

First Regular Session  
Seventieth General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO

**REENGROSSED**

*This Version Includes All Amendments  
Adopted in the House of Introduction*

LLS NO. 15-0470.01 Julie Pelegrin x2700

**HOUSE BILL 15-1326**

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**HOUSE SPONSORSHIP**

**Moreno and Esgar,**

**SENATE SPONSORSHIP**

**Garcia,**

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**House Committees**  
Education

**Senate Committees**

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**A BILL FOR AN ACT**

101 **CONCERNING PROHIBITING CONSIDERATION OF THE ACCREDITATION**  
102 **STATUS OF AN ENTITY THAT AWARDS A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA**  
103 **INDETERMINING A STUDENT'S POSTSECONDARY OPPORTUNITIES.**

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**Bill Summary**

*(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://www.leg.state.co.us/billsummaries>.)*

The bill prohibits the Colorado commission on higher education and institutions of higher education from considering the accreditation status of the school district or the state charter school institute from which a student graduates in making admissions decisions and in awarding financial assistance, grants, and scholarships, including the college

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.  
*Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.*  
*Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.*

HOUSE  
3rd Reading Unamended  
April 20, 2015

HOUSE  
Amended 2nd Reading  
April 17, 2015

opportunity fund stipend.

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1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-1-113, **amend** (1)

3 (b) as follows:

4 **23-1-113. Commission directive - admission standards for**  
5 **baccalaureate and graduate institutions of higher education - policy**

6 **- definitions.** (1) (b) The standards established for first-time admitted  
7 freshman students shall use a combination of high school academic  
8 performance indicators and national assessment test scores for eligibility  
9 criteria. The academic performance indicators may include, but are not  
10 limited to, grade point average, class rank, and content standard  
11 performance level assessments. The criteria established and the specified  
12 performance levels shall be consistent with the role and mission  
13 established for each state-supported institution of higher education. In  
14 considering the high school academic performance indicators, the  
15 commission and the governing boards may take into account the rigor of  
16 a student's high school academic preparation and the academic content of  
17 the courses taken. THE ACADEMIC STANDARDS SHALL NOT INCLUDE  
18 CONSIDERATION OF THE ACCREDITATION STATUS OF THE COLORADO  
19 SCHOOL DISTRICT OR THE COLORADO INSTITUTE CHARTER SCHOOL FROM  
20 WHICH A FIRST-TIME ADMITTED FRESHMAN STUDENT GRADUATES. In lieu  
21 of the established statewide criteria, each governing board may use  
22 additional criteria for up to twenty percent of the freshmen students  
23 annually admitted to each institution under the governing board's control.  
24 Students who meet the minimum criteria for admission are not guaranteed  
25 admission to the institution to which they have applied, but they are

1 eligible for consideration.

2           **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-3.3-102, **amend**  
3 (3) as follows:

4           **23-3.3-102. Assistance program authorized - procedure -**  
5 **audits.** (3) (a) Each state institution shall administer a financial  
6 assistance program according to policies and procedures established by  
7 the governing board of the institution. Each private institution of higher  
8 education, as defined in section 23-18-102 (9), that participates in the  
9 program of financial assistance established pursuant to this section shall  
10 administer a financial assistance program according to policies and  
11 procedures established by the governing board of the institution. Each  
12 participating nonpublic institution that is not a private institution of  
13 higher education shall administer a financial assistance program  
14 according to policies and procedures established by the commission. Each  
15 institution shall fund its assistance program using state moneys allocated  
16 to the institution and institutional moneys.

17           (b) THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR ADMINISTERING A  
18 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM SHALL NOT INCLUDE CONSIDERATION OF  
19 THE ACCREDITATION STATUS OF THE COLORADO SCHOOL DISTRICT OR  
20 COLORADO INSTITUTE CHARTER SCHOOL FROM WHICH A STUDENT  
21 GRADUATES IN DETERMINING THE STUDENT'S ELIGIBILITY FOR FINANCIAL  
22 ASSISTANCE OR THE AMOUNT OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE THE STUDENT  
23 MAY RECEIVE.

24           **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-3.3-701, **amend**  
25 (1) as follows:

26           **23-3.3-701. Colorado nursing scholarship program.** (1) (a) The  
27 general assembly hereby authorizes the commission to establish a nursing

1 scholarship program. Such program shall be administered in accordance  
2 with policies and procedures established by the commission. The general  
3 assembly may appropriate annually an amount for the support of such  
4 program.

5 (b) THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR ADMINISTERING THE  
6 NURSING SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM SHALL NOT INCLUDE CONSIDERATION OF  
7 THE ACCREDITATION STATUS OF THE COLORADO SCHOOL DISTRICT OR  
8 COLORADO INSTITUTE CHARTER SCHOOL FROM WHICH A STUDENT  
9 GRADUATES IN DETERMINING THE STUDENT'S ELIGIBILITY FOR OR THE  
10 AMOUNT OF A NURSING SCHOLARSHIP.

