



CareerWise Colorado
modern youth apprenticeship

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CAREERWISE COLORADO **PARENT & STUDENT** HANDBOOK

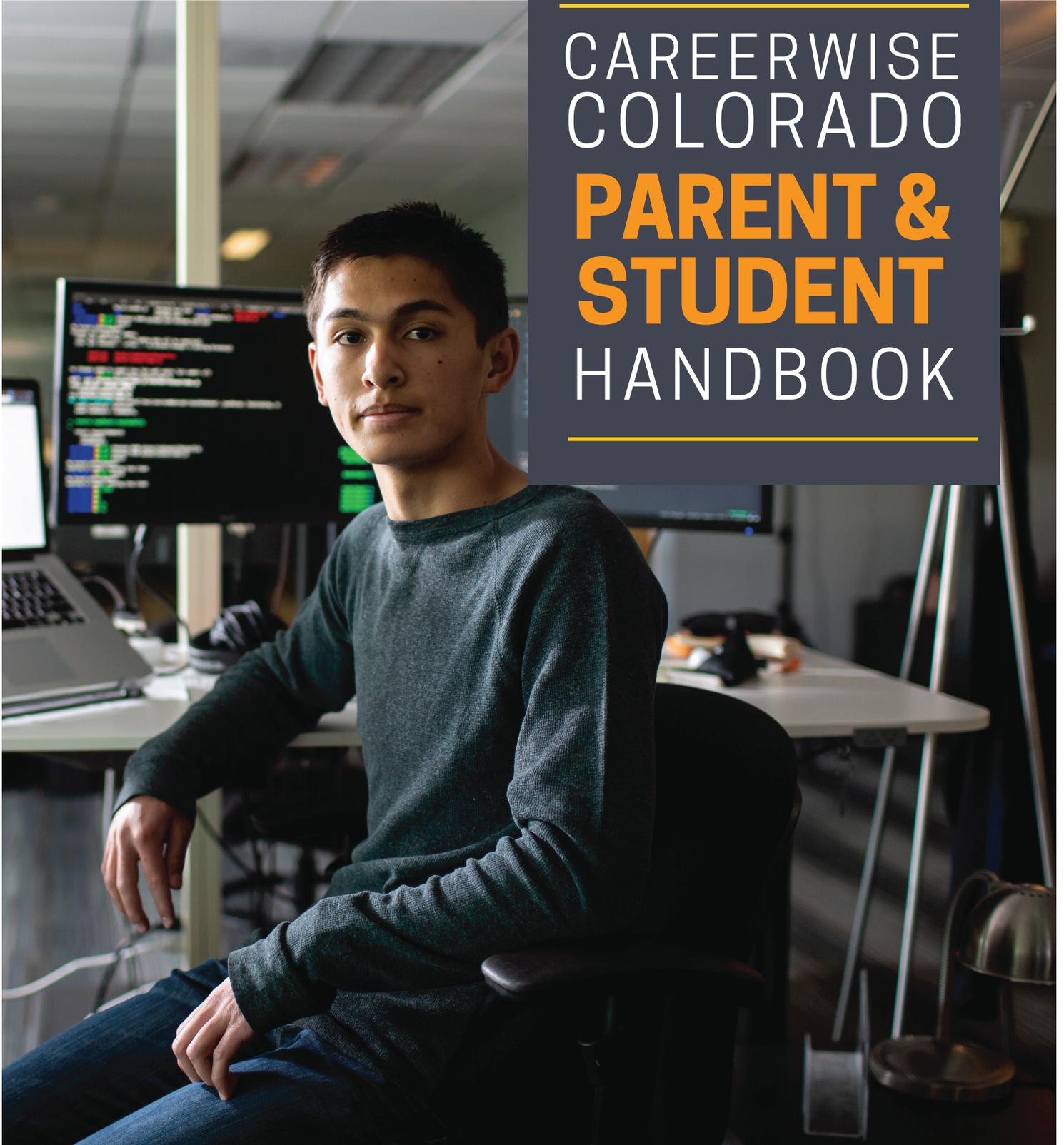


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PROGRAM OVERVIEW



INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on having your son or daughter selected as a CareerWise apprentice. This means that one of the leading companies in Colorado saw great promise in your student during a very competitive interview process and is confident that they will add value to their organization. The skills and competencies they'll develop during the apprenticeship will lay the foundation for success in our 21st-Century economy.

