

**Behavioral Health Bachelor's of Applied Science Program Approval Packet
Presented to the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education
September 2024**

Presentation Packet Contents:

- Community College of Aurora BEH BAS Program Narrative
- Community College of Denver BEH BAS Program Narrative
- Pueblo Community College BEH BAS Program Narrative
- Pikes Peak State College BEH BAS Program Narrative

STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION

TOPIC:	Bachelor of Applied Science in Behavioral Health (BEH)
PRESENTED BY:	Dr. Mordecai Brownlee, President, Community College of Aurora (CCA)
RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:	Transform the student experience; Create education without barriers through transformational partnerships; Redefine our value proposition through accessibility, affordability, quality, accountability, resource development, and operational excellence.

EXPLANATION:

Pursuant to the Colorado Community College System's (CCCS) role and mission (§23-60-201, C.R.S.), CCCS may offer technical, career, and workforce development Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree programs. Authority for CCCS to offer BAS degrees was made possible by SB14-004 (Community College Four-year Programs), signed by the Governor on February 27, 2014.

Additionally, in 2022, the Colorado State Legislature passed Senate Bill 22-181 which concerned the Behavioral Health Administration's plan to address issues regarding the delivery of behavioral healthcare services in Colorado. Within that legislation was direction to the Colorado Community College System to develop a career pathway in behavioral health in order to increase and diversify the behavioral healthcare provider workforce (Behavioral Health-care Workforce, SB22-181, 2022¹). This directive and its associated appropriation led to collaborative partnerships with the Colorado Department of Higher Education, the Colorado Department of Healthcare Policy and Financing, the Behavioral Health Administration, and multiple employers. From that, CCCS and its partnering colleges created and implemented a fully stackable pathway from high school CTE to an AAS, then to the proposed BAS, thus completing the legislative directive of delivering a career pathway in the behavioral health workforce that is accessible to a more diverse student population, ultimately increasing and diversifying the workforce and increasing services in our community and beyond.

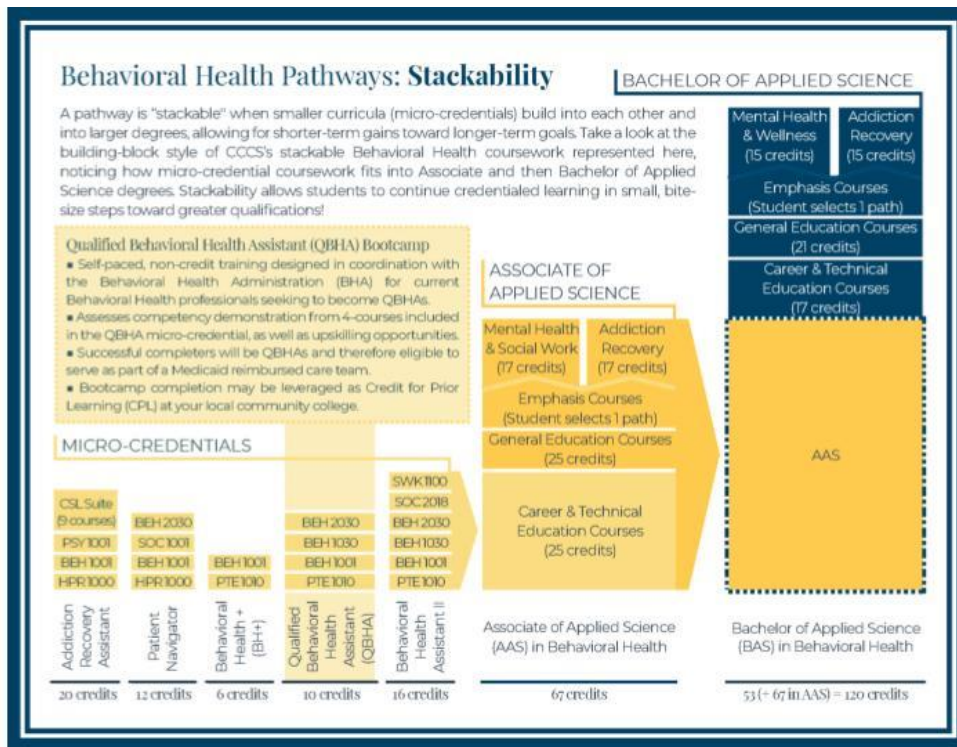
According to The State of Mental Health in America 2024 report (Reinert, Fritze, & Nguyen, 2024²), Colorado ranks 46th overall in the nation, indicating a higher prevalence of mental illness and lower rates of access to care. For the adult population, Colorado ranks 40th, and for youth, Colorado ranks 44th. This program and the culminating BAS degree seeks to change the current behavioral healthcare model in the state of Colorado to directly impact, and improve, these rankings.