11 **SECTION 4.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-3.3-901, **amend**  
12 (3) (d) as follows:

13 **23-3.3-901. Teach Colorado grant initiative created - award**  
14 **of grants - legislative declaration.** (3) (d) The commission shall adopt  
15 such additional guidelines as may be necessary for administration of the  
16 teach Colorado grant initiative, including but not limited to the  
17 application process, criteria for awarding grants in addition to those  
18 specified in subsection (4) of this section, and the amount of grants to be  
19 awarded. THE GUIDELINES MUST ENSURE THAT AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER  
20 EDUCATION THAT PARTICIPATES IN THE TEACH COLORADO GRANT  
21 INITIATIVE DOES NOT CONSIDER THE ACCREDITATION STATUS OF THE  
22 COLORADO SCHOOL DISTRICT OR COLORADO INSTITUTE CHARTER SCHOOL  
23 FROM WHICH A STUDENT GRADUATES IN DETERMINING THE STUDENT'S  
24 ELIGIBILITY FOR OR THE AMOUNT OF A SCHOLARSHIP.

25 **SECTION 5.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-3.3-1004, **add** (4)  
26 (a) (II.5) as follows:

27 **23-3.3-1004. Colorado opportunity scholarship initiative**

1 **advisory board - created - duties - rules.** (4) The board shall hold its  
2 first meeting on or before November 1, 2014, at a time and place to be  
3 designated by the executive director or by his or her designee. The board  
4 shall meet at least four times each year and shall carry out the following  
5 duties:

6 (a) Promulgate rules for administration of the initiative, including  
7 but not limited to the following:

8 (II.5) RULES THAT ENSURE THAT THE ACCREDITATION STATUS OF  
9 THE COLORADO SCHOOL DISTRICT OR COLORADO INSTITUTE CHARTER  
10 SCHOOL FROM WHICH A STUDENT GRADUATES IS NOT CONSIDERED IN  
11 DETERMINING THE STUDENT'S ELIGIBILITY FOR OR THE AMOUNT OF A  
12 GRANT FROM THE INITIATIVE;

13 **SECTION 6.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-3.5-103, **amend**  
14 (2) as follows:

15 **23-3.5-103. Grant program authorized - administration.**

16 (2) The commission shall determine, by guideline, the institutions of  
17 higher education eligible for participation in the grant program, and each  
18 eligible institution of higher education shall recommend in-state students  
19 to the commission for receipt of a grant. THE COMMISSION AND AN  
20 ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL NOT CONSIDER THE  
21 ACCREDITATION STATUS OF THE COLORADO SCHOOL DISTRICT OR  
22 COLORADO INSTITUTE CHARTER SCHOOL FROM WHICH A STUDENT  
23 GRADUATES IN RECOMMENDING OR AWARING GRANTS TO IN-STATE  
24 STUDENTS.

25 **SECTION 7.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-3.7-103, **amend**  
26 (2) as follows:

27 **23-3.7-103. Tuition assistance grant program - authorization**

1 - **administration.** (2) An in-state student may apply to an eligible  
2 nonpublic institution of higher education for a grant at any time after his  
3 or her acceptance by such nonpublic institution of higher education. The  
4 commission shall award grants, out of moneys in the fund created in  
5 section 23-3.7-107, for such students to such institutions in accordance  
6 with criteria established by the commission. In establishing this criteria  
7 the commission shall include, but not be limited to, the consideration of  
8 need and merit. The criteria shall also include:

9 (a) A prohibition against the awarding of any financial assistance  
10 pursuant to this article to a student who is pursuing a professional degree  
11 in theology; except that the prohibition described in this section shall not  
12 apply to financial assistance that is awarded to a student from a federal  
13 program, including but not limited to Title IV of the federal "Higher  
14 Education Act of 1965", 20 U.S.C. sec. 1070, as amended; and

15 (b) A requirement that a nonpublic institution of higher education  
16 that seeks to award financial assistance to a student pursuant to this article  
17 certify that the student is not pursuing a professional degree in theology;  
18 AND

19 (c) A PROHIBITION AGAINST CONSIDERING THE ACCREDITATION  
20 STATUS OF THE COLORADO SCHOOL DISTRICT OR COLORADO INSTITUTE  
21 CHARTER SCHOOL FROM WHICH A STUDENT GRADUATES IN AWARDED  
22 GRANTS.

23 **SECTION 8.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-18-201, **amend**  
24 (1) as follows:

25 **23-18-201. College opportunity fund program - creation -**  
26 **eligibility - guidelines.** (1) (a) There is hereby created in the department  
27 of higher education the college opportunity fund program, which shall be

1 administered by the Colorado student loan program. The college  
2 opportunity fund, created in section 23-18-202, shall be a trust fund for  
3 the benefit of eligible undergraduate students. It shall consist of a stipend  
4 for each undergraduate student in Colorado who applies for the stipend  
5 and who is admitted and registers to attend a state or participating private  
6 institution of higher education and is determined to be eligible by the  
7 Colorado student loan program to receive a stipend. An eligible  
8 undergraduate student may use the stipend for undergraduate courses and  
9 graduate-level courses that apply toward the student's undergraduate  
10 degree that are taken at a state or participating private institution of higher  
11 education at a fixed rate per credit hour, set annually by the general  
12 assembly.

13 (b) IN DETERMINING AN UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT'S ELIGIBILITY  
14 TO RECEIVE A STIPEND, THE COLORADO STUDENT LOAN PROGRAM SHALL  
15 NOT CONSIDER THE ACCREDITATION STATUS OF THE COLORADO SCHOOL  
16 DISTRICT OR COLORADO INSTITUTE CHARTER SCHOOL FROM WHICH A  
17 STUDENT GRADUATES.

18 **SECTION 9. Safety clause.** The general assembly hereby finds,  
19 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate  
20 preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.