Signed into Law

Bill Number: HB 10-1030

Short Title: Professional Standards for Early Childhood

Sponsors: Rep. Peniston Status: Signed into Law

Sen. Steadman

The act, recommended by the Early Childhood and School Readiness Legislative Commission, creates the Early Childhood Educator Development Scholarship Program in the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). Subject to the receipt of sufficient money from federal sources and other gifts, grants, and donations, the department must create a scholarship program to assist persons employed in early childhood education to obtain an associate of arts degree. The department must collaborate with the Department of Human Services, the community college system, and the Office of Information Technology, to establish rules, application procedures, and award amounts for the scholarship program. The act sets forth some of the criteria the department must use for making awards. The department may add additional criteria, as necessary, to identify applicants with the greatest need. Recipients of awards from the program must be assigned a unique educator identifier.

Appropriations:

The act creates the Early Childhood Educator Development Scholarship Cash Fund to receive federal money and other donations. Program scholarships will be paid from this fund. Moneys in the fund are continuously appropriated to the department for the direct and indirect program costs. The Commissioner of Education must notify the Revisor of Statutes by July 1 each year if moneys are received and available for the grant program. The act is repealed, effective July 1 following the notification that money has not been received or is no longer available. Moneys in the Early Childhood Educator Development Cash Fund are continuously appropriated.

Bill Number: **HB 10-1208**

Short Title: Higher Education Statewide Transfer Agreements

Sponsors: Rep. Todd and Rep. Murray

Status: Signed into Law

Sen. Shaffer and Sen. King

The act requires the creation of statewide college degree transfer agreements between institutions of higher education. Under the agreements, students who complete an associate's degree at a two-year school and are then accepted into a baccalaureate program at a four-year school must be enrolled with junior status and are not required to complete any additional general education credit hours.

No later than July 1, 2012, the act requires the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) and the state institutions of higher education to establish at least four statewide transfer agreements. No later than July 1, 2016, there must be at least 14 statewide transfer agreements. The act takes effect August 11, 2010, assuming the General Assembly adjourns May 12, 2010, as scheduled and no referendum petition is filed.

Appropriations:

The act is assessed as having no fiscal impact. Four statewide transfer agreements between the state's two- and four-year institutions already exist in the areas of business, education, engineering, and nursing and meet the requirement for establishing at least four agreements by July 1, 2012. Other degree programs are currently under consideration for new agreements. Given that the act permits almost six full years to adopt additional transfer agreements, there are no required expenses in the next two immediate fiscal years; however, staff time will be required at existing faculty-to-faculty conferences, held annually by the Department of Higher Education, in order to negotiate the additional agreements. The expenses incurred to attend these annual events, or to attend other meetings as needed, can be met within annual appropriations.

Signed into Law (Cont.)

Bill Number: SB 10-058

Short Title: Eligibility Nursing Teacher Loan Forgiveness

Sponsors: Sen. Tapia

Status: Signed into Law

Rep. Gagliardi

The act changes eligibility requirements for participation in the Nursing Teacher Loan Forgiveness Pilot Program. Prior to the act, participants were required to be employed full-time as a nurse educator to qualify for the program. This act reduces the required employment from full- time to half-time. A nurse can take advantage of the program within four years after completing an advanced degree.

The pilot program provides payment of up to \$20,000 in loan forgiveness for persons who teach courses in nursing for five consecutive years after receipt of an advanced degree. Each year that the teacher is employed in a qualified position, up to \$4,000 is applied to the participant's student loans.

Appropriations:

The expected increase in program participation can be accommodated within the existing fund balance. Current appropriations to the fund are sufficient to provide for over 30 nurse participants, and less than half that number are now receiving loan forgiveness. Therefore, no additional appropriation is required by the act. The act does not change the amount of money available for loan forgiveness or impact the workload of the Department of Higher Education or CollegeInvest; however, it is estimated that 5 additional nurses will join the program in each of the next two fiscal years. If each new nurse qualifies for the full benefit of \$4,000 each year, the new expenditures from the fund will be \$20,000 in FY 2010-11 and \$40,000 in FY 2011-12.

Bill Number: SB 10-079

Short Title: Mesa State College Program Authority

Sponsors: Sen. Penry

Status: Signed into Law

Rep. Bradford and Rep. King

The act changes the role and mission of Mesa State College to permit the school to offer general programs at the graduate level. Prior to the act, only a limited number of specialized graduate programs were allowed. The school will continue to offer undergraduate programs in liberal arts and programs for other professional and technical degrees. The school's community college will continue to offer career and technical education.

Appropriations:

The creation of new graduate degree programs will require a level of effort by the schools within the university to establish curriculum and admissions requirements, and to obtain approval from the governing board and the CCHE. These efforts can be met with existing appropriations. Additional graduate programs may increase overall student enrollment, and therefore create additional tuition revenue. Since enrollment and tuition rates are unknown, the full impact on state revenue cannot be estimated.

