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COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION (DHE)

November 1, 2017

SMART Act Report, 2017

This document summarizes and reports on key performance metrics aligned with the recently released statewide Master Plan, *Colorado Rises: Advancing Education and Talent Development* and the reporting requirements of SB17-297. These metrics are consistent with the accountability goals of the SMART Act (HB13-1299, CRS 2-7-201 through CRS 2-7-205. See the metrics dashboard at http://masterplan.highered.colorado.gov/november-1-release/, which will include all master plan metrics in the future.

This year's report on higher education outcomes is submitted in keeping with the changes authorized in SB17-297 which requires the Department of Higher Education to report on the goals outlined in the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) Master Plan. In doing this, SB 17-297 aligned the Master Plan performance metrics which demonstrates the progress and performance of Colorado's state institutions of higher education with the accountability required in the SMART Act.

These performance metrics and the statewide Master Plan align with the current mission statement of the CDHE: *The mission of the Department of Higher Education is to improve the quality of, ensure the affordability of, and promote access to, postsecondary education for the people of Colorado. In pursuing its mission, the Department of Higher Education will act as an advocate for the students and institutions of postsecondary education and will coordinate and, as needed, regulate the activities of the state's postsecondary education institutions.*

Statewide Priorities for Higher Education – *An Urgent Call to Action*

The CCHE's 2017 Master Plan, *Colorado Rises: Advancing Education and Talent Development*, reaffirms a statewide credential attainment goal of 66 percent by 2025 for our 25-34 aged adult population. Underlying the master plan are three main principles:

- Higher education is a public good that strongly benefits Colorado's communities and the state;
- The higher education system should be accessible to all, not just those with adequate personal financial means; and
- Institutions of higher education have a responsibility to demonstrate their stewardship of public resources.

Colorado must have a supply of talent to fill the jobs that will keep our state attractive to both businesses and our residents. In addition, changing demographics require that we increase the postsecondary attainment levels of our equity populations in order to expand opportunity, strengthen communities and ensure the level of talent development needed to retain Colorado's position as one of the top state economies in the United States.

The 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 Invest in Affordability and Innovation**

This report is organized by these four strategic goals and includes selected performance metrics associated with each goal.

Colorado Commission on Higher Education Master Plan – *Colorado Rises!*

Overarching Goal - Statewide Attainment to 66%: The commission believes that while formidable, achieving the 66 percent statewide attainment goal is critical to the state's success. Colorado's attainment has grown from 53.5 percent to 55 percent since 2012 when the statewide attainment goal was first established. Assuming continuation of current trends in Colorado's population, migration and credential production rates by all institutions—public and private—the commission projects Colorado would only achieve a statewide attainment rate of 57.5 percent by 2025. In addition, given the state's growing minority population and our ranking as the state with the second highest equity gap in the country, the Commission has also set an ambitious equity attainment goal of 66% for Hispanic, African American, and Native American populations. Current statewide attainment levels are 29% (Hispanics), 39% (African American) and 29% (Native American). Through the following four strategies and associated metrics, Colorado will close the gap on the additional needed credentials statewide and for our equity populations.

Strategic Goal #1 Increase Credential Completion: Significantly increase the number of credentials that students earn over an eight-year period and increase credential completion in high-demand areas such as STEM and teacher preparation.

Undergraduate Overall Credentials: Includes Bachelors, Associates and Certificates

Academic Year	2012	2013	'12-'13 % Change	2014	'13-'14 % Change	2015	'14-'15 % Change	2016	'15-'16 % Change	Progress
Credential Count	41,957	46,024	9.7%	48,651	5.7%	49,886	2.5%	51,589	3.4%	⇧

- In the master plan, revised projections for needed credentials are more aggressive. Estimates project a needed 5,000-9,200 increase in credential production for Academic Year 2016-2017 to stay on target for our credential goal. The 2015-16 increased credential production is positive.

- In the master plan, a focus is placed on increasing certificate production to align with workforce demands. The goal by 2025 is to increase certificate production to 33 percent of all credentials. The current certificate proportion of credentials is 25 percent.

Undergraduate STEM Credentials (Counts do not include Healthcare related credentials)

Degree Level	2014	2015	14-'15 % Change	2016	15-16 % Change	Progress
Certificate	141	139	-1.4%	177	27.3%	⇧
Associates	485	538	10.9%	578	7.4%	
Bachelors	6,201	6,473	4.4%	6,600	2.0%	
All Degree Levels	***6,827***	***7,150***	4.7%	***7,355***	2.9%	

- The master plan outlines a goal for STEM credentials, including healthcare, to increase to 14,500 by 2025. This is an average increase of 250 additional credentials per year. Last year's increase of 205 STEM credentials puts us slightly behind targets to reach this goal. However that number does not include healthcare credentials, which will be included in future reports.

Strategic Goal #2 Erase Equity Gaps: Success in meeting the statewide goal of 66% hinges on improving all students' completion in colleges, universities and other pathways in the state. Given Colorado's changing demographics, erasing current equity gaps in educational attainment is vital to meeting the state's ambitions goal.

