

Issue Brief: Local Education Support & Workforce Training



HOUSING & BUILDING
ASSOCIATION
OF COLORADO SPRINGS

Although the City of Colorado Springs is not directly involved with local education, it's critical that our city and region have strong and high-performing public schools and that all levels of government—from the state through municipalities—support our local schools and advocate for strong leadership, proper resources, and results for students, while also ensuring accountability for taxpayers.

Strong, community-based school districts are critical to the prosperity, economic opportunity, health and safety of our entire community. Families looking to put roots in our community want safe, high-quality schools for their children. Employers looking to bring jobs and grow their businesses in Colorado Springs cannot do so without great schools, where employees feel confident that their children are on the right path and future generations are being prepared to succeed in the workforce.

The HBA believes that this begins with the proper leadership of local school districts. We help identify and support qualified candidates for boards of education. We support reasonable mill levy and bonding questions so that our schools have proper funding to retain quality teachers, provide learning materials, and provide safe and modern schools and educational environments, with the expectation that this support will lead to improved student achievement. Our city has a vested interest in its schools, and we encourage the Mayor and Council members to be an active voice on educational issues and support.

The homebuilding industry depends on our local schools to provide a future workforce. For too long, vocational and career education was ignored in our local schools, and the construction industry in Colorado felt the negative impacts of a shortage of qualified workers. Labor shortages directly impact the cost of housing, making new

homes less affordable for buyers.

We believe that it is the responsibility of all parts of our civic community—including private employers, local school leaders and elected officials—to support workforce training programs and to encourage construction as a viable career path. When shop classes were phased out of the high school classroom, some students were left out of the equation—students who would otherwise be able to develop their interests and talents in trade skills, leading to potential career paths within the construction industry or beyond. With skills-based education being unavailable as a launch point for a vocational school or a career in the trades, the skilled-labor market is subsequently feeling the impact.

To that end, the HBA launched Careers in Construction Colorado (CICC) in 2015 to help young people connect with construction trade education in the Pikes Peak and southern Colorado regions. CICC began with 15 students at just one Springs high school in and has since grown to more than 2,300 students statewide. The program is offered in 16 high schools in the Pikes Peak region alone, serving about 1,068 students.

CICC supports vocational education at area high schools and colleges and works with other construction trade groups to create well-paying career opportunities across Colorado. CICC students learn from building professionals, work on real construction projects and then can receive certificates and accreditations that make them job-ready when they graduate. Students can earn up to 12 certificates recognized by the U.S. Labor Department.

Programs like CICC require private and public support to be successful. We would encourage all members of the Colorado Springs City Council to learn about this program and tour a CICC classroom or jobsite.

LEARN MORE:



HBA's Careers
in Construction
Colorado at
CICColorado.org

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