher education provide mentorship and support to the student; and
- payment by the school or district of the participating student's in-state tuition for no more than 36 credits, contingent upon the participating student working in the same district or school for three academic years.

Priority for the educator program is given to graduates of Colorado high schools who commit to teaching in a community that is experiencing a teacher shortage in a particular grade level or content area, and next to students who commit to teach in a rural school districts with a teacher shortage in a particular grade level or content area.

House Bill 18-1309 also creates a teacher of record license for a student who has completed all or substantially all of the course work requirements for a bachelor degree, but has not completed teacher field work requirements. Under the bill, a teacher holding a teacher of record license may be employed by a school district or charter school through the Grow Your Own Educator Program. Additionally, the bill establishes a second program that authorizes LEPs to implement a one- or two-year teacher of record program, wherein a

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LEP may employ a person holding a teacher of record license if there are no other qualified, licensed applicants.

Military and Workforce Readiness

House Bill 18-1343 continues the Colorado Veterans' Service-to-Career Pilot Program in the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE). The program, created in 2016, authorizes nonprofit agencies to partner with workforce centers selected by the CDLE to provide eligible participants with skills training, internships, work placement, career and professional counseling and other services. In addition to extending the program's repeal date, the bill expands eligibility for the program to include veterans, veterans' spouses, persons actively serving in the U.S. Armed Forces within six months of discharge, and members of the National Guard or military reserves who have completed initial entry training.

Unlawful Sale of Academic Assignments

House Bill 18-1252 prohibits the sale of academic materials for submission to an institution of higher education. The sale of academic materials includes selling or offering to sell an academic assignment, as defined in the bill, or providing assistance in preparing that assignment. This applies to a person who provides answers to an online exam and to a person who is not enrolled in a school for educational purposes. Under the bill, there are exceptions for providing, for a fee, tutorial assistance that is not intended to be submitted, in whole or in part, as an assignment or answer to an online exam, and a service in the form of typing, transcribing, assembling, reproducing, or editing an assignment, as long as substantive changes are not made to the work. The bill authorizes the Attorney General to bring a civil

action on behalf of the state to seek a civil penalty of up to \$750 for violations.

Degrees in Nursing

In 2018, the legislature expanded opportunities for students seeking nursing degrees to complete their degrees at local district colleges and community colleges. *House Bill 18-1300* authorizes a local district college, specifically Aims Community College, to offer a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing as a completion degree for students who have or are pursuing an associate degree in nursing. *House Bill 18-1086* allows a community college to offer a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing as a completion degree for students pursuing an associate degree in nursing and adds the degree to the role and mission of community colleges.