This proposal seeks approval from the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE) for a BAS degree in Behavioral Health (BEH) for Community College of Aurora. The legislative criteria for approval of a BAS degree are set forth below, with a summary of the supporting data demonstrating that the criteria have been met. Additional information is provided in the appendices.

¹ Behavioral Health-care Workforce, SB22-181. (2022). https://leg.colorado.gov/sites/default/files/2022a_181_signed.pdf

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See the Behavioral Health Pathways Stackability graphic below for a visual representation of this program.



1. Data demonstrating workforce and student demand for the degree program.

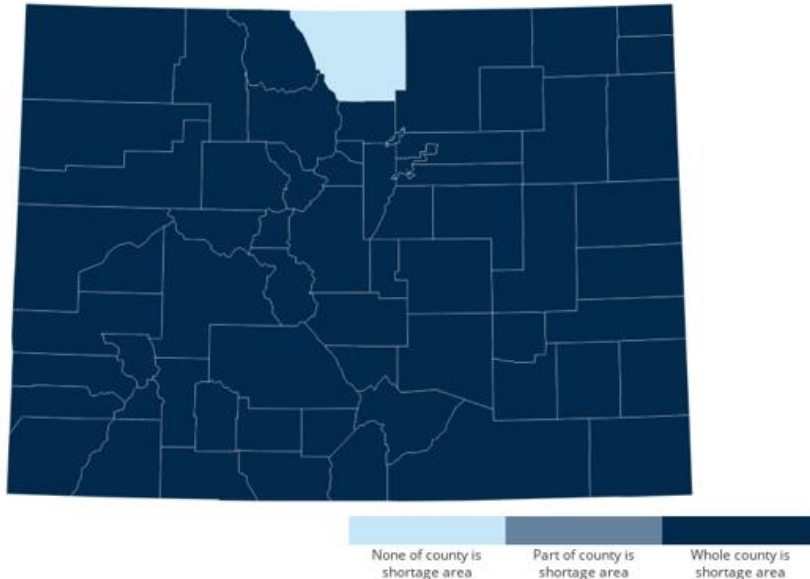
In the professional field of behavioral healthcare, a bachelor's degree leads to significantly increased economic mobility. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2024³), those with bachelor's degrees earn 35% higher than those with associate's degrees. This is a significant increase in earnings compared to the 18% increase that those with associate's degrees have over high school graduates. Additionally, there is a need for entry level employees and for those employees to have a pathway to mid-level roles. National data from Lightcast (2024⁴) indicates that 29% of employers require a bachelor's degree for social and community service managers or substance use, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors nationally, while 39% prefer a master's degree. This data set also noted that Denver is a top posting city for positions in this field. See *Appendix A* for local, state, and national Lightcast data sets.

The colleges in the Colorado community college system offer AAS degrees within this field, yet only some of those credits will transfer to four-year partners at this time. To help meet these needs, CCA has developed a BAS in Behavioral Health and has conducted extensive research to determine program viability, while also working to ensure students who transfer to related pathways at 4-year institutions do not lose credits. Additionally, every county in Colorado but one is identified as a federal Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA), see the map below, an issue specifically named in SB22-181.

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Health Professional Shortage Areas: Mental Health, by County, July 2024 - Colorado



Source: data.HRSA.gov, July 2024.

The behavioral health field traditionally relies on master’s level trained clinicians, which is a long and expensive pathway. These time and cost barriers result in a non-diversified and limited workforce, and one that takes six years of education and eight years before licensure (minimum). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2023⁵), 75% of mental health counselors were women, and 76% were white. These percentages were consistent for social workers, social and community service managers, and a variety of community and social service occupations (reaching as high as 88% female). CCA is a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). Having the ability for students to obtain their education in shorter increments that will stack to the AAS and then to the BAS is anticipated to increase the educational attainment in the Aurora community and beyond, positively impacting the access and success of historically excluded populations to gain entrance and advancement in the field.