We hope that the apprenticeship is one of the most significant experiences in their young lives. We have interviewed current apprentices, and many of them report feeling more mature and independent than their peers and are proud to take on adult responsibilities and be treated "like an adult."

Along with personal growth, you can expect your apprentice to learn about the field in which they are working. One of the many differences with a typical high school job is that apprentices are learning industry-supported competencies on the job and are on a path to earn (in most cases) an industry-valued credential. (More on competencies and credentials below.)

Furthermore, you can expect that your apprentice will gain some college credits, especially during their third year based on their readiness and goals. In some cases, these credits can be directly applied toward a more advanced degree, depending on the institution in which your child later enrolls.

COMMUNICATING WITH CAREERWISE

If you have a question about the program, or you or your student has feedback about their apprenticeship experience, you can reach out to your dedicated CareerWise Relationship Manager or use the parent hotline below.

If you have provided us with your contact information, you can expect to be cc'd on any email from CareerWise until they are 18 (after which they would need to grant permission). We will invite you by email to any parent trainings or events related to the program, which might be once or twice a year. Also, we encourage you to visit the parent section of our website for more information.

PARENT & APPRENTICE HOTLINE

(720) 325-2629

THE CAREERWISE MODEL

Apprenticeships have a long tradition both in this country and abroad. In colonial America, apprenticeship was the dominant form of education (before high schools gained popularity in the early- to mid-1800s), and for many generations apprenticeships have trained medical doctors (called a “residency”) and those in the trades such as electricians and pipefitters.

The CareerWise modern youth-apprenticeship model borrows from the system in Switzerland, where approximately 70 percent of high school-aged students are apprentices. Many scholars consider the Swiss system the gold standard of apprenticeship. It’s credited as a reason for the exceptionally low youth-unemployment rate in that country and a big reason the Swiss economy is rated among the most innovative in the world.

Modern youth apprenticeship is designed to promote both educational and professional permeability. The Swiss often use the phrase “no dead ends” when describing youth apprenticeship, which means that apprentices are always able to tap into additional educational and career opportunities, and the jobs to which apprenticeship lead are springboards to more and more opportunity. Because Americans tend to value keeping options open—especially for younger people—CareerWise values the Swiss model for this commitment to permeability.

CareerWise designed its own modern youth apprenticeship system based on the needs of those in our communities. For instance, in addition to providing the opportunity for debt-free college credit and paths to higher education, CareerWise only includes occupations that:

- ✓ Pay a living wage or higher at the entry-level (approximately \$35k/year)
- ✓ Are in high demand and part of a robust career pathway
- ✓ Do not require a bachelor’s degree for an entry level role

If you are interested in learning more about the Swiss apprenticeship model, this article is a good place to start: bit.ly/swissapprenticeship

CAREERWISE & YOUR SCHOOL’S CAREER PROGRAM

Many schools and districts have well-developed career programs. These might include opportunities for career exploration and work-based learning, such as job shadowing and internships. Schools and districts have partnered with CareerWise to offer apprenticeships, which is often the capstone experience of their career program. Therefore, our apprenticeships are typically co-branded within the larger school or district initiative. For instance, CareerWise apprenticeships are part of Denver Public Schools’ “CareerConnect” program and of Cherry Creek Schools’ “Career Connections” initiative.

While districts have different work-based learning programs, all of the apprenticeships in our partner schools are provided through CareerWise Colorado.



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APPRENTICE EXPERIENCE



SAMPLE WEEKLY & YEARLY SCHEDULES

Every apprentice and every school district schedule is unique. If students are beginning their junior year, their schedules may resemble the schedules below. With that said, apprenticeship is not a one-size-fits-all model, and schedules can vary. For example, some students may work half-days and attend high school the remaining portion of the day. Apprentices' higher education courses and schedule will be determined by their goals and readiness.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
YEAR 1	HIGH SCHOOL	WORK	HIGH SCHOOL	WORK	HIGH SCHOOL
YEAR 2	WORK	HIGH SCHOOL	WORK	HIGH SCHOOL TRAINING CENTER*	WORK
YEAR 3	WORK	WORK TRAINING CENTER*	WORK	WORK TRAINING CENTER*	WORK

*Training centers could be a community college, four-year college or industry-recognized training center.

