

2022 Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) Coordinator Update, HB15-1770

This report provides a status update on the progress made by the PWR Coordinator, a staff person established under HB15-1170 and shared between the Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC) and the Colorado Department of Education's (CDE) Office of Postsecondary Workplace Readiness (PWR Team). For implementation purposes, the PWR Coordinator is referred to as the Education Consultant throughout this document. A new Education Consultant, Janae Hunderman, started in this role on January 3, 2022.

This role was developed to be the connection point between industry needs and educational programming. When industry and education are disconnected, graduates leave high school uninformed about how their skills and interests align to potential careers and unprepared to intentionally make decisions about their future training or employment opportunities. When we strengthen the connection between what is learned in school with what is needed by industry, we prepare our learners to be the employees that our businesses need to thrive and to have the opportunity to contribute their skills at good jobs.

In order to support schools to improve these postsecondary and workforce readiness (PWR) outcomes for students, the Education Consultant focuses on increasing both K-12 and industry understanding of the Work-Based Learning (WBL) Continuum and the various ways that education and industry can align their efforts in order to build and strengthen future talent pipelines. The Education Consultant also supports the Career Development Incentive Program (CDIP) list of industry-recognized credentials and supports schools in their implementation.

Work-Based Learning (WBL)

Work-based learning strategies include much more than is often realized. Both schools and businesses can benefit by understanding the full [WBL Continuum](#) including strategies for Learning ABOUT Work, Learning THROUGH Work, and Learning AT Work as well as the WBL quality standards and return-on-investment for both employers and learners in each of these three areas. The Education Consultant completed the following activities to support schools to build and expand their WBL offerings and align them to industry demand:

- Co-organized and facilitated the in-person PWR Symposium in Durango, bringing together 60 attendees representing eight counties including 14 high schools, two intermediaries, two economic development organizations plus BOCES and the local community college. The agenda connected workforce development with education in order to enhance postsecondary workforce readiness strategies throughout the region and the state.
- Hosted a WBL presentation for the PWR Team's Town Hall, a monthly virtual meeting providing resources to educators. This was a two-part presentation with part one including industry and education representatives sharing their feedback on their Industry WBL Bootcamp experience (Bootcamps are described below). Part two introduced the WBL Standards draft and offered time for educators to provide feedback on the tool. The event had 35 attendees representing 24 schools and supporting organizations across the state.
- Presented at the Pathways Conference hosted by the Attainment Network. The first presentation included legislative and resource updates for WBL implementation for an audience of approximately 40 educators from throughout the state. The second presentation was an overview of the Industry WBL Bootcamps in partnership with a Colorado Mountain College implementation partner for an audience of approximately 30 educators.
- Updated the [CDE Work-Based Learning and Career Development website](#) with resources to better support schools and districts in the implementation of WBL.
- Attended Homegrown Talent Initiative (HTI) grant celebration events in Cortez and Durango and the Wiggins School Entrepreneurship Fair to see examples of best practices in innovative career development that can be shared throughout the state.
- Led a half-day in-person workshop about WBL for Salida, Buena Vista, and Leadville High Schools and local Colorado Mountain College staff and followed up with individual meetings with each school team to discuss their specific growth areas. Since then, each high school has led a similar Work-Based Learning presentation for local businesses in their area, resulting in increased business engagement in internships and other WBL activities.
- Coordinated a Talent Pipeline Report presentation for the PWR Team's Town Hall, a monthly virtual meeting for educators from across the state. This event had over 30 virtual attendees representing 27 schools and supporting organizations throughout the state.

Preparing Students for Energy Careers Guide

Utilizing career pathway development information in My Colorado Journey regarding the energy industry, the Education Consultant worked collaboratively with industry partners, the Colorado Career and Technical Education (CTE) team, and K-12 programs to develop a resource for secondary schools around a high school to postsecondary energy pathway. The resource focuses on the development of energy-related programming that is aligned with industry demand. It also provides examples of work-based learning experiences, concurrent enrollment opportunities, and certifications that lead to high-demand, high-wage jobs, and aligned CTE courses.

Career Development Incentive Program (CDIP)

The [Career Development Incentive Program](#) saw a significant increase in participation in 2021-2022. While 6,699 programs were reported in 2020-2021, there were 11,746 programs reported in 2021-2022, representing a 75% increase (see program specifics below). This increase includes 19 new districts participating for the first time, 15 of which are rural or small schools. Of the 43 districts who had reported previously, 23 had a 50% or more increase in the number of programs reported.

2020-2021: 6,699 programs reported

Certifications	4,831
Internships	700
Construction Pre-Apprenticeship	172
Construction Apprenticeship	1
Computer Science Advanced Placement	995

2021-2022: 11,746 programs reported:

Certifications	9,251
Internships	1,502
Pre-Apprenticeship*	46
Apprenticeship*	103
Computer Science Advanced Placement	839

**Note: [SB21-119](#) changed the CDIP Tier 2 reporting to allow pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeship outside of the construction industry.*

The top industries where CDIP certifications are being earned include:

- Skilled trades including architecture, automotive, construction, and welding

- Business, including marketing and social media
- Hospitality
- Health sciences
- Environmental

The top 20 certifications earned in both 2020-2021, a year heavily impacted by COVID, and 2021-2022 can be seen in the tables below.