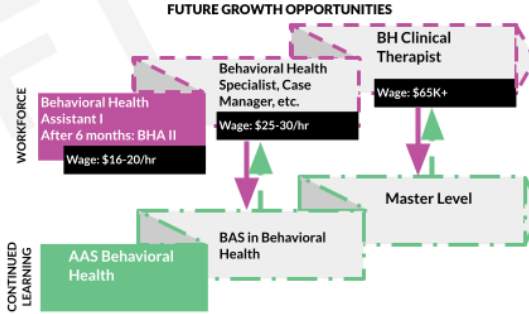
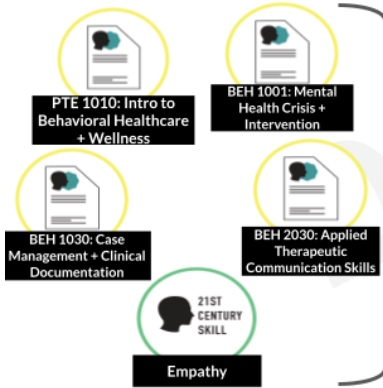
The BAS in Behavioral Health will create an accessible, high-quality opportunity to enter this field at a faster rate while still ensuring economic mobility, achieving the SB22-181 goals. It will contribute to increased entry and mid-level practitioners that can help form a behavioral health care team versus a one-person support model. This increases opportunities to diversify the field with folks for whom a master’s degree is not currently accessible, prevent burnout for the folks able to complete a master’s degree, and increase the speed and quality of care Colorado citizens receive. A visual representation of this program and the aligning industry positions and pay is below.

⁵ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2019). Labor force statistics from the current population survey. <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.htm>

SUMMARY: The *Qualified Behavioral Health Assistant* micro-credential ensures students develop entry-level behavioral health knowledge and competencies. Upon completion of this coursework, they will be a Qualified Behavioral Health Assistant as outlined by the Behavioral Health Administration. The curriculum includes entry-level skills and foundational knowledge about behavioral health and wellness, intercultural competency, therapeutic communication, case management, and crisis intervention.

- TOP SKILLS:**
1. Understanding of Behavioral Health and Healthcare Systems
 2. Empathy and Healthy Boundaries
 3. Therapeutic Communication Skills
 4. Case Management and Documentation
 5. Crisis Intervention and Wellness
 6. Trauma-Informed Care and Cultural Competency

CREDENTIALS EARNED
 6 months | 10 Credits towards higher credential | Hybrid



Medicaid Competencies: (Under supervision), these individuals will be able to do elements of: Wellness Promotion, Education, Community Needs Assessment, Screening, Referral, Crisis Management, Case Management, Orientation to Services, and Individual & Group Interventions

Throughout the BEH BAS planning and design, industry partners were engaged to ensure the program best reflected current employer needs. Based on responses from industry, collected during listening sessions and surveys, this new BAS will prepare students for a competitive job market where they will be in high demand. The program curriculum (*Appendix B*) was designed with employer feedback at the center, driving the courses included and developed. Lightcast data trends by SOC codes are below.

Table 1. Lightcast 10-Year Employment Projections by combined SOC Codes (2023 – 2033)

	Colorado	CCA 3 Counties	National Average
Social & Community Manager (11-9151) and Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors (21-1018)	22%	21%	22%

Table 2. Lightcast Educational Attainment of Current Workers – National Data

	High School	Some College	Associate's degree	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree
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Table 3. Lightcast CO Wage Percentiles 2023 Wages CCA County Area – Combined SOC Codes

	25 th Percentile	Median	75 th Percentile
Social & Community Manager (11-9151) and Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors (21-1018)	\$43,757 - \$50,843	\$58,765 – 68,188	\$76,071 - \$87,596

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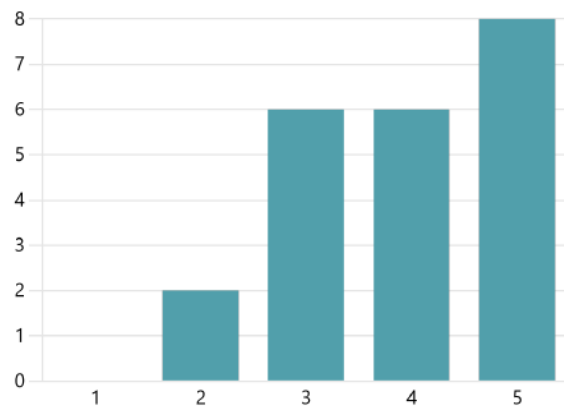
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Therefore, CCA is requesting approval to develop a BAS in Behavioral Health and has conducted extensive research to determine program viability.