YEARLY SCHEDULE	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC CLASSES	3 DAYS PER WEEK	2 - 3 DAYS PER WEEK	NONE
ON-THE-JOB TRAINING	12 - 16 HOURS PER WEEK	20 - 24 HOURS PER WEEK	32+ HOURS PER WEEK
HIGHER ED PARTNERS COLLEGE-LEVEL COURSEWORK ALIGNED WITH YOUR PATHWAY	COLLEGE COURSES BASED ON YOUR GOALS & READINESS The instruction you receive here will provide you debt-free college credit and the knowledge you need for your nationally recognized industry certification. Typically, courses are taken in the second half of the apprenticeship.		

OTHER CAREERWISE TIME COMMITMENTS

BOOT CAMP

Apprentices will attend a professional “Boot Camp” in the summer prior to beginning their apprenticeship (usually two-three days) in which they build the skills that will help them during their apprenticeship.

REBOOT CAMP

Apprentices will attend an annual ReBoot Camp (usually held over one day in the summer) to continue to hone their professional skills and to learn new information relevant to that stage in their apprenticeship.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Some apprentices have been able to continue to participate in extracurricular activities, but many have found that they need to make tradeoffs. Some businesses are more able to accommodate extracurricular schedules than others. But it is unlikely, for instance, that a student could take multiple AP courses, play on the basketball team, be in the school play, AND be an apprentice. There just isn't enough time in the day; students could run the risk of burnout.

If your student is interested in being an apprentice and continuing to take part in one or more extracurriculars, CareerWise recommend the following:

- Discussing extracurriculars with their counselor
- Asking during interviews if work schedules will allow for participation in extracurriculars, and whether weekend work hours might be possible
- Once hired, working with their supervisor to determine what is and isn't possible from a scheduling and participation perspective.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

Being an apprentice will not impact when your student graduates from high school. Schools only approve students who are on track to graduate. The school counselor develops a schedule that ensures the student will have enough time to spend in the workplace and have enough credits to graduate on time. (Note: CareerWise encourages you to check with your district about when students receive their diploma.)

THE THIRD YEAR

During the third year an apprentice can expect to be working approximately 32 hours per week and taking one to three college courses during the year (again, depending on the pathway and the apprentice's readiness and career goals).

Also, during the third year the apprentice (and his or her parents) can meet with a Relationship Manager at CareerWise to discuss options after the apprenticeship. These options could include continuing to work for the apprentice employer, to work for another company, or to pursue more education. We are happy to talk through these (and perhaps other) options with you.

LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY-BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES

Most schools have multiple apprentices, which will allow your students to connect with those who are also participating in the program. Additionally, apprentices will come together annually for a bootcamp and other cohort-wide events, where they will spend time with their entire apprentice class.

If apprentices are looking to get more involved in the program, we also have an Apprentice Advisory board. If your student is interested in joining the advisory board have them contact Dave Fulton at david.fulton@careerwisecolorado.org

ROLE OF PARENTS

The best way to be a supportive parent is through showing interest in your child's apprenticeship, (see "Apprenticeship Conversation Starters" below) and playing a role in ensuring your student takes the commitment seriously and prioritizes their apprenticeship, including the expectation that they learn and add value to the company.

There are no financial commitments to being part of this program.

APPRENTICESHIP CONVERSATION STARTERS

- What are you learning at your apprenticeship?
- How are you progressing against your competencies / training plan?
- Have you received a performance review?
- What did you learn as part of that review?
 - Are you feeling challenged?
- How is learning at work different than learning at school?
- Who are some co-workers that you connect with and are learning from?
 - What's been your best day as an apprentice?

THINGS TO AVOID AS AN APPRENTICE PARENT

Current apprentices report that they welcome an active interest from their parents in their apprenticeship, but that they don't want them to be over-involved. Being over involved as a parent may in fact get in the way of what could be a period of great personal growth for your apprentice.

So, if you have any questions or concerns about your child's experience, reach out to your apprentice's dedicated relationship manager or call our parent hotline. Please refrain from going directly to your apprentice's supervisor.

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LEARNING IN THE WORKPLACE



COMPETENCIES

Competencies—and the tracking of them—are one of the things that set an apprenticeship apart from internships or other work-based learning experiences. Obtaining these competencies will gain apprentices entry into a full-time job in that occupation, help them pass their credential exam, and ensure that they are learning real, meaningful skills.

There are two types of competencies: **Career-Ready Competencies** and **Technical Competencies**.

