



2020 SMART Act Report

Colorado's master plan for higher education, *Colorado Rises: Advancing Education and Talent Development* supports the Colorado Commission on Higher Education's vision that all Coloradans have an education beyond high school to pursue their dreams and improve our communities. To accomplish these goals, the Department supports students, advocates and develops policies to maximize higher education opportunities for all. The master plan provides a series of metrics pursuant to CRS 23-1-108 (1.5)(f).

The Colorado Rises Goal – Reaching 66% Statewide Attainment by 2025:

Colorado established an attainment goal in 2012 that has risen from 53.5% to 57.6% over the past eight years. Assuming continued trends in Colorado's population, migration and credential production rates by all institutions—public and private—the Commission projects Colorado would achieve a statewide attainment rate of 60.9% by 2025.¹ Factoring the state's changing demographics, the Commission has also set an ambitious equity attainment goal of 66% for African American or Black, Hispanic or Latinx and Native American populations; current statewide attainment levels are 41.3% for African Americans or Blacks, 29.9% for Hispanics or Latinx, and 29.9% for Native Americans.² By pursuing the following four strategies and tracking the associated metrics, Colorado can close the gap and expand educational opportunity.

CCHE identified four strategic goals within the scope of the public postsecondary system to make this plan actionable:

STRATEGIC GOAL #1: Increase Credential Completion

STRATEGIC GOAL #2: Erase Equity Gaps


STRATEGIC GOAL #3: Improve Student Success

STRATEGIC GOAL #4: Commit to Cost Containment and Innovation

Highlights from this year's report:

- Though credential production is increasing, Colorado must accelerate trends to meet our goals.
- Colorado must align and increase certificate production with workforce demands. Between academic years 2014-15 and 2018-19, certificate production grew nearly 40%, significantly advancing toward this goal.
- Colorado has significant work to do to improve outcomes for Coloradans of color. Current projections suggest that by 2025, only 48% of African American or Black students, 35% of Hispanic or Latinx students and 31% of Native American students will earn a postsecondary credential. Changes in 2018-19 to the performance funding model to weight Pell students more heavily may help to reverse these trends.
- The most recent year of data shows significant improvements in both retention and completion rates.
- Colorado has seen significant growth in both enrollment and completion of dual and concurrent enrollment courses and programs.
- State investment in higher education has helped slow tuition increases. The number of students with debt also decreased between fiscal year 2013-14 and 2018-19.

This report includes select performance metrics related to these four strategic goals.

A  indicates positive progress in the most recent year.

While the state has made progress in most areas, we must accelerate to reach our 2025 goal.

¹ Source: Colorado State Demographers Office projections using 2016 ACS estimates

² Source: American Community Survey Data through the U.S. Census



STRATEGIC GOAL #1—Increase Credential Completion:

The first strategic goal is to significantly increase the number of credentials that students earn over an eight-year period and credential completion in high-demand areas, such as STEM and teacher preparation.

OVERALL UNDERGRADUATE CREDENTIAL PRODUCTION INCREASED YEAR OVER YEAR BETWEEN ACADEMIC YEARS 2011-12 AND 2018-19.³

Academic Year	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	
Credentials	41,956	46,023	48,643	49,816	51,477	56,019	57,353	59,155	
1-Year Change		10%	6%	2%	3%	9%	2%	3%	✓
Certificates	11,567	13,859	15,604	15,373	16,217	20,069	20,214	21,393	
1-Year Change		20%	13%	-1%	5%	24%	1%	6%	✓

AFTER AN INCREASE IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2016-17 EDUCATOR PREPARATION CREDENTIALS DECLINED AGAIN IN 2018-19; STEM CREDENTIALS INCREASED EACH ACADEMIC YEAR BETWEEN 2011-12 AND 2018-19.

Academic Year	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	
Educator Prep. Credentials⁴	3,078	2,858	2,704	2,563	2,472	2,674	2,553	2,491	
1-Year Change		-7%	-5%	-5%	-4%	8%	-4.5%	-2.4%	
STEM Credentials⁸	7,378	7,991	8,823	9,598	9,958	10,695	11,172	11,941	
1-Year Change		8%	10%	9%	4%	7%	4%	7%	✓



STRATEGIC GOAL #2—Erase Equity Gaps:

With our state's changing demographics, the goal of 66 percent is unattainable if we do not make major progress on erasing equity gaps—the racial disparities in educational attainment. Of states with at least one million Hispanics or Latinxs, Colorado ranks the highest in size of equity gaps.⁵ *Colorado Rises* aims to raise African American or Blacks, Hispanic and Native American students to 66%.

AFRICAN AMERICAN AND HISPANIC STUDENTS SAW INCREASED CREDENTIAL COMPLETION BETWEEN ACADEMIC YEARS 2011-12 AND 2018-19 BUT ARE NOT ON TRACK TO MEET MASTER PLAN GOALS; PELL STUDENT CREDENTIAL COMPLETION REMAINS RELATIVELY FLAT FOR THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS.⁶

Academic Year	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	
Race/Ethnicity									
African American	1,453	1,449	1,741	1,844	1,809	1,942	2,057	2,164	
1-Year Change		0%	20%	6%	-2%	7%	6%	5%	✓
Hispanic	5,438	5,761	7,096	7,755	8,307	9,402	10,281	11,365	
1-Year Change		6%	23%	9%	7%	13%	9%	11%	✓
Native American	437	485	511	532	502	565	536	567	
1-Year Change		11%	5%	4%	-6%	13%	-5%	6%	✓
Academic Year	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	
Income									
Pell Eligible	12,777	14,084	15,029	14,904	14,926	15,005	15,536	15,483	
1-Year Change		10%	7%	-1%	0%	1%	4%	0%	

³ Source: SURDS Data. Also available on the [CDHE Master Plan Dashboard](#).

