

**First Regular Session
Seventy-fifth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. 25-0055.01 Alana Rosen x2606

SENATE BILL 25-150

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Michaelson Jenet,

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Gilchrist,

Senate Committees
Health & Human Services

House Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 **CONCERNING CREATING A PILOT PROGRAM TO ENCOURAGE YOUTH IN**
102 **FOSTER CARE TO GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL.**

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://leg.colorado.gov>.)

The bill creates the fostering success pilot program (pilot program) in the department of human services (department). The pilot program is a 2-part program, which includes:

- The supplemental support for foster students program (supplemental support program), which awards \$2,000 scholarships annually to a foster care provider, kinship

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing law.
Dashes through the words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law.

foster care provider, or a non-certified kinship care provider (provider) who cares for a youth in the legal custody of a county department of human or social services until the youth graduates from high school; and

- The milestone incentives program (milestone program), which awards \$1,000 to a youth for successfully graduating from high school.

On or before September 30, 2025, subject to available appropriations, the department shall contract with a third-party administrator (administrator) to develop, implement, and administer the pilot program. The department shall contract with an administrator that is:

- A nonprofit organization;
- Experienced working with students and families; and
- Experienced administering student scholarship and grant programs.

On or before December 31, 2025, subject to available appropriations, the department shall establish a timeline for:

- Announcing the pilot program;
- Accepting applications from youth and their providers; and
- Selecting youth and their providers to participate in the pilot program.

The department shall select youth and provider participants in the order of applications received. A youth and their provider selected to participate in the pilot program must participate in the supplemental support program and the milestone program.

The administrator may contract with one or more private entities to develop and implement a system to establish scholarship accounts that allows payment to qualifying vendors by electronic means from an online portal.

The administrator shall:

- Ensure that the scholarship account is accessible through an online portal for the provider to facilitate payments to a qualifying vendor for the supplemental support program;
- Ensure the transfer of scholarship funds from the online portal directly to a qualifying vendor without direct access to scholarship funds by a provider; and
- Distribute money to each scholarship account.

The administrator shall ensure that a youth has sole access to the milestone program award funds. There are no restrictions on how the youth may use the milestone program award funds.

On or before July 1, 2028, the administrator shall administer a survey to youth and their providers to receive feedback on the pilot program.

On or before October 31, 2028, the administrator shall report to the

department the following information:

- The number of participants selected for the pilot program;
- The amount of money awarded through the pilot program;
- The survey results from youth and their providers; and
- How the pilot program affected the youth's performance in school.

On or before December 31, 2028, the department shall submit a report summarizing the information collected from the survey to the education committees of the house of representatives and senate, the health and human services committees of the house of representatives and senate, or their successor committees.

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

2 **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 19-7-105 as
3 follows:

4 **19-7-105. Fostering success pilot program - financial support**
5 **for youth in foster care, kinship foster care, or non-certified kinship**
6 **care - report - rules - definitions - repeal.** (1) AS USED IN THIS SECTION,
7 UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

8 (a) "FOSTERING SUCCESS PILOT PROGRAM" OR "PILOT PROGRAM"
9 MEANS THE FOSTERING SUCCESS PILOT PROGRAM CREATED IN SUBSECTION
10 (2) OF THIS SECTION, WHICH CONSISTS OF TWO PROGRAMS: THE
11 SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORT FOR FOSTER STUDENTS PROGRAM CREATED IN
12 SUBSECTION (2)(a)(I) OF THIS SECTION AND THE MILESTONE INCENTIVES
13 PROGRAM CREATED IN SUBSECTION (2)(a)(II) OF THIS SECTION.

14 (b) "MILESTONE INCENTIVES PROGRAM" MEANS THE MILESTONE
15 INCENTIVES PROGRAM CREATED IN SUBSECTION (2)(a)(II) OF THIS
16 SECTION.

17 (c) "PROVIDER" MEANS A FOSTER CARE PARENT OR A RELATIVE OR
18 KIN WHO PROVIDES KINSHIP FOSTER CARE AND WHO IS CERTIFIED TO
19 OPERATE A KINSHIP FOSTER CARE HOME PURSUANT TO SECTION 26-6-910.

1 "PROVIDER" ALSO INCLUDES A RELATIVE OR KIN WHO PROVIDES
2 NON-CERTIFIED KINSHIP CARE, AS DEFINED IN SECTION 26-6-903, TO A
3 CHILD OR YOUTH WHO IS IN THE LEGAL CUSTODY OF THE COUNTY
4 DEPARTMENT.

