



Pathways in Technology Early College High Schools (P-TECH) in Colorado

www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/p-tech

SUMMARY

The Bill

In 2015, Governor Hickenlooper signed the Pathways in Technology Early College High Schools (P-TECH) bill into law (HB 15-1270). P-TECH is intended to create a public-private partnership to prepare thousands of Colorado students for high-skill jobs of the future.

The What

- P-TECH is an innovative partnership between a school district, a community college(s), and one or more local high growth industry employer(s).
- Students begin in 9th grade and go through 14th grade (i.e. high school and two equivalent years of college) for a total of 6 years.
- As such, students graduate with both a high school diploma and an industry-recognized associate degree, in addition to gaining relevant workplace skills.
- The associate degree is in a Science, Technology, Engineering or Math (STEM) focused high-growth industry.
- Students receive intensive student support services, in addition to mentoring, job shadowing, internships, pre-apprenticeships, and other workplace educational experiences.
- Students may also earn pre-apprenticeship certificates and other industry-recognized certificates in addition to an associate degree.
- P-TECH is open to all students, with a special focus on encouraging enrollment of students who are socio-economically and racially diverse, the first to attend college in their family, English language learners, and students with disabilities.

The Why

By 2018, there will be 14 million new jobs requiring “middle skills”, suited for those with associate degrees. The highest paid of those jobs will be in STEM fields. Yet many young adults not only lack the skills to succeed in these jobs, they fail to finish college altogether. Further, in Colorado there is a striking disparity in degree attainment between white and under-represented minority students. To illustrate, the following are percentages within groups of Colorado residents aged 25-64 who have earned an associate degree or higher: 55% of White adults; 34% of Black adults; 27% of Native American adults; and 20% of Hispanic adults. That is a 35% degree attainment gap between White and Hispanic adults. Clearly, more needs to be done to better prepare all Coloradoans for the workforce, but particularly for our under-represented minority students.

The When

Approved P-TECH schools can begin operating the 2016-17 academic year. Applications for P-TECH schools will be accepted starting September 2015 with priority consideration given to applications received by October 15, 2015. It is strongly recommended that all applications are received by December 1st for schools planning to open for the 2016-17 academic year.

Contact Information

Office of Postsecondary Readiness at the Colorado Department of Education, to discuss eligibility and application details: Ruthven_M@cde.state.co.us; 303.866.6206.