MINUTES
COLORADO BOARD OF PRIVATE OCCUPATIONAL SCHOOLS
December 2, 2025 at 9:33 a.m.

Join Zoom Meeting
https://highered-colorado-gov.zoom.us/j/89605684038?pwd=azrA3RQU7hbgbTWbUU5KorYMXSXseP.1
Meeting ID: 896 0568 4038
Passcode: 677812

Board Members Present:
Jessica Wagner, Chair;
Chris Smith, Secretary;
Ellen Wamser;
Jennifer Hash;
Scott Cardona; and
Jason Wardrip

Board Members Absent:
JoAnn Stevens, Vice Chair

Division Staff Present:
Chief Occupational Education Officer/Director Lorna Candler;
Deputy Director & Compliance Officer Mary Kanaly;
Compliance Investigator Tamara Simmons;
Program Specialist Rachel Acosta;
Program Specialist Martha Torres-Recinos;
Program Specialist Austin Bentz;
Program Specialist Kerrie Solis;
Program Specialist Assistant Bernadette Esquibel; and
Division Specialist Kristi Connors

Board Counsel Present:
Assistant Attorney General Paige Olson, Office of the Colorado Attorney General

Call to Order:

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Private Occupational Schools Board was called to order by Jessica Wagner, Chair, at 9:33 a.m. The Board members, Division staff, and guests were introduced. Board roll call was taken. A quorum was present for the Board meeting, and for executive session, if needed.

Consideration of Approval of Minutes:

Following review and consideration of the October 28, 2025, regular and executive session minutes, Secretary Smith motioned to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded and carried.

Additions / Changes to the Agenda:
COEO/Director Candler reported no changes to the agenda.

Director/Staff Report:

- COEO/Director Candler welcomed new Board Chair Wagner, new Vice Chair Stevens and new Secretary Smith who were elected at the Annual Board Retreat on November 13, 2025. The Board retreat had a presentation about the use of AI to review applications.
- COEO/Director Candler also welcomed new Board member Jason Wardrip to the Board.
- Deputy Director Kanaly reported that the Division is currently conducting rulemaking to update rules and regulations for 2026. The stakeholder meeting will be held on January 13, 2026 for comments or questions to be heard about proposed changes. The rulemaking hearing will be held on January 26, 2026, prior to the regular Board meeting.
- COEO/Director Candler reported on proposed significant new restrictions on CDL truck driving schools to ensure CDL truck drivers are qualified and eligible to be out on the roads. are
- COEO/Director Candler presented the Code of Decorum for the Board to consider; the document outlines clear expectations for communication and decorum to facilitate effective consideration and resolution of matters before the Board of Private Occupational Schools. In summary, the Board requires all public members in attendance at meetings to conduct themselves in an appropriate and respectful manner. Disruptive behavior, profanity, personal attacks, and shouting will not be permitted in Board meetings. Violations of the Code of Decorum may result in a verbal warning or removal from the remainder of the Board meeting. Secretary Smith motioned to approve the Code of Decorum for the Board of Private Occupational Schools. The motion was seconded and carried.

New Business/Action Items:

A. Consideration of Approval of Provisional Certificate

1. The Pilates Studio – Denver – KS

Program Specialist Solis presented to the Board for review and consideration of a Provisional School Application to Operate including one stand-alone course: Comprehensive Teacher Training. A school representative was present. A site visit was completed. The Board determined that the school has adequate surety coverage and can maintain compliance with the minimum standards as prescribed by the Private Occupational Education Act of 1981, as amended.

Following review and consideration, Board member Wamser motioned to approve the Provisional Certificate effective December 2, 2025, and ending June 30, 2027. The motion was seconded and carried.

B. Consideration of Approval of Out-of-State Provisional Certificate

1. Real Estate U Online – Miami, FL – BE

Program Specialist Assistant Esquibel presented to the Board for review and consideration of an Out-of-State Provisional School Application to Operate. A school representative was present. The school is approved by the home state of Florida to operate.

Following review and consideration, Board member Wamser motioned to approve the Provisional Certificate effective December 2, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026. The motion was seconded and

carried.

C. Consideration of New Program(s)/Stand-Alone Course(s) or Major Revisions

1. Cyber Qubits, LLC – Greenwood Village – AB

Program Specialist Bentz presented to the Board for review and consideration of one new program: Enterprise Network Defender. A school representative was present. The Board determined that the school has adequate surety coverage and can maintain compliance with the minimum standards as prescribed by the Private Occupational Education Act of 1981, as amended.

