



D 2025 006

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Reimagining the Future of the Postsecondary Talent Development System in Colorado

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Governor of the State of Colorado and, in particular, pursuant to Article IV, Section 2 of the Colorado Constitution, I, Jared Polis, Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order reimagining the future of the postsecondary talent development system in Colorado.

I. Background and Purpose

Colorado's workforce is one of the secrets of our success. Colorado has a strong track record of high labor force participation and credential attainment. Over the course of my administration and in partnership with the General Assembly, Colorado has created a policy framework that identifies and prioritizes the skills needed in our economy and expands learner pathways to success. To date, Colorado has invested in free in-demand credentials, created stackable credentials, grown registered apprenticeships, developed the continuum of work-based learning, encouraged skills-based hiring, expanded access to postsecondary and workforce readiness programs in K-12 and higher education, supported dual and concurrent enrollment, developed business-led talent development solutions, improved the affordability of higher education, created a statewide longitudinal data system for measuring outcomes, and led the nation by adopting an equivalency framework for different modalities of education. This policy framework is foundational to ensure there are no wrong doors and no dead-ends on a Coloradan's journey to success.

To that end, the General Assembly championed HB 21-1330, which created a Student Success and Workforce Revitalization Task Force. Through the work of this task force, Colorado set a bold new vision for education and training. The HB 21-1330 Task Force recommended building a learner-centered talent ecosystem, ensuring better results from targeted increases in State education and training investments, and ensuring a flexible and adaptive talent development system. To build on the vision for a learner-centered talent ecosystem, we must continue to close the gaps between academic and occupational education and training. State postsecondary education and training efforts must meet learners where they are and serve them dynamically to continue to meet the workforce demands of Colorado's growing economy.

Building on our work in this space, I am directing relevant State agencies to collaborate on reimagining the future of the postsecondary talent development system in Colorado to meet the needs of learners, employers, and the economy.

II. Declarations

- A. To meet the workforce demands of Colorado's dynamic economy, reimagining the talent development system through postsecondary education and training systems is necessary.
- B. To build a flexible and adaptive postsecondary talent development system, internal and external talent development partners need an aligned strategy, common principles, and a bold vision for Colorado's postsecondary education and training systems.
- C. To ensure the greatest possible outcome, agencies must collaborate closely, identify systemic barriers, and create seamless learner pathways through education and training and into employment.
- D. To promote a seamless transition from secondary education into postsecondary education and training, it is important to coordinate these efforts with the Colorado Department of Education.
- E. To ensure Coloradans ages 18-24, especially those not currently in education or employment, have access to high-quality employment, education, or training and to reduce the rate of young Coloradans not in education, employment or training, greater coordination and connection between postsecondary education and training is needed.

III. Directives

- A. I hereby direct the following State agency executive directors and other leaders in my Administration to collaborate with the Office of the Governor and the Colorado Department of Education on the future of the postsecondary talent development system in Colorado and to identify appropriate agency staff to explore agency operations and best practices to achieve the goals of this Executive Order:
 - 1. Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE);
 - 2. Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE);

3. Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA);
 4. Executive Director of the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT);
 5. Governor's Office Director of Operations and Cabinet Affairs; and
 6. Governor's Office Director of Policy and Research.
- B. In addition to coming together to identify common principles of the reimagined primary and postsecondary talent development system, the agencies and offices listed in Section III.A. shall work with their respective divisions and internal teams to develop a plan to accomplish the following:
1. Seamlessly integrate postsecondary education, skills attainment, and training strategies to improve the flexibility and permeability of the system;
 2. Future-proof talent development by investigating and scaling strategies that help the postsecondary education and workforce development strategies be more adaptive and efficient;
 3. Improve the ability for learners, employers, community members, and State agencies to navigate the postsecondary talent development system;
 4. Increase postsecondary credential attainment, particularly for the students who historically have not connected to postsecondary education or training within six years of high school graduation; and
 5. Reduce bureaucratic barriers to cross-functional education and training.
- C. By December 1, 2025, the agencies and offices listed in Section III.A.1-6 shall jointly report to me with recommendations in the following areas:
1. Evaluation of the operations of the State's current postsecondary talent development system and identify where State activities could be better coordinated, streamlined, or strengthened to close the identified gaps between K-12, Higher Education, and workforce development in Colorado;
 2. Recommendations for new administrative designs for a postsecondary talent development system that would build on the work of the Student Success and Workforce Revitalization Task Force created under HB 21-1330;
 3. A statement of shared strategies and common principles of the new postsecondary talent development system;

4. Recommendations for solutions to ensure any strategies suggested are successful and have high impact, after identifying operational challenges;
5. Strategies for implementation of administrative solutions to coordinate and improve the efficiency of workforce development activities; and
6. Recommendations for the General Assembly's considerations to advance and codify findings of the group in Section III.A.

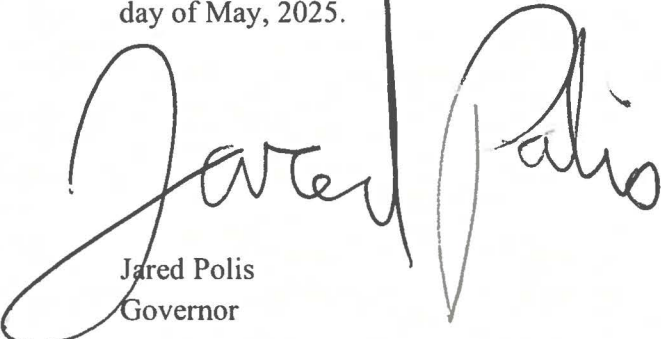
D. In accomplishing the goals and objectives of this Executive Order, the agencies and offices shall collaborate with other State departments, agencies, and offices and external stakeholders for feedback on how State government can best serve Coloradans engaging in postsecondary education and training.

IV. Duration

This Executive Order shall remain in effect unless modified or rescinded by future Executive Order of the Governor.



GIVEN under my hand and the
Executive Seal of the State of
Colorado this twentieth
day of May, 2025.



Jared Polis
Governor