⁴ Source: 2018 Educator Preparation Report, Colorado Department of Higher Education

⁵ Source: Rocky Mountain Divide: Lifting Latinos and Closing Equity Gaps in Colorado, Georgetown Center for Workforce and Education.

⁶ Source: SURDS Data. Also available on the [CDHE Master Plan Dashboard](#).



STRATEGIC GOAL #3—Improve Student Success:

To graduate more students, Colorado must focus on promoting and improving successful student retention and momentum.

RETENTION RATES, THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO START AT A COLLEGE ONE FALL AND ENROLL THE NEXT FALL, STAYED RELATIVELY CONSTANT BETWEEN THE FALL 2011 AND THE FALL 2018 COHORTS.⁷

Cohort	Fall 11-12	Fall 12-13	Fall 13-14	Fall 14-15	Fall 15-16	Fall 16-17	Fall 17-18	Fall 18-19
Fall to Fall Retention	68.7%	70.4%	70.1%	72.0%	72.50%	71.7%	73.0%	73.6%
1-Year Change		2%	0%	2%	1%	-1%	1%	1%



AT TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS, GRADUATION RATES INCREASED BETWEEN THE FALL 2009 AND FALL 2016 COHORTS. AT FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS ON-TIME GRADUATION RATES INCREASED AND 150 PERCENT-TIME GRADUATION RATES REMAINED RELATIVELY FLAT.⁸

2-Year Institutions								
Cohort Year	Fall 09	Fall 10	Fall 11	Fall 12	Fall 13	Fall 14	Fall 15	Fall 16
3 Year Graduation	20.9%	21.0%	20.8%	21.8%	21.6%	24.3%	26.9%	29.2%
4-Year Institutions								
Cohort Year	Fall 06	Fall 07	Fall 08	Fall 09	Fall 10	Fall 11	Fall 12	Fall 13
4 Year Graduation	31.2%	31.8%	32.8%	32.9%	34.2%	34.5%	36.1%	37.4%
6 Year Graduation	58.7%	59.3%	59.2%	60.2%	59.9%	59.3%	61.8%	61.1%



ENROLLMENT IN AND CREDENTIALS OBTAINED THROUGH CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT CONTINUE TO GROW.⁹

High School Graduating Class	Class of 2012	Class of 2013	Class of 2014	Class of 2015	Class of 2016	Class of 2017	Class of 2018
Enrollment							
High school graduates attempting Concurrent Enrollment	14.7%	18.6%	22.0%	25.7%	26.5%	28.7%	30.4%
1-Year Change		4%	3%	4%	1%	2%	2%
High school graduates attempting Any Dual Enrollment	21.2%	22.8%	25.7%	31.1%	33.3%	35.7%	38.2%
1-Year Change		2%	3%	5%	2%	2%	3%
Academic Year	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Outcomes							
Credentials Produced	775	956	1,231	1,491	2,017	2,758	3,116
1-Year Change		23%	29%	21%	35%	37%	13%



⁷ Source: SURDS Data, also available in the annual Retention Rate Report

⁸ Source: SURDS Data, also available in annual Graduation Rate Report

⁹ Source: SURDS and CDE, also available in the annual Concurrent Enrollment Report



STRATEGIC GOAL #4—Invest in Affordability and Innovation:

To help ensure affordability for Colorado students and strengthen Colorado’s economic and community development, Colorado needs to increase public investment and encourage efficient institutional delivery models that reduce costs and time-to-degree.

WHILE MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME EXPERIENCED 27 PERCENT GROWTH BETWEEN FISCAL YEARS 2012-13 AND 2019-20, RESIDENT TUITION AT FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS HAS OUTPACED INCOME WITH A GROWTH RATE OF 36%.

Fiscal Year	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Resident Tuition¹⁰	\$6,513	\$7,028	\$7,338	\$7,666	\$8,144	\$8,519	\$8,758	\$8,840
1-Year Change		8%	4%	4%	6%	5%	3%	0.9%
Median Family Income¹¹	\$57,255	\$67,912	\$60,940	\$66,596	\$70,566	\$74,984	\$73,034	\$72,499
1-Year Change		19%	-10%	9%	6%	6%	-3%	-1%
Tuition as a Percent of Income	11.4%	10.3%	12.0%	11.5%	11.5%	11.4%	12.0%	12.2%

THE PERCENT OF RESIDENT ASSOCIATES DEGREE GRADUATES AND RESIDENT BACHELOR’S DEGREE GRADUATES WITH DEBT HAS CONTINUED TO DECLINE.¹²

Graduation Year	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	
Bachelor’s Degree Graduate with Debt	64%	62%	60%	59%	56%	55%	✓
Associates Degree Graduate with Debt	54%	53%	50%	48%	45%	42%	✓

For More Information

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Colorado Department of Higher Education <https://highered.colorado.gov/>

Colorado Rises: Advancing Education and Talent Development <http://masterplan.highered.colorado.gov/>

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¹⁰ Source: DHE Tuition and Fees Data

¹¹ Source: U.S. Census Bureau

¹² CDHE’s Return on Investment report: https://highered.colorado.gov/Publications/Reports/Legislative/ROI/202008_ROI.pdf

Note: Percentages differ from last year’s report due to a methodological change to the way average debt is calculated.