



EXPANDING ACCESS TO

WORKFORCE & HIGHER ED



Saving Coloradans Money on Tuition

Colorado Democrats worked to lower the cost of higher education and made the first two years of college free for all students and families making under \$90,000 with a new refundable tax credit ([HB24-1340](#)).

The 2024 state budget ([HB24-1430](#)) caps higher education tuition increases to prevent rising costs from being passed onto students. It also increases funding for higher education institutions by nearly \$115 million to streamline services for students, boosts financial aid support by nearly \$27 million and invests almost \$1.7 million to support students who experienced homelessness in high school to afford books, housing, tuition and fees. A bipartisan law will make it easier to transfer college credits, improve transparency in higher education reporting, and ensure rights for students enrolled in postsecondary institutions ([SB24-164](#)).

Expanding Concurrent Enrollment Options

It will soon be easier for Coloradans to graduate from high school with an associate's degree or certificate in certain disciplines through concurrent enrollment ([HB24-1305](#)). This will save students money as they pursue their degree or certificate in higher education and begin their careers.

Supporting the Educator Workforce

This year, the legislature created a task force to examine educator safety and address critical issues impacting educator retention and recruitment ([HB24-1320](#)). The legislature also created a new program to help school districts recruit and retain new teachers with an educator stipend ([HB24-1290](#)).



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Creating Jobs and Supporting Small Businesses

Colorado Democrats established a new tax credit to support employee-owned businesses and create jobs ([HB24-1157](#)). Lawmakers also incentivized new jobs by encouraging more TV shows and movies to be filmed in Colorado ([HB24-1358](#)) and continued successful Community Revitalization incentives, which are financing local projects all across the state that create jobs and foster vibrant communities ([HB24-1295](#)).

Helping Coloradans Fill Critical Jobs in Growing Industries

The legislature passed new laws to make it easier for Coloradans to find and enter degree programs in construction, infrastructure and building trades to fill jobs in fields with critical shortages ([HB24-1365](#)). Lawmakers also passed a law to study new pathways to degree programs in high-demand industries ([HB24-1364](#)). A new tax credit will reimburse employers for the costs of bringing on apprentices, expanding opportunities for student-workers ([HB24-1439](#)).

Supporting the Health Care Workforce

New legislation will finance the creation of a new medical college at the University of Northern Colorado-Greeley and new health care, veterinary medicine programs, and program construction at Metropolitan State University-Denver, Trinidad State College, and Colorado State University - Fort Collins ([HB24-1231](#)) to help train the next generation of health care and veterinary care professionals and boost the workforce.

The legislature also passed new laws to increase the availability of physician assistants ([SB24-018](#)), increase the number of dentists and dental hygienists practicing in the state ([SB24-010](#)) and increase the number of social workers in Colorado ([HB24-1002](#)).