**MINUTES**
**COLORADO BOARD OF PRIVATE OCCUPATIONAL SCHOOLS**
**February 24, 2026 at 9:30 a.m.**

Join Zoom Meeting
https://highered-colorado-gov.zoom.us/j/81774665299?pwd=NH0gUDXWbcLLYbImkCkCwiFIUqorh8.1
Meeting ID: 817 7466 5299
Passcode: 922607

Board Members Present:
Jessica Wagner, Chair;
JoAnn Stevens, Vice Chair
Chris Smith, Secretary;
Ellen Wamser; and
Howard Ogg;

Board members Absent:
Jennifer Hash; and
Jason Wardrip

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; and
Division Specialist Kristi Connors

Division Staff Absent:
Program Specialist Assistant Bernadette Esquibel

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 9:31 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 January 27, 2026, regular and executive session minutes, Board member Wamser motioned to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded and carried.

Following review and consideration of the interim February 4, 2026, 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 or additions to the Agenda.

Director/Staff Report:

- COEO/Director Candler reported that 78 renewal applications were submitted by the February 15, 2026 deadline as required by Statute. Four schools failed to submit renewal applications by the deadline and will be required to submit provisional applications in order to continue operating past June 30, 2026.
- COEO/Director Candler reported that the Department has a new Executive Director, JB Holston, who started in January.
- COEO/Director Candler reported that it's Career and Technical Education month which is especially relevant to our schools and industries. It's also Financial Aid Awareness month which is important to our students and any work we can do to ensure students who may qualify are able to access those funds.
- COEO/Director Candler reported that rulemaking has concluded which included quite an overhaul of the rules to make them much more accessible and clearer to the user.
- COEO/Director Candler announced that Board member Wamser will be terming out in June and we are very grateful to her dedication and guidance in tackling some of the more challenging financial issues our schools face. The Division has begun a search for a replacement with the criteria for this Board member position to be employed by a lending institution located in Colorado and be familiar with funds authorized in Title IV.
- COEO/Director Candler announced that a new fee for exemption requests will be implemented with the updated Rules when they are effective April 1, 2026.

**New Business/Action Items:**

A. Consideration of Approval of Provisional Certificate

At this time, Board member Ogg recused himself.

1. RouteReady CDL Academy – Pueblo – AB

Program Specialist Bentz presented to the Board for review and consideration of a Provisional School Application to Operate including two programs: 160-hour Tractor Trailer Training and 75-hour Straight Truck 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, Secretary Smith motioned to approve the Provisional Certificate effective February 24, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027. The motion was seconded and carried.

At this time, Board member Ogg rejoined the meeting.

2. Kim Robins Pilates Teacher Training Program – Boulder – KS

Program Specialist Solis presented to the Board for review and consideration of a Provisional School Application to Operate including one program: Comprehensive Pilates 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, Secretary Smith motioned to approve the Provisional Certificate effective February 24, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027. The motion was seconded and carried.

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

1. Colorado School of Energy Studies – Boulder – KS

Program Specialist Solis presented to the Board for review and consideration of one new program: Craniosacral Therapy Home Study. 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, Vice Chair Stevens motioned to approve the previously mentioned new program effective February 24, 2026. The motion was seconded and carried.

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

- Background: Approved school until May 2025, when the school owner sent a letter to the Division & Board reporting he did not wish to be subject to Board oversight and surrendered his certificate of approval. The Division accepted the surrender.
- June 2025: Fadez filed a complaint against the Division and Board, alleging the Board failed to take a required oath of office and altered Board meeting minutes
- Oct. 2025: Court dismissed complaint for failure to state a claim
- Fadez appealed the dismissal to the Colorado Supreme Court for extraordinary relief

***New information:*** The Colorado Supreme Court issued an order denying Fadez' petition for extraordinary relief on February 3, 2026. This matter is now closed.

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

- Background: Approved school until June 2023, when the Board denied renewal application. Since that time, the school has continued to operate in a nonexempt manner without Board approval.
- Aug. 2024: Board asked for injunction due to school's continued operation
    - Court issued injunction + payment of civil penalty (Feb. 2025)
- June 2025: Board voted to issue a motion to find the school in contempt of the Court's order against Defendants
- Aug. 2025: Board filed for contempt against school and owner due to continued operation
- Jan. 2026: District Court issued a warrant to school owner for failure to appear ($1,000 bond)

***No New information***

3. Whole Body Studios

- Background: Unapproved school in Denver offering Pilates teacher training to students without an approved exemption or certificate of approval o
    - School has not submitted an application or documentation to support exempt status despite multiple requests by Division to do so
    - School is currently offering a Pilates teacher training course

***New information***:

- Cease and Desist Order attached (issued on Feb. 4, 2026)
- Whole Body Pilates reported it modified its program for Pilates Teacher Training and submitted an exemption request to the Division on Feb. 18, 2026

4. Paul Mitchell The School, Colorado Springs – No Action

- Dec. 2025: Board summarily suspended Nail Technician and Cosmetology programs and issued Notice of Noncompliance to school.
    - Issues: offering programs in a manner and location not approved by the Board, jeopardizing student and customer safety by not providing training in approved location, failure to report permitting issue to the Division
- Jan. 2026: Board voted to lift suspension of programs once the school provides evidence it has obtained the necessary approval and permits to operate from the regional building inspector