Following review and consideration, Board member Wamser motioned to approve the previously mentioned new program effective December 2, 2025. The motion was seconded and carried.

2. Sage Truck Driving Schools – Denver – AB

Program Specialist Bentz presented to the Board for review and consideration of three new programs that were tabled from the October Board meeting: Straight Truck Class B (STB40), Class B CDL 80 Hour Straight Truck Driver Training Program (STB80), and Tractor Trailer Driver, Advanced (TTD80). A school representative was present. The Board determined that the school has adequate surety coverage and can maintain compliance with the minimum standards as prescribed by the Private Occupational Education Act of 1981, as amended.

Following review and consideration, Secretary Smith motioned to approve the Class B CDL 80 Hour Straight Truck Driver Training (STB80) new program effective December 2, 2025. The motion was seconded and carried.

Following review and consideration, Secretary Smith motioned to approve the Tractor Trailer Driver, Advanced (TTD80) new program effective December 2, 2025. The motion was seconded and carried.

Secretary Smith motioned to move Straight Truck Class B (STB40) to executive session. The motion was seconded and carried.

3. Sage Truck Driving Schools – Grand Junction – AB

Program Specialist Bentz presented to the Board for review and consideration of three new programs that were tabled from the October Board meeting: Straight Truck Class B (STB40), Class B CDL 80 Hour Straight Truck Driver Training Program (STB80), and Tractor Trailer Driver, Advanced (TTD80). A school representative was present. The Board determined that the school has adequate surety coverage and can maintain compliance with the minimum standards as prescribed by the Private Occupational Education Act of 1981, as amended.

Following review and consideration, Board member Hash motioned to approve the Class B CDL 80 Hour Straight Truck Driver Training (STB80) new program effective December 2, 2025. The motion was seconded and carried.

Following review and consideration, Board member Hash motioned to approve the Tractor Trailer Driver, Advanced (TTD80) new program effective December 2, 2025. The motion was seconded and carried.

Secretary Smith motioned to move Straight Truck Class B (STB40) to executive session. The motion was seconded and carried.

4. Summit Barber Academy – Aurora – KS
Program Specialist Solis presented to the Board for review and consideration of one new program: Hairstyling Program. A school representative was present. The Board determined that the school has adequate surety coverage and can maintain compliance with the minimum standards as prescribed by the Private Occupational Education Act of 1981, as amended.

Following review and consideration, Secretary Smith motioned to approve the previously mentioned new program effective December 2, 2025. The motion was seconded and carried.

C. Closures (No Action)

1. Aplmed Academy, Inc.

The school has not enrolled students since the date of closure on 08/01/2025. Effective 10/07/2025, all available student records are on deposit at the Division.

2. Healing Spirits Massage Training Program

The school has not enrolled students since the date of closure on 07/01/2025. Effective 09/30/2025, all available student records are on deposit at the Division.

Other Business:

A. Legal Update

The Board's Counsel, Assistant Attorney General Paige Olson, updated the Board on the following legal matters and other business items listed on the Board's agenda:

1. Ritually Rooted (Delta County District Court) - No Action

- February 2024: Board voted to issue Cease and Desist Order for operating a non-exempt private occupational school without a certificate of approval
    - Ritually Rooted kept operating after Cease and Desist issued
- October 2024: Board voted to file a Complaint in Delta County Dist. Ct.
    - Requested relief: order school to stop operating without a certificate of approval or approved exemption
    - Hearing date: November 20-21, 2025

New information:

- The hearing took place as scheduled and the parties will meet with the Court on December 4, 2025, to receive the Judge's ruling.

- A few additional updates regarding a settlement offer from Ritually Rooted can be discussed in executive session if that would be helpful to the Board.

Secretary Smith motioned to move Ritually Rooted to executive session. The motion was seconded and carried.

2. Fadez Academy Barber College (Denver District Court) – No Action

- June 2025: Fadez filed a complaint against the Division and Board
    - Claims:
        - Failure to take an oath required by the Colorado Constitution
        - Failure to take an oath required by law in Colorado
        - Improper probation penalties on Fadez's certificate of approval
        - Alteration of public meeting minutes from the Board's February 2025 meeting

New information:

- The only outstanding claim is pending with the Colorado Supreme Court, but there has been no determination issued at the time.