5 (d) "QUALIFYING VENDOR" MEANS AN ELIGIBLE SERVICE VENDOR
6 THAT THE THIRD-PARTY ADMINISTRATOR APPROVES TO PARTICIPATE AND
7 PROVIDE SERVICES TO YOUTH AND PROVIDERS PARTICIPATING IN THE
8 SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORT FOR FOSTER STUDENTS PROGRAM.

9 (e) "SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORT FOR FOSTER STUDENTS PROGRAM"
10 MEANS THE SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORT FOR FOSTER STUDENTS PROGRAM
11 CREATED IN SUBSECTION (2)(a)(I) OF THIS SECTION.

12 (2) (a) THE FOSTERING SUCCESS PILOT PROGRAM IS CREATED IN
13 THE DEPARTMENT. THE PILOT PROGRAM IS A TWO-PART PILOT PROGRAM
14 THAT INCLUDES:

15 (I) THE SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORT FOR FOSTER STUDENTS PROGRAM,
16 WHICH AWARDS TWO-THOUSAND-DOLLAR SCHOLARSHIP PAYMENTS
17 ANNUALLY TO A SCHOLARSHIP ACCOUNT ESTABLISHED IN SUBSECTION
18 (3)(a) OF THIS SECTION FOR A FOSTER CARE PROVIDER, KINSHIP FOSTER
19 CARE PROVIDER, OR A NON-CERTIFIED KINSHIP CARE PROVIDER WHO CARES
20 FOR A YOUTH IN THE LEGAL CUSTODY OF A COUNTY DEPARTMENT UNTIL
21 THE YOUTH GRADUATES FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO BE USED FOR
22 EDUCATION-RELATED EXPENSES FOR THE YOUTH; AND

23 (II) THE MILESTONE INCENTIVES PROGRAM, WHICH AWARDS A
24 YOUTH WHO IS IN THE LEGAL CUSTODY OF A COUNTY DEPARTMENT AND
25 LIVING IN A FOSTER CARE HOME, KINSHIP FOSTER CARE HOME, OR
26 NON-CERTIFIED KINSHIP CARE HOME ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR
27 SUCCESSFULLY GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL.

1 (b) ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 30, 2025, SUBJECT TO AVAILABLE
2 APPROPRIATIONS, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL CONTRACT WITH A
3 THIRD-PARTY ADMINISTRATOR TO DEVELOP, IMPLEMENT, AND ADMINISTER
4 THE PILOT PROGRAM. THE DEPARTMENT SHALL CONTRACT WITH A
5 THIRD-PARTY ADMINISTRATOR THAT IS:

6 (I) A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION, AS DEFINED IN SECTION
7 26.5-5-303;

8 (II) EXPERIENCED WORKING WITH STUDENTS AND FAMILIES; AND

9 (III) EXPERIENCED ADMINISTERING STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP AND
10 GRANT PROGRAMS.

11 (c) (I) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL EXAMINE URBAN, RURAL, AND
12 SUBURBAN AREAS WITH HIGH RATES OF YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE TO
13 IDENTIFY THE REGIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE PILOT PROGRAM.

14 (II) THE THIRD-PARTY ADMINISTRATOR SHALL IMPLEMENT THE
15 PILOT PROGRAM IN THE REGIONS THAT THE DEPARTMENT IDENTIFIES
16 PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (2)(c)(I) OF THIS SECTION.

17 (d) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 31, 2025, SUBJECT TO AVAILABLE
18 APPROPRIATIONS, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ESTABLISH A TIMELINE FOR:

19 (I) ANNOUNCING THE PILOT PROGRAM;

20 (II) ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FROM YOUTH AND THEIR
21 PROVIDERS; AND

22 (III) SELECTING YOUTH AND THEIR PROVIDERS TO PARTICIPATE IN
23 THE PILOT PROGRAM.

24 (e) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL SELECT YOUTH AND PROVIDER
25 PARTICIPANTS IN THE ORDER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED. A YOUTH AND
26 THEIR PROVIDER SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PILOT PROGRAM MUST
27 PARTICIPATE IN THE SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORT FOR FOSTER STUDENTS

1 PROGRAM AND THE MILESTONE INCENTIVES PROGRAM.

2 (f) AS PART OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS, A YOUTH AND THEIR
3 PROVIDER MUST AGREE THAT THE YOUTH'S ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE MAY
4 BE SHARED BY THE YOUTH'S EDUCATION PROVIDER, AS DEFINED IN
5 SECTION 22-32-138 (1), WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AS
6 DESCRIBED IN SECTION 22-32-138 (9.5)(b).

7 (3) (a) THE THIRD-PARTY ADMINISTRATOR SHALL ESTABLISH A
8 SCHOLARSHIP ACCOUNT ON BEHALF OF A YOUTH. THE THIRD-PARTY
9 ADMINISTRATOR MAY CONTRACT WITH ONE OR MORE PRIVATE ENTITIES TO
10 DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A COMMERCIALY VIABLE, COST-EFFECTIVE,
11 AND PROVIDER-FRIENDLY SYSTEM TO:

12 (I) ESTABLISH SCHOLARSHIP ACCOUNTS; AND

13 (II) MAXIMIZE PAYMENT FLEXIBILITY BY ALLOWING FOR PAYMENT
14 OF SERVICES TO QUALIFYING VENDORS BY TRANSFERRING SCHOLARSHIP
15 FUNDS BY ELECTRONIC OR ONLINE MEANS FROM AN ONLINE PORTAL.

16 (b) THE THIRD-PARTY ADMINISTRATOR SHALL:

17 (I) ENSURE THAT THE SCHOLARSHIP ACCOUNT IS ACCESSIBLE
18 THROUGH AN ONLINE PORTAL FOR THE PROVIDER TO FACILITATE
19 PAYMENTS TO A QUALIFYING VENDOR WHO PROVIDES SERVICES TO YOUTH
20 AND THEIR PROVIDERS PARTICIPATING IN THE SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORT FOR
21 FOSTER STUDENTS PROGRAM;

22 (II) ENSURE THE DIRECT TRANSFER OF SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS FROM
23 THE ONLINE PORTAL TO A QUALIFYING VENDOR TO PAY FOR EXPENSES;

24 (III) ENSURE YOUTH AND THEIR PROVIDERS CANNOT WITHDRAW
25 OR HAVE DIRECT ACCESS TO THE SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS; AND

26 (IV) DISTRIBUTE MONEY TO EACH SCHOLARSHIP ACCOUNT.

27 (c) STARTING IN THE 2026-27 FISCAL YEAR, THE DEPARTMENT

1 SHALL DISTRIBUTE TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS TO YOUTH AND PROVIDERS
2 FOR THE SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORT FOR FOSTER STUDENTS PROGRAM. THE
3 PROVIDERS MAY USE THE SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS ON EDUCATION-RELATED
4 SERVICES FOR YOUTH THAT ARE PROVIDED BY A QUALIFIED VENDOR THAT
5 INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

6 (I) AFTER-SCHOOL TUTORING SERVICES;

7 (II) COMPUTERS OR TECHNOLOGICAL DEVICES INTENDED FOR A
8 YOUTH'S EDUCATIONAL NEEDS;

9 (III) TRANSPORTATION FEES;

10 (IV) EXPENSES OR FEES RELATED TO EXTRACURRICULAR
11 ACTIVITIES, FIELD TRIPS, OR OTHER EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES; AND

12 (V) PERSONAL GROWTH EXPERIENCES, WHICH MAY INCLUDE
13 PARTICIPATING IN SPORTS AND OUTDOOR NATURE EXPERIENCES.

14 (d) THE PROVIDER MAY NOT USE THE SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS ON
15 TUITION AND FEES FOR PRIVATE SCHOOL.

16 (e) SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS MUST BE SPENT WITHIN NINE MONTHS
17 AFTER THE THIRD-PARTY ADMINISTRATOR DISTRIBUTES THE SCHOLARSHIP
18 FUNDS IN THE YOUTH'S SCHOLARSHIP ACCOUNT. AT THE END OF THE NINE
19 MONTHS, UNSPENT SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS ARE REVERTED BACK TO THE
20 DEPARTMENT.

21 (4) (a) UPON A YOUTH'S GRADUATION, THE THIRD-PARTY
22 ADMINISTRATOR SHALL DISTRIBUTE THE AWARD FUNDS DESCRIBED IN
23 SUBSECTION (2)(a)(II) OF THIS SECTION INTO THE YOUTH'S ACCOUNT.

24 (b) THE THIRD-PARTY ADMINISTRATOR SHALL ENSURE THAT A
25 YOUTH HAS SOLE ACCESS TO THE MILESTONE INCENTIVES PROGRAM
26 AWARD FUNDS. THERE ARE NO RESTRICTIONS ON HOW THE YOUTH MAY
27 USE THE MILESTONE INCENTIVES PROGRAM AWARD FUNDS.

1 (5) ON OR BEFORE JULY 1, 2028, THE THIRD-PARTY
2 ADMINISTRATOR SHALL ADMINISTER A SURVEY TO YOUTH AND PROVIDERS
3 TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

4 (a) FEEDBACK FROM PROVIDERS REGARDING THEIR EXPERIENCE
5 PARTICIPATING IN THE PILOT PROGRAM;

6 (b) FEEDBACK FROM YOUTH REGARDING THEIR EXPERIENCE
7 PARTICIPATING IN THE PILOT PROGRAM; AND

8 (c) HOW YOUTH WHO RECEIVED AWARD FUNDS THROUGH THE
9 MILESTONE INCENTIVES PROGRAM USED THE AWARD FUNDS.

10 (6) (a) ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 31, 2028, THE THIRD-PARTY
11 ADMINISTRATOR SHALL PROVIDE THE DEPARTMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING
12 INFORMATION:

13 (I) THE NUMBER OF APPLICANTS SELECTED FOR THE PILOT
14 PROGRAM;

15 (II) THE AMOUNT OF MONEY AWARDED THROUGH THE PILOT
16 PROGRAM;

17 (III) THE RESULTS OF THE SURVEY CONDUCTED PURSUANT TO
18 SUBSECTION (5) OF THIS SECTION; AND

19 (IV) HOW THE PILOT PROGRAM AFFECTED THE YOUTH'S
20 PERFORMANCE IN SCHOOL, INCLUDING, AT A MINIMUM:

21 (A) THE GRADUATION AND COMPLETION RATES OF YOUTH
22 PARTICIPATING IN THE PILOT PROGRAM; AND

23 (B) THE AGGREGATED ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF YOUTH
24 PARTICIPATING IN THE PILOT PROGRAM.

25 (b) ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1, 2028, THE DEPARTMENT OF
26 EDUCATION SHALL PROVIDE THE DEPARTMENT THE INFORMATION
27 REGARDING THE EFFECTS OF THE PILOT PROGRAM ON YOUTH IN SCHOOLS AS

1 DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (6)(a)(IV) OF THIS SECTION.

2 (c) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 31, 2028, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL
3 SUBMIT A REPORT SUMMARIZING THE INFORMATION DESCRIBED IN
4 SUBSECTION (6)(a) OF THIS SECTION TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEES OF
5 THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATE, THE HEALTH AND HUMAN
6 SERVICES COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATE,
7 OR THEIR SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES.

8 (7) THE DEPARTMENT MAY ADOPT RULES FOR THE PURPOSES OF
9 THIS SECTION.

10 (8) THE DEPARTMENT MAY SEEK, ACCEPT, AND EXPEND GIFTS,
11 GRANTS, OR DONATIONS FROM PRIVATE OR PUBLIC SOURCES FOR THE
12 PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION.

13 (9) THIS SECTION IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2031.
14 BEFORE THE REPEAL, THIS SECTION IS SCHEDULED FOR REVIEW PURSUANT
15 TO SECTION 24-34-104.

16 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-32-138, **add** (9.5)
17 as follows:

18 **22-32-138. Out-of-home placement students - school stability,**
19 **transfer, and enrollment procedures - absences - exemptions -**
20 **provision of academic supports - report - definitions.** (9.5) (a) ON OR
21 BEFORE JULY 1, 2028, AN EDUCATION PROVIDER WITH STUDENTS
22 PARTICIPATING IN THE FOSTERING SUCCESS PILOT PROGRAM CREATED IN
23 SECTION 19-7-105(2) SHALL REPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION,
24 AT A MINIMUM, THE FOLLOWING:

25 (I) THE GRADUATION AND COMPLETION RATES OF STUDENTS
26 PARTICIPATING IN THE FOSTERING SUCCESS PILOT PROGRAM; AND

27 (II) THE AGGREGATED ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS

1 PARTICIPATING IN THE FOSTERING SUCCESS PILOT PROGRAM.

2 (b) ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1, 2028, THE DEPARTMENT OF
3 EDUCATION SHALL REPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES THE
4 INFORMATION DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (9.5)(a) OF THIS SECTION FOR
5 PURPOSES OF SECTION 19-7-105 (6)(b).

6 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 24-34-104, **add**
7 (32)(a)(XVI) as follows:

8 **24-34-104. General assembly review of regulatory agencies**
9 **and functions for repeal, continuation, or reestablishment - legislative**
10 **declaration - repeal.** (32) (a) The following agencies, functions, or both,
11 are scheduled for repeal on September 1, 2031:

12 (XVI) THE FOSTERING SUCCESS PILOT PROGRAM CREATED IN
13 SECTION 19-7-105.

14 **SECTION 4. Act subject to petition - effective date.** This act
15 takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the
16 ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly; except
17 that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V
18 of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this
19 act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take
20 effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in
21 November 2026 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the
22 official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.