Career-Ready Competencies are common across all occupations and define the professional skills needed to succeed in jobs of today. The list of these competencies came from many convenings with business and educators around the state, and aligns with the Colorado Department of Education’s “Essential Skills” document.

Technical Competencies came from a multi-step process that includes drawing from a U.S. Department of Labor database, interviewing industry experts, and job shadowing to determine the set of tasks and skills that typically make up the an entry level position in a specific field. CareerWise also included skills or knowledge that are needed to pass the credential exam.

Several times a year, supervisors evaluate the apprentice on a four-point scale for each competency. CareerWise encourages each apprentice to become familiar with their set of competencies to ensure they are on track, and perhaps to ask their supervisor to teach them new things if needed.

NATIONALLY-RECOGNIZED INDUSTRY CREDENTIALS

We surveyed experts in each field and identified credentials that both have currency in industry and are reasonably attainable during an apprenticeship. In rare cases, experts told us that something other than a credential would be more valuable, such as a portfolio in the Junior Coder role, or additional college courses in the accounting role.

In most cases, students will earn their credential in the last year of their apprenticeship. Earning the credential typically involves passing an exam (or series of exams) and sometimes—as in the case of the healthcare pathway—doing well in a certain number of college courses. The employers pay all costs associated with obtaining a credential. (But if the apprentice does not pass the exam, they may have to pay for the cost of the retest.)

WORKPLACE SUPPORTS

Supervisor Each apprentice reports to a supervisor in the workplace. Like a typical supervisor, this individual monitors the apprentice’s work, assigns tasks and projects and completes performance reviews. Apprentice supervisors are also in charge of creating an apprentice’s training plans and ensuring he or she learns the content needed to obtain an industry credential.

Coach Each apprentice also has a coach in the workplace. The coach serves as a mentor to apprentices. This individual will meet with apprentices on a regular basis to check-in on apprentices, see if they have any questions, and ensure they are getting the most out of their experience.

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HIGHER EDUCATION AND APPRENTICESHIP



HIGHER EDUCATION & COLLEGE CREDITS

CareerWise's K-12, higher ed, and employer partners collaborate to recommend and fund college courses. These courses are closely aligned with the competencies required at work to ensure the highest level of effective and learning for apprentices both in classroom and in training at work. The career-relevant college courses are independent from the concurrent enrollment college courses the apprentices may already be enrolled in through their high school. Most employers agree to pay up to \$4,000 maximum per apprenticeship year in college and training costs to help apprentices meet their career goals and be ready for an in-demand, high-paying position upon completion of the program. The actual tuition amount the employers agree to may not carry over from one year to another. Each employer's corporate policies on tuition reimbursement and fiscal budgeting will impact the final tuition agreement between the employer and apprentice. Please refer to the job descriptions and apprenticeship agreement for the detailed tuition offering from each employer.

COURSE SELECTION & TIMING

Apprenticeship is not a one-size-fits-all model. CareerWise and the student's counselors guide each apprentice to take college courses at an appropriate pace during their apprenticeship based on their own goals and readiness. Therefore, the actual number of credits completed during the apprenticeship may vary based on the apprentice's goals, readiness, passion, training requirements and pathway. The decision on which college courses and higher education institutions will be impacted by various factors; alignment of competencies in the course, learning outcomes, tuition budget, scheduling, etc... CareerWise recommends all apprentices to focus on high school coursework and working at their apprenticeship in year 1. During the first year, CareerWise will facilitate collaborative conversations with supervisors, counselors, and apprentices to gauge the apprentices' readiness and relevant college, credential, and certification coursework for year 2 and/or year 3. The collaborative and proactive conversation will continue throughout the 3 years of apprenticeship program to ensure that all coursework is meaningful, relevant, and valuable for the apprentices and employers.

TRANSFERRING COLLEGE CREDITS

Credit transferability is negotiable with colleges and universities. Some of the career-relevant credits earned during the apprenticeship will be naturally transferable, some of them may be negotiated with the institution, and others may be transferred due to a transfer agreement that CareerWise has established with the college. For example, CSU-Global will accept all credits earned during the apprenticeship as well as additional credit for the number of years served in apprenticeship and any professional certifications the apprentice earned. The effort on credit transferability is ongoing and will evolve as our apprenticeship program matures and expands. We will continue to provide timely updates on our progress.