

HB 15-1170 PWR COORDINATOR UPDATE

Strengthening and sustaining Colorado's talent pipeline requires a strong supply of talented workers who are equipped with the skills demanded by the labor market. Considering that youth make up a key component of the state's supply of talent, the Colorado Workforce Development Council (housed within the Colorado Department of Labor) and the Colorado Department of Education have partnered to support the work of an Education Liaison.

Established under **HB 15-1170**, this position serves as the statewide postsecondary and workforce coordinator. The Education Liaison is responsible for supporting local school districts working to align their education programs with the needs of the labor market and improve postsecondary outcomes of students.

Utilizing the sector partnership model, the Education Liaison is working with business leaders within a given industry and region of the state to come together to identify and prioritize their shared needs. Key among these priorities was the need to collaborate with local school districts to ensure students have greater exposure to the wide variety of job opportunities available in healthcare and develop apprenticeships and curricula to equip students with the foundational skills needed to advance to careers in healthcare upon graduation. The use of the sector partnership model and career pathway systems development as strategies ensures that the corresponding programming and curricula are responsive to the needs of the labor market and help to leverage resources and promising practices from across education providers, businesses and the workforce development system within the region. This is one example of how the Education Liaison is partnering with regional businesses and local education providers to strengthen Colorado's talent pipeline.

Goals of the position include:

- Develop and maintain **electronic tools** and a network of statewide support to provide guidance for local school districts to develop workforce readiness programs and initiatives. The electronic tools will include frameworks for action, resources for establishing and sustaining meaningful relationships with businesses, link to existing resources supporting postsecondary and workforce outcomes and highlight promising practices.
- Work with business and industry to **identify workforce needs** and promote programs and resources targeted at middle and high school students working to address those needs upon graduation from high school.
- Support the **launch of sector partnerships** as a vehicle to coordinate and align education, workforce and economic development partners in response to the needs of businesses.
- Coordinate the efforts of secondary and postsecondary partners working to refine industry-led **career pathway systems** and programs that align programs and

incorporate stackable credentials that lead to in demand jobs for students and job seekers.

- Convene teams of businesses and local education providers working to **develop and implement workforce readiness initiatives** including, but not limited to apprenticeships, industry-based curricula and programs, and internships and externships.
- Support the launch of Colorado's **youth apprenticeship** system and assist local education providers looking to enroll students in business-led opportunities to earn money while developing workforce skills.