3. Springs Truck Driving School (Denver County District Court) – No Action

- June 2023: Board denied renewal application
- March 2024: Board voted to issue subpoena for student records
- August 2024: Board voted to file Complaint in Denver County Dist. Ct. (issued Nov. 2024)
    - Status: Default judgment – Court found in favor of Board
    - Relief granted by Court on 2/24/2025
        - to stop operating without a certificate of approval from the Board,
        - to deposit any remaining records by March 26, 2025 (and authorized the Division to seize the school's records if not produced), and
        - to pay civil penalties in the amount of $110,200.
- June 2025: Board voted to issue a motion to find the school in contempt of the Court's order against Defendants

New information:

- The Court entered an order allowing the Board to serve the School and owner by substitute service (on someone else and mail the documents to the owner).
- The hearing for the owner to appear and schedule the contempt hearing is scheduled for January 6, 2026.

4. Assist to Succeed – Action Available

- July 2025: Board voted to issue a notice of noncompliance and summary suspension
    - Issues: school falsely reported students enrolled at school to receive State funds in the amount of approximately $127,000
    - Notice of Noncompliance (issued Aug. 1, 2025)
    - Summary Suspension (issued Aug. 5, 2025)
- August 2025: Board voted to file Notice of Charges to revoke school's certificate and owner's agent's permit

New information:

- Assist to Succeed' s owner approved a Stipulated Agreement that is ready for Board review.
- ***Action Available***: The Board may choose to approve or reject the settlement agreement to resolve the matter involving the school's certificate of approval.

Board member Wamser motioned to move Assist to Succeed to executive session. The motion was seconded and carried.

5. Carter Truck Driving Academy – Action Available

- May 2025: Carter's certificate of approval suspension by operation of law for lapse of surety coverage
- September 2025: Board voted to issue a Notice of Noncompliance
    - Issues: lapse of surety coverage and failure to correct, *possible* changes to program (name, programs offered, location) without Division notice or approval
    - Response: partial responses submitted on Oct. 28 and Nov. 3, 2025

New information:

- Carter provided a partial response to the Notice of Noncompliance on Oct. 28 and Nov. 3, 2025, and proof of surety coverage
    - Outstanding requests from NON: student records, advertising materials
- Suspension (by operation of law) of certificate of approval lifted on Nov. 3, 2025
- ***Action Available:*** The Board may choose to take no further action based on response to Notice of Noncompliance OR proceed with Notice of Charges to revoke School's certificate of approval
    - Board may impose fee for lapse of surety coverage ($1000 minimum and $50/day that violation continued)

Secretary Smith motioned to move Carter Truck Driving Academy to executive session. The motion was seconded and carried.

6. Cosmo Beauty Academy – Action Available

- October 2025: Board voted to deny new program application for school

New information:

- Division received complaint about school and performed site visit.
- Deputy Director Kanaly presented a summary of Division findings from the site visit including student record issues, lack of qualified instructors, and false information reported to the Division by the school.
- ***Action Available***: The Board may choose to summarily suspend certain programs offered (massage, esthetics, hairstylist) AND/OR issue a Notice of Noncompliance requesting student records, updated surety calculation form, etc.

Secretary Smith motioned to move Cosmo Beauty Academy to executive session. The motion was seconded and carried.

7. Executive Security International, LTD – Action Available

New information:

- Division received complaint that school agent/Vice President reported false information in agent's application re: criminal history
- ***Action Available***: The Board may choose to issue a fee to school for false statement about material fact in application ($500 minimum per violation)

Board member Hash motioned to move Executive Security International to executive session. The motion was seconded and carried.

8. Paul Mitchell The School – Colorado Springs – Action Available

New information:

- Division received complaints that nail technician program was halted temporarily due to Stop Work order issued for violation of El Paso County building codes (room used for training did not have proper ventilation)
- Subsequent complaints reported nail technician program relocated to parking lot with heaters
- Attorney for School reported school appealed Stop Work order order stayed pending decision on the appeal. School returned to operating in room without proper ventilation

- ***Action Available***: The Board may choose to summarily suspend the School's certificate for nail technician program due to risk presented to public safety and welfare, pending outcome of appeal.

Secretary Smith motioned to move Cosmo Beauty Academy to executive session. The motion was seconded and carried.

