



Transfer Apprenticeship Credit To College Credit

“The CCCS has a long-standing history of collaborating with business and industry to inform curriculum and enhance the student experience for meaningful career opportunities. CCCS has worked with industry leaders, state agencies, K-12 school districts, and institutions of higher education to identify opportunities in the state of Colorado that will allow individuals completing Registered Apprenticeships (RA) in construction occupations pathways to academic coursework and credential attainment. We have appreciated the opportunity to address concerns around the ability of students to move from Registered Apprenticeships into the formal academic setting. If there are any questions about the report, please do not hesitate to reach out.”

— Joe Garcia, Chancellor, Colorado Community College System

Executive Summary

HB19-1294 concerns “a requirement that the chief administrative officer of the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) create a working group to determine the best manner in which to facilitate the transfer of earned construction industry Registered Apprenticeship program credit to college credit” resulting in this report to the legislature.

Key questions specified in the legislation and addressed through the approximately six-month project include:

- A. How does Registered Apprenticeship (RA) coursework align with academic credit and progress toward a degree?
- B. How are work-based learning opportunities in construction explained to students and job seekers?
- C. Where are academic programs currently offered/not-offered? Why? Why not?
- D. What are the barriers, gaps, and opportunities for alignment raised by stakeholders? What recommendations follow?

In order to address the above and make actionable recommendations, it was essential to build an understanding of the construction landscape from the industry, associations (union and non-union), and education perspectives. This report summarizes the current state of the industry, education and training programs, work-based learning initiatives, and culminates with aggregated stakeholder feedback and recommendations.

From the incredible amount of valuable feedback emerged a series of findings and recommendations that leverage existing work and provide opportunities to amplify collaborative efforts to ensure Colorado has a strong talent pipeline for construction-related industry.

Findings & Recommendations

Project findings include the following categories of opportunities and recommendations:

1. Marketing, Communications, Image, and Visibility
2. Stakeholder Engagement
3. Market Intelligence and Data Coordination
4. Rules and Policies
5. Work-Based Learning- Intelligence
6. Work-Based Learning- Growth
7. Industry-Led
8. Curricular Alignment
9. Funding Investments

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Industry & Labor Market Overview

Construction is a key industry in Colorado, comprising 6.7% of all jobs in the state, with over 20,000 entities and 182,531 total employees. Immediate demand for workers at all levels is strong (1,611 job openings in October), with continued projected growth. Particularly, the industry is projected to grow by over 50,000 employees in the next ten years at an annual growth rate of 2.57% (Source: Colorado Dept. of Labor, Labor Market Information), a statistic that does not account for anticipated retirements.

Industry employment distribution is largely concentrated in the Denver-Aurora Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) (102,179 employees, or 56%), and along the Interstate 25 corridor (I-25). There are a significant number of Top Jobs as identified in **The Colorado Talent Pipeline Report** (jobs paying a living wage for both an individual and family) in construction, with an average hourly wage of \$29.68 and a weekly wage of \$1,187. Construction laborers, electricians, carpenters, supervisors, and plumbers/pipefitters/seamfitters are the top five occupations in terms of estimated employment (Source: Colorado Dept. of Labor, Labor Market Information).



Construction Industry Overview

6.7% of all CO jobs

20,000 entities

182,531 employees

102,179 employees (56%) in Denver-Aurora MSA

\$29.68 hourly / **\$1,187** weekly average wage

(Source: Colorado Dept. of Labor, Labor Market Information)



Workforce Demand

1,611 job openings in October

2.57% annual growth rate

+50,000 employee growth in 10 years

(Source: Colorado Dept. of Labor, Labor Market Information)



Top Five Occupations *(by number of employees)*

1. Construction Laborers

2. Electricians

3. Carpenters

4. Supervisors

5. Plumbers/Pipefitters/Seamfitters

(Source: Colorado Dept. of Labor, Labor Market Information)

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