Bill Number: SB 10-088

Short Title: Two-year College Degree Designation

Sponsors: Sen. Johnston

Status: Signed into Law

Rep. Massey

The act authorizes community colleges and junior colleges to offer two-year degree programs with academic designation. For community colleges, the degree programs with academic designation must have a valid student transfer agreement. Prior to offering the degree program, a community college must submit the degree program designation for review and approval by the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education, and a junior college must submit the degree program designation for review and approval by its board of trustees and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education.

Appropriations:

The change in law is not anticipated to increase enrollment, and therefore no new revenue or expenditures are anticipated. The act is assessed as having no fiscal impact.

Awaiting Action by the Governor

Bill Number: SB 10-003

Short Title: Higher Education Flexibility

Sponsors: Sen. Morse

Status: Awaiting Action by the Governor

Rep. Ferrandino

The rerevised bill makes several changes to state law with regard to flexibility for state higher education institutions with regard to tuition-setting and operations. On or before December 15, 2010, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) must submit to the Governor and the General Assembly a new master plan for the state system of higher education. The CCHE will work with the governing boards and chief executive officers of the state institutions education in preparing the master plan, taking into consideration the recommendations of the Governor's Higher Education Strategic Planning Steering Committee. The master plan must address several issues and goals pertaining to the alignment with elementary and secondary education, accessibility and affordablity, funding, and program quality. Prior to submitting the master plan to the Governor and the General Assembly, CCHE must distribute a draft of the plan to the governing boards for comment.

The rerevised bill provides governing boards of the higher education institutions the authority to set tuition beginning in FY 2011-2012. The schools may not increase tuition by more than 9 percent unless the school obtains approval from the CCHE. Colorado School of Mines may increase its tuition by the greater of 9 percent or twice the inflation rate. To obtain approval, the school must provide a five-year financial and accountability plan. The plan must specify the amount of the tuition increase requested, the governing board's plans for ensuring accessibility and affordability, and the measure the governing board will implement to ensure academic program quality. CCHE may approve the tuition increase for the full five years or may approve the increase for two years, with approval for the remaining years conditional upon performance.

Under the rerevised bill, state institutions and certain private institutions will have greater flexibility in distributing state financial aid moneys, rather than being required to comply with the guidelines established the CCHE. In its biennial review of schools, the Office of the State Auditor must include a review of access to and affordability of higher education.

Appropriations:

The bill may affect state revenue and expenditures, but no additional appropriation is required by the bill. Shifting authority for tuition rates from the General Assembly to individual schools will have an unknown effect on state cash funds revenue from tuition. Granting authority to the schools for the administration of financial aid will have no net change on state expenditures or revenue.

Bill Number: SB 10-064

Sponsors: Sen. Bacon

Under current law, resident undergraduate students are eligible to have tuition stipends paid to schools on their behalf from the College Opportunity Fund (COF). Eligible students must apply for the program, be approved, and enroll in a state or participating private institution of higher education. Once enrolled, the student must authorize the stipend before the stipend can be applied to their tuition. The bill permits an institution of higher education to make the application, on behalf of an enrolled student, to the COF program, if the student gives his or her permission.

Short Title: Institutions Apply for COF for Students

Status: Awaiting Action by the Governor

Appropriations:

The bill will increase the number of students who apply for the COF stipend, thereby increasing the appropriation from the General Fund. Assuming no increase from the current COF stipend amount, if all students choose to accept the state money, General Fund appropriations will increase by at least \$442,952. In FY 2010-11, the Department of Higher Education requires a General Fund appropriation of \$17,500.

Awaiting Action by the Governor (Cont.)

Bill Number: SB 10-101 Short Title: Colorado Mountain College Bachelor Degrees

Sponsors: Sen. Gibbs Status: Awaiting Action by Governor

Rep. Scanlan and Rep. Massey

The rerevised bill changes the role and mission of Colorado Mountain College (CMC) to permit the school to offer baccalaureate degrees. The school will identify degrees intended to address the needs of communities in its service area. Under current law, the college may offer no more than two years of postsecondary instruction. If the bill is adopted, the college is permitted to offer up to five baccalaureate degree programs and seek approval from the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) for the new degrees. The bill also includes criteria for the CCHE to consider when approving baccalaureate programs for CMC.

The creation of new undergraduate degree programs will require a level of effort by the schools within the college to establish curriculum and admissions requirements, and to obtain approval from the governing board and the CCHE. These efforts can be met with existing appropriations. It is assumed that any change in spending

cludes criteria for the CCHE to consider when approving baccalaureate programs for CMC. authority will be addressed through the annual budget process.

Bill Number: SB 10-108 Short Title: Higher Education Core Courses

Sponsors: Sen. King Status: Awaiting Action by Governor Rep. Middleton

The bill allows nonpublic institutions to request that Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) review courses the nonpublic school believes meet general education requirements for inclusion in gtPATHWAYS. Under current law, CCHE and the state-supported institutions of higher education are required to define a process for students to test out of core courses. This program, known as gtPATHWAYS, currently includes more than 1,000 lower-division general education courses in 20 subject areas approved for guaranteed transfer between public institutions. If approved, these institutions may have courses included in the statewide agreements for transferability of credits. CCHE may charge an initial review and an annual review fee to cover costs.

