



COLORADO
Department of
Higher Education

**The Colorado Department of Higher Education supports HB 17-1180,
a Department Legislative Agenda Item**

- Technical Changes to Financial Assistance Program for Career & Technical Education -
Bill Sponsors: Representatives Winter and Lawrence, Senators Neville and Kerr

HB 17-1180 would make technical changes to current law, enacted by HB 15-1275, which seeks to provide needed financial assistance to students attending career and technical education programs that are not otherwise eligible for federal financial aid.

Specifically, the bill would (1) require the Colorado Commission on Higher Education to develop income eligibility standards and (2) clarify that the funds can be used for programmatic costs beyond just tuition.

Why is This Fix Needed?

Current law specifies student eligibility as being "Pell-eligible". The only way to determine Pell-eligibility is for a student to complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). However, the short-term certificate programs targeted by this state grant program are generally ineligible for federal aid, so students have had no reason to complete the FAFSA; therefore, institutions struggled to find eligible students and were unable to effectively direct this financial assistance to the students who need it.

Last year almost half of the funds allocated were reverted.

What Types of Education Programs are Eligible?

Work-force based, short-term certificate programs that are not eligible for federal aid are the targeted programs for this state aid.

The program must be approved by the institution's governing board and are designed to get students quickly into the workforce, and the state's financial support is directed to students with need and limited ability to pay.

The Department of Higher Education **urges your support** for HB 17-1180.



For more information, please contact Kachina Weaver, Chief Policy Officer for the Colorado Department of Higher Education, at (303) 883-7076 or kachina.weaver@dhe.state.co.us

