

# 2023 LEGISLATIVE WINS FOR COLORADO LEARNERS

Colorado Succeeds is proud to champion policies that promote equitable access to high-quality educational opportunities from early childhood to career.

In 2023, we made substantial headway on our goals, ensuring:

**The system centers on both accountability and continuous improvement so that students are prepared and families have choices.**

Members supported efforts that will help modernize and optimize the impact of the state's accountability system, explore ways to improve school transportation, and equalize charter school funding.

**All students who graduate from high school are prepared for college and career success.**

Members helped secure long-term funding for high school students who graduate with an industry-recognized credential, support for improving math education, and an additional \$1,000 in funding per student. Each of these policies also includes provisions to support more equitable access.

**A pathway to economic mobility for every learner.**

Members worked with other business stakeholders to champion programs that will invest more than \$65 million to give learners access to in-demand credentials and expand adult education and teacher apprenticeship pathways.

# BUSINESS VOICES & KEY PARTNERS

**Business Leaders came through to support critical partners in pursuit of our goals.**

## Centering Choice & Continuous Improvement

*“Strong outcomes in math matter for the long-term talent pipeline. We want to hire more Colorado kids but we have a major talent gap. Without a solid foundation of math, we cannot expect our homegrown talent to fill the jobs of today, let alone tomorrow.”*



Kelly Flenniken,  
Director of  
Community  
Relations,  
Xcel Energy

*“Every year, we remind and educate our legislators about the funding inequities for students attending charter schools authorized by the state. On average, schools authorized by CSI receive 25% less funding than students attending district schools. We’re very pleased by the \$10M investment that the legislature has made this year to closing the funding gap for these students as well as its commitment to full equalization for students attending CSI schools beginning in 2024-25. Colorado Succeeds has been a consistent partner in pushing annually for the equitable funding that our students deserve, and we look forward to continuing that partnership to close that gap further.”*



Dr. Terry Croy Lewis,  
Executive Director,  
Colorado Charter  
School Institute

## Supporting College & Career-Ready Graduates

*“Students are receiving certifications through the Career Development Incentive Program and immediately entering the workforce or going onto postsecondary enrollment. Students experience the importance of learning opportunities that connect their education to the real world. Moreover, businesses have proven their willingness to hire these learners and schools are responding by providing opportunities that align to in-demand jobs.”*



Joe Kuntner,  
Managing Director  
of Public Sector,  
Slalom

*“Imagine a personalized pathway that gives students experience in careers, postsecondary credit, and sharpens the relevance of the high school experience. This is what the 1215 task force is doing—helping us figure out how to fundamentally redesign high school to give students the school experience they deserve.”*



Dr. Katy Anthes,  
Commissioner,  
Colorado  
Department of  
Education

## Pathways to Economic Mobility

*“Those of us who work in the construction industry face daily workforce shortages. This \$40 million investment in zero-cost credentials is based on a proven program and will go a long way in helping meet the needs of our industry. Not only will it help meet our state’s workforce needs, but it will also help ensure that Coloradans can access the training they need to get a good job.”*



Joel Pennick,  
Vice President,  
JE Dunn  
Construction

*“The investment of state resources to build a stronger workforce through access to no-cost, short-term credentials is good for Colorado’s economy, and Colorado’s Community Colleges are proud to be key players in providing the education and training targeted in the legislation. Working with partners, including Colorado Succeeds, and with strong support from the Governor and the bill’s sponsors, we will expand opportunities for tens of thousands of students while efficiently responding to our state’s workforce needs.”*



Joe Garcia,  
Chancellor,  
Colorado Community  
College System



# BY THE NUMBERS

2023  
Legislative  
Session



100%

of legislators received updated data about relevant information topics via the Colorado Succeeds Field Guide



18/18

bills supported passed

4/4

bills we opposed were defeated or amended favorably

## Centering Choice & Continuous Improvement



50  
EDUCATION  
LEADERS

including those connected to business, will serve on task forces to shape the next-generation accountability system and explore transportation barriers



\$27 MILLION

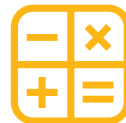
to equalize charter school funding—  
an increase of \$10 Million over 2022

## Supporting College & Career-Ready Graduates



\$95 MILLION

over 10 years to support industry-recognized credentials for high-school students



\$27 MILLION

to improve math instruction and expand access to math enrichment programs for students who need them most

## Pathways to Economic Mobility



\$52 MILLION

to expand adult education programs linked to credentials and zero-cost credential programs in high-needs areas



16,000+

high-school graduates will have access to a scholarship to pursue a postsecondary education aligned with economic needs

# BUILDING ON SUCCESS

## Expanding the Career Development Incentive Program

The Career Development Success Program, or Career Development Incentive Program (CDIP), provides financial incentives to school districts and charter schools to offer industry-recognized certificate programs, internships, pre-apprenticeship programs, and AP Computer Science courses—all of which are aligned with in-demand industries.

Since 2016, the state has invested \$22 million to support 32,000 students from 61 districts.

This year, the program received bi-partisan support to invest in its success and significantly increase funding to

**\$9.5 million/year  
x 10 years**

**\$ 95 million total**

The program funds districts for outcomes and provides additional incentives for districts to ensure equitable access to the program. Unlike prior funding, which was sporadic, this new authorization provides long-term stability and consistent funding, helping districts plan and expand.

 [coloradosucceeds.org](https://coloradosucceeds.org)

*"The CDIP funding increase is a huge win for districts like ours—we offer our students pathways directly into the workforce or living-wage jobs while they seek higher education. Without that funding, we couldn't create the authentic experiences necessary for certification. With increased funding, we look forward to expanding our programs and technology to meet our local economy demands."*



Bill Summers,  
Principal,  
Canon City  
High School

*"We are leading efforts to expand CDIP because the program has allowed us to create a unique public-private partnership helping address the construction industry's talent shortages. Through our partnership with the HBA, we contribute private money to allow 48 high schools to offer the Home Builder Institute's curriculum. Our high school partners use CDIP reimbursements to fund instructors, equipment, and lab space. The bottom-line result is that more than 500 graduates last year were part of our program, and 20% of them went on to work directly in industry in jobs that make a living wage and a great career."*



Michael Gifford,  
President and CEO,  
AGC Colorado

*"CDIP has been an incredible resource for the Holyoke School District—the program is a major asset in connecting our students to locally-needed job certifications. We're thankful that Colorado Succeeds was such a champion for this year's bill so that we'll have more funding that can be reinvested into our students' futures and so that more districts can offer this valuable program to its students."*



Summer Kreider,  
Holyoke School  
District,  
Jr/Sr Counselor