Attainment of this BAS will allow CCA graduates to qualify for positions that require a bachelor's degree, including the Certified Addiction Specialist, plan for progressive advancements in employment and earning potential, and gain equitable access to the profession through an affordable and applied education. An industry survey was sent (*Appendix C*) to local and state partners regarding the BAS. Twenty-two partners responded, and some results are highlighted below:

1. How would you rate the market value for a Bachelor of Applied Science in Behavioral Health?

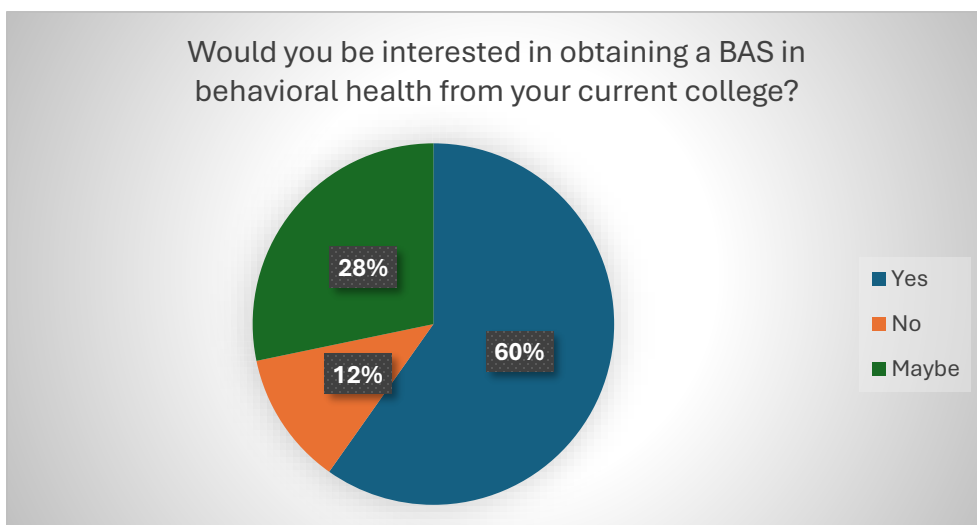
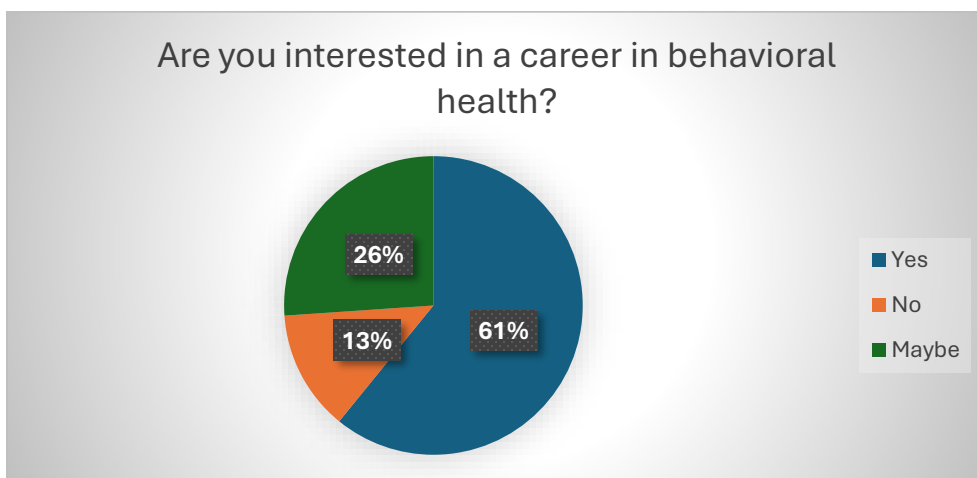
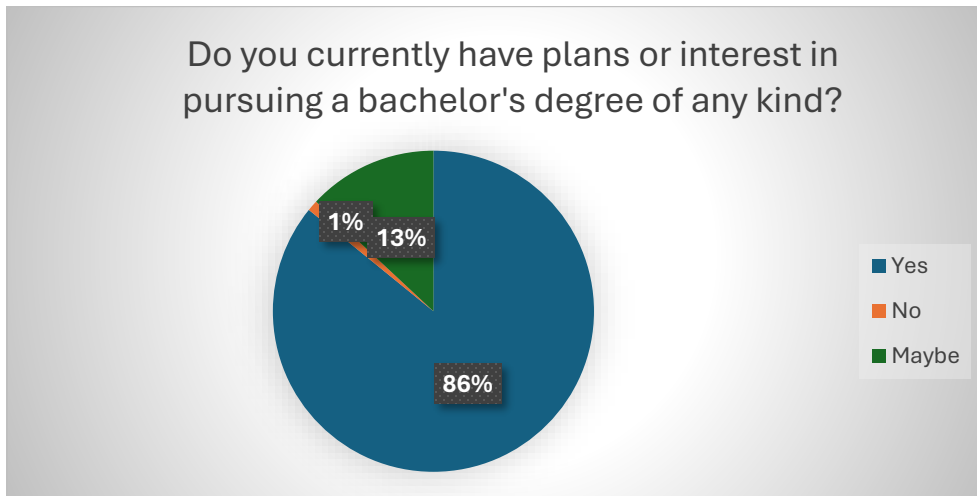
3.91
Average Rating

