

B 003 07

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Creating the Governor's P-20 Education Coordinating Council

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Office of the Governor of the State of Colorado, I, Bill Ritter, Jr., Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order regarding the creation of the Governor's P-20 Education Coordinating Council, to be known as the P-20 Council.

1. Background, Need, and Purpose

Education is the foundation of Colorado's economy. For this reason, the development of a highly trained workforce is both a compelling state interest as well as a collective, inter-sector responsibility. Moreover, though considerably strained in recent years, Colorado's educational systems, if given the tools necessary to flourish, aligned appropriately, and financed adequately, have the potential to successfully satisfy all of the state's short- and long-term educational needs.

The preservation and expansion of Colorado's economy will require a substantially expanded workforce possessed of technical dexterity, creative industriousness, and scholarly talents comparable to those developed anywhere else in the world. Accordingly, state policies should not only emphasize the assessment of competencies needed for success in the 21st century economy, but also facilitate students' progress through the numerous pathways to college and careers while not presupposing occupational outcomes.

Unless reversed in the near-term, however, the ever-widening achievement gaps and postsecondary participation and completion rates among certain classes of students, especially those who are members of impoverished and historically underserved communities, will result in deepened economic disparities and lasting—though otherwise avoidable—strains on a variety of state-provided services.

As a state, we cannot delay action. However, achieving the pledges found in the *Colorado Promise*, such as halving the high school dropout rate and doubling the production of postsecondary certificates and degrees by 2017, will require more than simply aligning education standards and assessments, it will require attentive, inclusive, ongoing conversations to understand and thoughtful, earnest actions to address the needs of and interconnections among the early childhood, K-12, and postsecondary educational systems; to correct current activities and potentially rethink state policies and expectations; to provide meaningful, detailed, and constructive measures of accountability; to embrace innovative approaches to education while strengthening traditional methods and ensuring high quality outcomes for all; to maximize the effectiveness of the State's investments in education; and align the products of the State's educational systems with the expressed needs of current and potential future businesses throughout the state. For these reasons, a statewide P-20 Council is essential.

2. Mission and Scope

- A. The purpose of the P-20 Council will be to provide a forum for considering options and providing recommendations for the achievement of the education oriented initiatives found in the *Colorado Promise*.
- B. The P-20 Council shall facilitate statewide conversations and convene sub-committees as needed to discuss and formulate the legislative and policy remedies needed to accomplish the *Colorado Promise*.
- C. Topics to be addressed by the P-20 Council shall include, but not be limited to the following topics found in the *Colorado Promise*:
 - i. identifying options for expanding, monitoring, and effectively coordinating early childhood education;
 - ii. methods for engaging and retaining all students, thereby reducing the number of students who drop out of high school;
 - iii. approaches for recovering high school dropouts and adults in need of retraining;
 - iv. improving transitions between high school and postsecondary education, including establishing common high-school level expectations for competencies within certain content areas such as English, mathematics, and science;
 - v. identifying various methods to demonstrate attainment of the abovementioned objectives;
 - vi. developing innovative options for postsecondary matriculation, retention, and completion;

- vii. improving the recruitment and retention of and supporting innovative approaches to competitively compensate high quality teachers;
 - viii. aligning federal and state financial aid policies in order to widen college access and maximize the utility of state-level resources;
 - ix. examining appropriate levels and potential sources of funding, including the resources needed to ensure the long-term sustainability of the state's educational systems;
 - x. enhancing accountability practices and improving statewide data systems; and,
 - xi. connecting regional and statewide workforce needs with current and future educational capacities.
- D. The P-20 Council shall make recommendations to the Governor regarding potential legislation, policies, and programs that will make progress toward the implementation of goals found in the *Colorado Promise*. Recommendations requiring legislative responses should be finalized no later than the last working day of November preceding the commencement of each legislative session.
- E. The P-20 Council shall meet regularly at the discretion and direction of the Governor. Subcommittees formed by the P-20 Council shall determine their own meeting schedules.

3. Membership

- A. The P-20 Council shall be composed of members appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Governor.
- B. The P-20 Council may create subcommittees as needed to address specific issues.

4. Duration

This Executive Order shall remain in force until further modification or rescission by the Governor.

5. Staffing and Resources

The Office of Policy and Initiatives within the Governor's Office shall provide to the P-20 Council necessary support, information, data, analytical information, and administrative support.

The P-20 Council shall have the power to accept money and in-kind contributions from private entities and persons only to the extent such donations are necessary to cover its expenses. Any money contributed to the P-20 Council shall be directed to the Office of the Governor and deposited with the Treasurer of the State of Colorado in an account within the Office of the Governor's budget. Members of the P-20 Council shall serve without compensation, but may, at the discretion of the chair and approval of the Office of the Governor, be reimbursed for any actual expenses incurred.

6. Directive

The Governor's P-20 Education Coordinating Council is hereby created.

GIVEN under my hand and
the Executive Seal of the
State of Colorado, this 24th
day of April, 2007.

Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor