

CU students now eligible for Colorado Promise tax credits following systemwide collaboration ^[1]

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University of Colorado students are now eligible for benefits under the state's [Colorado Promise](#) ^[3] program following a coordinated, multi-team effort involving University Information Services and campus partners earlier this year.

Supported by teams across Data and Business Intelligence, Institutional Research and Management, CU-SIS Development and CU-SIS, the work ensured CU students could be identified and reported as eligible for Colorado Promise tax credits. The initiative, authorized under HB24-1340 and SB25-315, required more than standard reporting. It represented the culmination of more than six months of collaboration among dozens of staff across all CU campuses, alongside ongoing coordination with the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE), to model data, define processes and implement a repeatable system that can support the program annually, including clarifying requirements, validating data and ensuring accurate student notifications.

“What I’m most proud of is the level of collaboration this required across CU to help reduce costs for our students,” said Ryan Allred, CU System director of Institutional Research and Data Analysis. “Dozens of staff across our campuses spent more than six months working through technical, legal and operational challenges to build a process that didn’t exist before.”

About Colorado Promise

Colorado Promise is designed to reduce the cost of earning a college degree by providing tax credits to offset tuition and fees for eligible Colorado residents whose families have an adjusted gross income below \$90,000. Eligibility is determined based on tuition and fees paid after grants and scholarships, along with multiple enrollment and academic criteria defined in legislation.

Implementing the program presented significant challenges. Because of the legislation’s complexity and extensive eligibility requirements, existing statewide data systems could not fully support the process. Each public institution was required to develop its own approach to identify and validate eligible students. At CU, this meant integrating data from multiple systems and iterating through extensive documentation, coding updates and cross-functional reviews to accurately interpret requirements that were conceptual in the legislation but not fully aligned with real-world data structures.

Coming together for students

UIS leaders emphasized the collaborative nature of the effort and its impact on students.

“This was a highly coordinated endeavor that required precision and partnership across multiple teams,” said Rick Rowcotsky, UIS lead solutions manager for CU Student IT Services. “The outcome directly supports students and families by helping make higher education more affordable.”

From July 2025 through January 2026, a CU implementation working group met weekly to guide the effort. The group included representatives from UIS, Financial Aid, Registrars, Bursars, Budget and Finance, University Counsel, and Institutional Research across all campuses and system administration. These subject matter experts played a critical role in navigating technical, legal and operational challenges. UIS in particular provided leadership and the technical foundation for system-level development and implementation.

Moving forward

Following submission of eligible student data to CDHE by Jan. 31 and transfer to the Department of Revenue on Feb. 15, most of the work for the 2025 tax year has concluded. Students were required to file taxes by April 15, with remaining activity limited to filing extensions and a small number of eligibility petitions. CU teams now look ahead to insights from state agencies on how many students ultimately claimed the credit, which will help inform future iterations of the process.

UIS will continue to monitor outcomes as state agencies finalize reporting on how many students ultimately receive the credit.

CU 1340 Implementation Working Group

	Boulder	UCCS	Denver	Anschutz
Institutional Research	Jess Keating, Blake Redabaugh	Jenny Russell	Dave Deffenbacher, Paula Dickson	
Financial Aid	Barb Marshall, Vic Goldberg	Jevita Rogers	Ryan Grodman	John Young
Registrar	Kristi Wold-McCormick	Tracy Barber	Lara Medley	Allison Diekoff
Student Financials	Nok Sitchawat	Renee McBride, Marcy Clegg	Jackie Gatlin	
System Administration				
Budget & Finance	Celina Duran			
Institutional Research	Ryan Allred, Stephanie Sheldon			

UIS

Joseph Ciecior, Rick Rowcotsky, Brian Ruden, Stefan Garman, Sharon Price, Lisa Damboise, Sridevi Bankupalli, Darlene Crow, Brad Baker, Brian Schaeffer

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Samantha Kramer, Julie Steeler

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