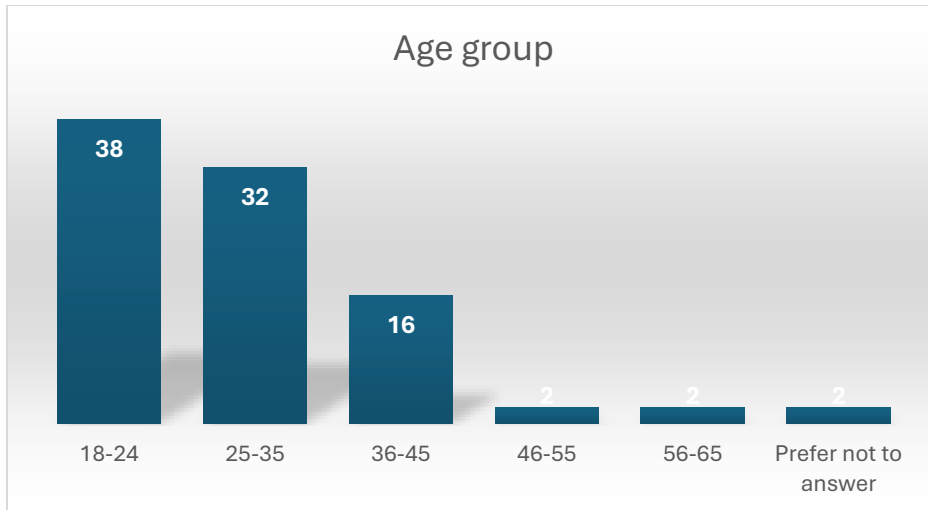


3. Which of the following award levels would be most valuable for students entering the behavioral health industry (rank from most valuable to least valuable)?



A student survey was sent to current students and alumni (*Appendix D*). The 92 responses revealed a positive outlook for student interest, motives for pursuing a BAS in Behavioral Health, training and skills desired from this degree, and how they would prefer to take classes. Some results are highlighted below:





Qualitative comments from students included:

- “I like routine; I would prefer not to transfer to another school to complete my Bachelor's degree.”
- “Behavioral health is an issue of concern in our community and country at large and much investment should be made to attract people to that sector of our health department”
- “I think it would be fantastic if I could continue my classes with CCA without having to transfer after receiving an AA.”
- “I think offering a bachelors in behavioral health will bring so many students the chance to keep going after their associates in the same collage without the need of moving to a University”
- “I would like to attend the Community college of Aurora to complete my bachelor’s degree in social work / mental health, if this college offered this degree..... I will be obtaining my associate degree from this college next year, it would be a great transition to stay in this college as I am very happy with the support and help provided to me since fall 2022. I have great grades. Please consider the bachelors degree for next year !!!!! Thank you”
- “I would like to get a Degree in Behavioural health so as to help people not only in my community around me but also anyone who is ready to come and seek help for the better of themselves.”
- “Transferring to finish my degree feels unappealing.”
- “I 100% agree with a possible bachelor's of applied science degree in Behavioral health “
- I intend to get a nursing degree, but if behavioral health interests me I would consider a degree in it”
- “this would be a great option for me.”
- “A Bachelor's of Applied Science degree in Behavioral Health provides comprehensive training in mental health, preparing students for diverse careers in counseling, case management, and mental health services, while also offering practical experience and the opportunity to make a positive impact on individuals' lives.”