2020-2021 Top 20 Certifications earned:

Solidworks	673
Home Builder's Institute (HBI): PACT CORE	385
Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)	319
S/P2 Automotive Service	303
Adobe Certified Associate (ACA): Photoshop	225
High School of Business	157
ProStart National Certificate of Achievement	142
Ford ACE Program	120
Home Builder's Institute (HBI): PACT Carpentry	117
Autodesk Certified Professional (ACP): Autodesk Inventor	102
Automotive Certification NATEF (ASE)	101
Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS)	100
Colorado River Watch Certification	99
National Health Science Certification	97
Certified Welder	95
ServSafe Manager Certification	86
Social Media Certification	80

2021-2022 Top 20 Certifications earned:

Solidworks	1,095
S/P2 Automotive Service	681
Home Builder's Institute (HBI): PACT CORE	665
Adobe Certified Associate (ACA): Photoshop	429
Microsoft Office Specialist - Associate (MOS)	358
Certified Welder	259
Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)	225
Snap-On Level 1	199
ProStart National Certificate of Achievement	197
High School of Business	174
Home Builder's Institute (HBI): PACT Carpentry	151
National Health Science Certification	150
Social Media Certification	144
ServSafe Manager Certification	135
Google Ads Certification	133
Automotive Service Excellence (ASE)	109

Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Entry-Level Maintenance and Light Repair	70
CompTIA A+	68
Emergency Medical Responder (EMR)	62

Entry-Level Maintenance and Light Repair	
Colorado River Watch Certification	102
Home Builder's Institute (HBI) PACT4	99
Snap-On Level 2	97
Ford ACE Program	97

These numbers represent the increased value of CDIP in our schools, yet our funding has not increased significantly since before COVID, resulting in reimbursement amounts which may not fully cover the cost of implementation for schools.

The Education Consultant took the following steps to support the implementation of CDIP:

- Visited Cherry Creek Innovation Center, Cañon City High School, and St. Vrain campuses in order to see the effect and implementation of CDIP. These visits allow the Education Consultant to see the impacts of successful CDIP implementation in order to better support best practices throughout the state.
- Co-led a “PWR of Certifications” presentation for the PWR Team’s Town Hall, a monthly virtual meeting for educators from across the state. This presentation introduced 63 attendees representing 48 schools and supporting organizations across the state to the Industry Credentials Communications Toolkit, developed in response to [SB21-199](#), as well as bringing in national guest speakers who are experts in the high school credentialing landscape.
- Collaborated with Colorado Education Initiative and CDE’s PWR Team in the development of the [Colorado Career Development and Industry Credentials Communications Toolkit](#).

Industry Engagement

Work-based learning doesn’t happen without industry engagement. The Education Consultant has focused on building industry awareness and understanding of WBL as a strategy to impact the future of education through the following activities:

- Moderated a WBL panel for the "Setting the Stage for the Next Generations of Workforce" South Metro Denver Chamber of Commerce Workforce Showcase. This event led to developing relationships at the Cherry Creek Innovation Center, who is

now interested in partnering in the Bootcamp programming. It also led to being invited to present legislative updates and PWR program resources at the Visit Denver Government and Community Affairs Committee Meeting, which in turn led to their team connecting with local sector partnerships in order to engage further with this work.

- Presented talent development resources at the Leadville Lake County Economic Development Council meeting, which led to the coordination and implementation of the first of their intended quarterly series of Industry WBL Bootcamps (described below).
- Visited the Emergent Campus in Florence and a TECHStart Meetup, an example of strong sector partnership engagement. These new partners became strong supporters of the CDIP industry-recognized credential review process.

Industry WBL Bootcamps

The Industry Work-Based Learning Bootcamps were developed by the Education Consultant in order to support businesses in the intentional creation of their talent pipeline while also strengthening relationships with local professionals who are available to support. The Bootcamp main topics include: Work-Based Learning, Skills-Based Hiring Practices, Age-relevant Onboarding Strategies, and Job Quality. Each topic is led by a local professional, including high school and community college educators, Small Business Development Center (SBDC) staff, workforce center staff, and Economic Development Council (EDC) staff. In this way, businesses not only connect with each other around their pressing needs, but they also expand their network of local contacts who can support their efforts.

The initial Bootcamp was piloted in Chaffee County in August and had 11 registered businesses, including many of the largest businesses in the region such as Mt. Princeton Resort, Ski Monarch, Colorado Central Telecom, and Fading West. Buena Vista and Salida High School staff collaborated with the Colorado Mountain College staff to present work-based learning strategies, the SBDC presented skills-based hiring, and the EDC shared job quality resources. The local workforce center shared resources and the Education Consultant presented legislative updates. The bootcamp offered such value that a local bank has offered to sponsor repeated bootcamps on a quarterly basis in Chaffee County.

The second bootcamp was run in Lake County in October and included 12 registered businesses including the Climax Mine, the County Commissioner's office, and the local school district's HR Manager. By the time of publication, a third bootcamp will be complete

in Pagosa Springs. As a result of the early success of the bootcamps in Chaffee and Lake Counties, many other regions are considering hosting bootcamps in their region in 2023.

Goals for 2023

- Develop Preparing Students for Agriculture Careers Guide. Similar to the energy guide created this year, the agriculture careers guide will utilize career pathway development information in My Colorado Journey regarding the agriculture industry as well as collaboration with the Career and Technical Education (CTE) team, industry representatives, and other partners.
- Analyze CDIP equity data and support schools to strengthen their efforts to increase credential attainment for students of color and from low-income backgrounds. This work may be done alongside a CTE equity project with similar goals to improve the equity of access to CTE programs throughout the state. The Education Consultant has partnered with the CTE team in a Gap Analysis Community of Practice offered through Advance CTE and will be working on implementation in schools beginning in 2023.
- Join the Colorado Department of Higher Education's Stackable Credential Pathways Steering Committee in an effort to align certification attainment opportunities between high school and postsecondary.
- Support the implementation of SB 21-140 to raise awareness for employers and school districts about WBL quality standards and support the development and implementation of high quality work-based learning programs across the WBL Continuum.