



SUPPORT HB20-1240

REPS. McCLUSKIE & WILL; SENS. DONOVAN & RANKIN

CONCERNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT TO ENROLL IN POSTSECONDARY COURSES

Concurrent enrollment programs are key to giving students college-level class experience, credits and the “college-going confidence” to complete a postsecondary credential. Many 5th/6th year high school programs in partnership with institutions of higher education - like ASCENT, Early Colleges and P-TECH - are built on the foundation of solid concurrent enrollment courses. We believe strengthening these partnerships between high schools and colleges paves the way for more students to be successful in earning a college degree.

GOALS OF HB 20-1240

- **Do no harm to existing programs** by maintaining all “Early College” type models through year 2022 in order to research best practices and create new, comprehensive financial and policy strategies.
- **Establish an advisory group** to review and recommend new policies for growing joint high school-college degree programs throughout the state, especially in rural school districts.
- **Deliver more resources to school districts** without affecting the School Finance Act. In particular, explicitly authorize and allow the use of state need-based financial aid for students enrolled in concurrent enrollment programs.

CURRENT LAW IN COLORADO

- **ASCENT:** Permits up to 500 high school students to enroll in college as “5th year” students
 - ASCENT slots have not expanded since 2011
 - ASCENT access concentrated in Denver Metro area
- **Early Colleges:** Permits high school students to enroll in joint HS degree/college programs
 - Early Colleges have no enrollment limitations in grade 9-12
 - Early College programs traditionally outperform traditional high schools in college readiness, college participation, and degree completion.
 - State law (SB 18-225) eliminated 5th year options beginning in 2020, leaving only ASCENT and P-TECH as eligible programs.
- **P-TECH:** Permits schools to create “6-year” joint degree programs with industry and college partners
 - Open to all students in a P-TECH designated school without limitation
 - Seven (7) P-TECH schools in Colorado; one in rural location (Canon City)