Equity Populations: Undergraduate Overall Credentials: Includes Bachelors, Associates and Certificates

Academic Year	2012	2013	12-13 % Change	2014	13-14% Change	2015	14-15% Change	2016	15-16% Change	Progress
Hispanic Credentials	5,438	5,761	5.9%	7,096	23.2%	7,760	9.4%	8,316	7.2%	⇧
Black or African American Credentials	1,453	1,449	-0.3%	1,741	20.2%	1,847	6.1%	1,812	-1.9%	⇩
Native American Credentials	437	485	11.0%	511	5.4%	532	4.1%	502	-5.6%	⇩

- The 2017 Master Plan outlines a goal of increasing attainment for each equity population to 66% statewide. While the Department is still finalizing the crosswalk between attainment and completion for equity populations, an aggressive increase in annual credentials will be needed to meet our goal. Hispanic attainment is currently at a low of 29 percent, growth of an additional 37 percent is needed. While completions have been steadily and substantially increasing for Hispanic students, continued high growth is necessary to erase the equity gap. Credential completion of African American and Native American students decreased this past year, primarily due to low credential completions by male students in these populations. Without significant interventions, the Department will fall short of erasing equity gaps.

Strategic Goal #3 Improve Student Success: This goal is focused on promoting and improving successful student momentum, which is critical for successful postsecondary competition.

Retention (First Year to Second Year)

Academic Year	Fall '11 to '12	Fall '12 to '13	% Change	Fall '13 to '14	% Change	Fall '14 to '15	% Change	Fall '15 to '16	% Change	Progress
Retention Percent	68.7%	70.4%	2.5%	70.1%	-0.4%	72.0%	2.7%	72.5%	0.7%	⇧

- The master plan outlines a goal of increasing first-to-second year retention rates. Statewide retention rates have increased the past two year.

Developmental education student counts over the past four years:

	2013	2014	% Change	2015	% Change	2016	% Change	Progress
2 –year institutions	5,467	4,616	-15.57%	4,417	-4.31%	4,824	9.21%	⇩
4 –year institutions	2,832	2,888	1.98%	3,055	5.78%	3,013	-1.37%	⇧
Statewide	8,299	7,504	-9.58%	7,472	-0.43%	7,838	4.90%	⇩

- The master plan outlines a goal of reducing remediation rates. Four-year institutions have seen a decline in the number of students needing developmental education in the last year but the number of students needing remediation increased at two-year institutions and therefore also statewide. More work is needed to reduce the number of students who enter postsecondary institutions needing remediation.

Concurrent Enrollment

Program Type	Academic Year 2013-2014	Academic Year 2014-2015	Academic Year 2015-2016	Change from 2014-15 to 2015-16	Progress
Concurrent Enrollment Total	20,488	23,127	25,534	+10.4%	
2 –year institutions	*18,696*	*20,878*	*22,582*	*+8.2%*	
4 –year institutions	*2,345*	*2,645*	*3,599*	*+36.1%*	
Area Technical Colleges	-	883	946	+7.1%	
ASCENT Program	415	462	485	+4.9%	
Other Dual Enrollment Programs	10,189	11,241	11,554	+2.8%	
Total	**31,092**	**35,713**	**38,519**	**+7.9%**	

- One strategy that has been shown to improve student retention and completion and to decrease average time and credits to degree is concurrent enrollment. Colorado has seen steady growth over the past few years in the number of high school students enrolled in college courses.

Strategic Goal #4 Invest in Affordability and Innovation: Increase public investment and encourage models that reduce costs and time-to-degree.

	FY 2011-12	FY 2017-18	6 Yr. $ Change	% Change	Progress
Tuition 4 Year	5,902	8,519	2,617	44.3%	
Median Family Income	61,788	72,999	11,211	18.1%	

- As a measure of affordability, tuition growth has outpaced median family income growth between 2011-12 and 2017-18. Improving affordability in Colorado is critical to achieving the state's attainment goal.

Percentage of Graduates from Public Institutions with Debt						Progress
Degree Type	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	
Bachelor's Degree	58.9%	69.2%	70.2%	68.9%	67.4%	
Associate's Degree	52.8%	66.3%	65.5%	63.4%	60.4%	

- While the percentage of graduates with debt is higher than it was in 2012, there has been a decrease in debt for Associate's Degree recipients since 2014 and a decrease for Bachelor's Degree recipients since 2015.

Innovation

- **University of Colorado fee removal announcement:** (University of Colorado to Eliminate Course Fees in Fall 2018).The University of Colorado is eliminating all course and program fees starting in the fall of 2018. Eliminated fees will collectively save students $8.4 million per year.
- **Open Educational Resources:** To address the high cost of college textbooks, Senate Bill 17-258, Using Open Educational Resources (OER) In Higher Education, established the OER Council to evaluate the use of academic materials by Colorado's public institutions of higher education. Based on experience in other states, it is reasonable to expect up to a four-time return on investment in as little as a year.

Conclusion

With the rapidly changing landscape of higher education, the 2017 Master Plan, *Colorado Rises*, refines Colorado's statewide goals and the strategies needed to achieve success. While progress has been made in some areas, attention must be given to all areas including those where progress has stalled or decreased.

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