***New information:*** No updates from the school on the status of inspection/permit approval at this time.

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

- Background: Occupational school in Paonia, Colorado providing training to students to become "holistic practitioners" or "holistic nutritionists" without Board approval or an exempt status
- Feb. 2024: Board issued Cease and Desist Order to school, ordering the school to cease from continued unlawful operations
    - Ritually Rooted kept operating after Cease and Desist issued
- Dec. 2025: District Court issued injunction to stop Ritually Rooted from operating after 2-day hearing
- Jan. 2026: Ritually Rooted filed an appeal with the Colorado Court of Appeals asking the court to overturn the injunction.

***New information:***

- Appeal is pending with the Colorado Court of Appeals

6. Carter Truck Driving Academy – No Action

- Background: Approved school that ceased operations in or around Dec. 2024. The school is not currently operating, does not have necessary equipment to provide education/training, and does not have an approved location.
- May 2025: school's certificate of approval suspended due to lapse of surety coverage
- Sept. 2025: Board issued Notice of Noncompliance for failure to obtain surety coverage, lack of follow through on statements to the Board
    - Incomplete response from school – school did not supplement response or provide required information
    - School did obtain required surety coverage
- Dec. 2025: Board voted to revoke school's certificate of approval due to continued noncompliance after additional time provided

***New information***:

- The school has agreed to voluntarily surrender its certificate of approval to remove the need for a hearing on revocation.
- The school still needs to upload student records required from a school upon closure before the Stipulated Agreement comes to the Board.

7. Cosmo Beauty Academy (Office of Administrative Courts)

- Dec. 2025: Board voted to issue Notice of Noncompliance and summarily suspend Cosmo's esthetician, hairstylist, permanent makeup, massage therapy and cosmetology programs
- Jan. 2026: Board voted to proceed with Notice of Charges to revoke school's certificate of approval

***No new information.*** Notice of Charges IN PROGRESS

8. 160 Driving Academy – Commerce City

- Jan. 2026: Board voted to issue a Notice of Noncompliance to school re: financial stability concerns

***New information:*** Notice of Noncompliance IN PROGRESS

9. IntelliTec – Colorado Springs

- Jan. 2026: Board voted to issue a Notice of Noncompliance to school re: educational program quality and placement rates

***New information:*** Notice of Noncompliance IN PROGRESS

10. Rise Aesthetics

- Jan. 2026: Board voted to issue a Notice of Noncompliance to school re: providing advanced training in a manner not approved by the Board and utilizing unqualified instructors

***New information:*** Drafting of Notice of Noncompliance IN PROGRESS

B. School of Inner Health

Deputy Director Kanaly reported that the school was placed on conditional approval since their renewal application was before the Board in June 2025 due to concerns over a program being approved for 350-hours but students receiving credentials for a 700-hour program upon completion. The school submitted a new program application for a 700-hour program, but the application was denied by the Board due to concerns regarding the home-study portion of the program and the lack of interaction with instructors.

The Division has had good discussions with the school and have come to a resolution to protect current students. For eight current students to complete the program as approved by the Board, the school has completed enrollment agreement addendums to make it clear that students are enrolled in the 350-hour program and will receive that credential upon graduation. The school has submitted signed addendums to the Division which will satisfy the conditional approval requirements of the renewal application.

C. Medical Sales College

Board Counsel provided a summary of actions taken by the Board including placing the school on conditional approval of their renewal application in 2024 due to concerns regarding financial stability, imposing a probationary status due to continued concerns regarding financial stability in 2025, and adding a new term of probation pertaining to the school's further enrollment of new students or starting new programs. Subsequent to the additional term of probation, the school filed a motion in Denver District Court requesting a temporary restraining order and a complaint seeking relief. A special Board meeting was held on February 4, 2026, and voted to remove the additional term. The school has since asked the court for a stay of its request for a temporary restraining order. The court issued a stay for 60 days to allow the parties to work together to figure out a resolution.

**Secretary Smith motioned to move Medical Sales College 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 Ogg 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 matter: Medical Sales College 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 10:10 a.m.

The Board of Private Occupational Schools convened in executive session with its attorney of record, the Division Director, and Division staff at 10:10 a.m.

Summary of Return to Regular Session:

After the review and consideration of the matters previously mentioned, Chair Wagner 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:

Medical Sales College

Board member Wamser expressed concern about the overall financial performance and stability of the school due to declining enrollment. The school was placed on probationary status for the Board to monitor the plans and projections provided and to protect the students. Chair Wagner reiterated the precedent of the Board monitoring schools' financial stability when there is an investor involved to ensure that financial stability is maintained. Vice Chair Stevens continued the discussion by adding that continued monitoring is to ensure the protection of students and their investments in the programs.

Vice Chair Stevens motioned to reject the settlement offered by Medical Sales College. The motion was seconded and carried.

Adjournment:

Chair Stevens motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:54 a.m. The motion was seconded and carried. motioned

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board is Tuesday, March 24, 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.