No later than March 1, 2016, CCHE must submit a report to the House and Senate Education committees that includes the names of the nonpublic institutions participating in the general education core course requirements and the number of students who have transferred core course credits to or form a nonpublic institutions. In addition, the report must include any issues that have arisen in the course of implementing the general education core course requirements and any recommendations for changes.

The bill also authorizes the CCHE to consider complaints that pertain to the general education core course requirements of a private college or university, bible college, or seminary or that pertain to specific core courses if such an institution has chosen to seek transferability of its core courses.

Appropriations:

Appropriations:

For FY 2010-11, this bill requires a cash fund appropriation of \$36,820 and 0.4 FTE to the Department of Higher Education. Costs include the administrative support necessary to review applications for course reviews, assist department and faculty staff to conduct reviews, and make recommendations to the CCHE upon completion of reviews.

Postponed Indefinitely

Bill Number: **HB 10-1040**

Short Title: CollegeInvest Lifelong Learning Savings

Sponsors: Rep. Kerr A.

Status: Postponed Indefinitely

The introduced bill would have directed CollegeInvest to promote and encourage the use of 529 savings plans by adults already in the workforce (lifelong learners) to further their postsecondary education goals. The bill also required that CollegeInvest develop procedures to allow an employer to make a matching contribution to a lifelong learner's account for any contribution made by the lifelong learner.

Appropriations:

The bill would have required no additional expenditures incurred to implement the provisions because CollegeInvest is already marketing 529 plans to lifelong learners. CollegeInvest does not receive appropriations from the General Assembly, and costs for implementing this bill would have been absorbed by 529 plan participants.

Bill Number: **HB 10-1067**

Short Title: Fort Lewis Cost of Instruction

Sponsors: Rep. Middleton

Status: Postponed Indefinitely

Sen. Bacon

The introduced bill would have maintained the requirement to fund 100 percent of the cost of tuition for Native American students at Fort Lewis College for resident students; however, nonresident students would have been funded at 100 percent of the cost of instruction, as determined by the Department of Higher Education (DHE). Native American students, both resident and nonresident, would have continued to attend the school without any tuition charge.

Appropriations:

For FY 2010-11, the bill would have reduced General Fund appropriations by \$1,807,272 to the Colorado Commission on Higher Education for financial aid.

Bill Number: **HB 10-1262**

Short Title: Green Jobs and Medical Scholarships

Sponsors: Rep. Frangas

Status: Postponed Indefinitely

The introduced bill would have created two new scholarship programs to be administered by CollegeInvest, the student loan division of the Department of Higher Education (DHE) — the Colorado Green Jobs Scholarship Program and the Colorado Medical Services Job Training Program. The Green Jobs Scholarship Program would have provided scholarships for postsecondary education to persons seeking jobs in environmentally friendly growth industries. The Governor's Energy Office would have assisted by creating a list of industries the division could reference when awarding green job scholarships. The Medical Services Job Training Program would have provided scholarships to persons seeking jobs in medical services fields. The scholarship programs were to be repealed on July 1, 2014.

Appropriations:

The division would have been required to award at least \$0.5 million in scholarships for the green jobs program and at least \$1.0 million for the medical services job training program over the next four years. In each fiscal year, the division would have been required to report details of the grant programs to the education committees of the General Assembly.

The bill would have created two new funds in the state treasury and transferred enough money from the DHE's student loan division's trust fund to provide the minimum scholarships. The transfer would have been made one time in FY 2010-11. The division would have been able to seek and accept gifts, grants, and donations for the funds. In FY 2010-11, the bill would have required an appropriation of \$125,000 from the Green Jobs Scholarship Program Fund to the Department of Higher Education and an appropriation of \$250,000 from the Medical Services Scholarship Program Fund to the Department of Higher Education. All money in the funds would have been subject to annual appropriations by the General Assembly.

Postponed Indefinitely (Cont.)

Bill Number: SB 10-039 Short Title: Job Training Scholarship Programs

Sponsors: Sen. Carroll Status: Postponed Indefinitely

Rep. Gagliardi

The introduced bill would have created the Colorado Job Retraining Scholarship Program in the Department of Higher Education (DHE). The student loan division, known as CollegeInvest, would have implemented and administered the program. Scholarships are intended to provide job training opportunities and increased access to higher education for persons receiving unemployment insurance benefits as of July 1, 2008. The division would have been required to award \$1.0 million annually through FY 2012-13. Any portion of the \$1.0 million that remained uncommitted at the end of each fiscal year would have been transferred to the Teach Colorado Grant Initiative Fund. Money transferred to the fund would have been continuously appropriated. The program would have been repealed, effective July 1, 2013.

Appropriations:

The bill would have resulted in total cash funds expenditures of \$1.0 million from the CollegeInvest Scholarship Trust Fund in each year from FY 2010-11 through FY 2012-13. Any uncommitted funds at the end of the fiscal year would have been transferred to the Teach Colorado Grant Initiative Fund.