9. Face and Body by Iannotti – Action Available

- May 2025: Board denied application submitted for this school

New information:

- Division received information about operation of unauthorized school ran by Dr. Iannotti
    - School offering occupational training in aesthetics, operating as a medical director and advanced courses in injectables
    - ***Action Available***: The Board may choose to issue a Cease-and-Desist Order to order to stop the school from operating unlawfully.

Board member Wamser motioned to move Face and Body by Iannotti to executive session. The motion was seconded and carried.

Following review and consideration of the previous matters discussed during the regular portion of the meeting, Board member Wardrip motioned to convene in executive session with the Board's Counsel to seek legal advice pursuant to C.R.S. §24-6-402(3)(a)(II), on the following matters: Sage Truck Driving – Denver and Grand Junction, Cosmo Beauty Academy, Assist to Succeed, Carter Truck Driving Academy, Executive Security International, Paul Mitchell The School – Colorado Springs, Face and Body by Iannotti, and Ritually Rooted in consideration of relevant parts of the Private Occupational School Act, C.R.S. §23-64-101 et seq. and the Rules and Regulations, 8 CCR 1504-1. The motion was seconded and carried. The public session recorder was turned off at 12:03 p.m.

The Board of Private Occupational Schools convened in executive session with its attorney of record, the Division Director, and Division staff at 12:20 p.m.

Summary of Return to Regular Session:

After the review and consideration of the matters previously mentioned, Vice-Chair Stevens resumed regular session at 2:18 p.m. The executive session recorder was turned off. The public session recorder was turned on and the general public was welcomed back.

Assistant Attorney General Paige Olson, affirmed for the record that this executive session was for the sole purpose of providing legal advice to the Board and to otherwise engage in good faith in what is believed to be attorney-client privileged discussions.

Following executive session, the Board resumed its agenda as follows:

Sage Truck Driving School - Denver

Board member Hash expressed concern with the vague pre-requisite requirements for the Straight Truck Class B STB40 program.

Secretary Smith motioned to table the new program to the January 2026 Board meeting to give school time to revise and ensure clear pre-requisite requirements are provided. The motion was seconded and carried.

Sage Truck Driving – Grand Junction

Vice Chair Wagner reiterated the same concerns previously expressed about the same new programs discussed with the Denver location.

Secretary Smith motioned to table the new program to the January 2026 Board meeting to give school time to revise and ensure clear pre-requisite requirements are provided. The motion was seconded and carried.

Ritually Rooted

Board member Wamser motioned to reject the proposed settlement agreement set forth by Ritually Rooted's counsel. The motion was seconded and carried.

Assist to Succeed

Board member Wamser summarized the terms of the proposed stipulated agreement including the revocation of the school's approval to operate and the agent's permit. Board member Wamser motioned to approve the stipulated agreement. The motion was seconded and carried.

Carter Truck Driving Academy

Chair Wagner expressed concern with the amount of time for the school to produce student records and the inability of the school to maintain compliance with statute and rules. The response to the notice of noncompliance was insufficient.

Board member Cardona motioned to issue a notice of charges for revocation of the school's certificate of approval to operate. The motion was seconded and carried.

Cosmo Beauty Academy – Aurora

Following additional discussion with the school owner, Secretary Smith raised concerns about the lack of administrative capacity and the lack of understanding of what it takes to successfully run and maintain a school.

Board member Hash motioned to summarily suspend the hairstyling, esthetician, cosmetology, and massage therapy programs. The motion was seconded and carried.

Board member Wardrip motioned to issue a notice of noncompliance to Cosmo Beauty Academy. The motion was seconded and carried.

Executive Security International LTD

Board member Wardrip motioned to Issue a notice of noncompliance for failing to disclose past criminal history. The motion was seconded and carried.

Paul Mitchell The School – Colorado Springs

Board member Wamser stated the issue of concern is the improper ventilation for the nail technician program to be taught in the existing classroom that is approved by the Board.

Board member Wamser motioned to issue a notice of noncompliance to the school. The motion was seconded and carried.

Board member Wamser motioned to summarily suspend the nail technician program and cosmetology program. The motion was seconded and carried.

Face and Body by Iannotti

Following additional discussion with the school owner, Board member Wamser motioned to issue a Cease-and-Desist order to stop the school from continuing to operate illegally.

Adjournment:

Secretary Smith motioned to adjourn the meeting at 2:59 p.m. The motion was seconded and carried. motioned

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board is Tuesday, January 27, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. and will be held via the web conference application, Zoom; meeting details will be posted on the Division's website: highered.colorado.gov/dpos.