Additionally, focus groups were conducted with students as part of the initial planning process, as well as student interest surveys, and students were excited about the stackability of the new pathway which allowed them to get started in the field faster (earning social and economic mobility by accruing years of experience) and ultimately complete their BAS at the College, followed by attainment of a well-paying career.

The BAS in BEH will serve multiple disciplines and graduates will be able to apply for positions such as addiction technicians and addiction specialists, social and community service managers, and more. This degree also provides the educational foundation of required courses that Colorado requires for Licensed Addiction Counselor (LAC). While a master's degree in a mental health field is also part of the LAC educational requirements, the BAS in BEH does meet the academic prerequisites for application to many graduate psychology and graduate counseling programs, and articulation agreements with those partners are in development.

CCA currently has 325 students who have declared Behavioral Health as a major and 159 certificate seekers. We have 116 unduplicated headcount for Fall 2024 semester enrollment in the micro-credentials/certificates and AAS programs, providing a strong base of potential students for the BAS.

2. The regional and professional accreditation requirements for the degree program, if applicable, have been met.

Regional accreditation. This program will require approval by or notification to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). CCA will submit a [New Academic Program Substantive Change Application](#) upon receiving all appropriate SBCCOE and state approvals of the program because CCA does not have programs at the BAS credential level. This will likely require, in addition to the full *HLC Substantive Change Form*, a desk review, and a campus visit.

Professional accreditation. CCA is not pursuing professional accreditation at this time for the BAS in Behavioral Health. However, after the second year, seeking national certification as an NAADAC Approved Education Provider is planned. This will allow students and community-based professionals to access nationally recognized education.

CCA is in progress with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) in Colorado for all the Certified Addiction Counseling (CAC) training course work, this is a CSL prefix in the Common Course Numbering System (CCNS). This MOU will cover the current CAC/CSL courses that are in the AAS level and will include the new CAC/CSL courses at the BAS level. This MOU is a benefit to both the college in securing qualified instructors and the students that are pursuing their CAT or CAS certification in tracking their course work with BHA.

3. Providing the degree program within the Community College System is cost-effective for the students and the Community College System.

The BEH pathway at CCA and other CCCS colleges was created based on a series of stackable options to provide a cost-effective program for students. Students can start the process by working towards a micro-credential/certificate, which will stack into the AAS in BEH in either the Addictions Recovery emphasis area or the Mental Health & Social Work emphasis area, these two emphasis areas have 50 out of 67 credits as common or core in the degree. The proposed BAS in Behavioral Health will have two emphasis areas to align and stack with the AAS, Addictions Recovery and Mental Health & Wellness. The BAS emphasis areas will have 38/53 credits that are common core with 21 credits of general education courses, which brings the total of general education between the AAS and BAS to 46 credits.

The first 67 credits of the 120 credits required to complete the BAS come directly from the AAS degree requirements. The BAS pathway will allow students to declare a double major so that they can be enrolled and take courses concurrently in both the BEH AAS and BEH BAS; this ability for students could potentially decrease their time to completion for the BAS.

Tuition for the 3000- and 4000-level courses in the BAS has been agreed upon between the CCCS colleges that are requesting approval and is in alignment with several other BAS degrees within CCCS. This rate of tuition supports the necessary expenses of offering the degree, which is indicated in the financial analysis (*Appendix E*). The tuition rate that is proposed is lower than comparable degree programs available in Colorado and neighboring states and CCCS colleges will apply all 67 credits of the AAS to the BAS.

Due to the feedback from industry partners, the fact that the BEH program is new at all levels and that there are internship requirements at the BAS level, the CCCS BEH curriculum team has requested and been granted a 2 year opt out from CO Online for pooled sections in four prefixes: BEH, PTE, CSL, and SWK. However, to ensure consistency, the tuition rate has been set in line with comparable BAS programs, which also aligns with the CO Online tuition rate. Should the program transition to CO Online, no tuition adjustments will be needed.

4. Providing the degree program's projected facility and equipment costs are considered.

This program will not require any additional facility and equipment cost, as the current office and classroom space of the AAS degree program will meet the needs of the BAS. CCA currently is receiving grant funding from SB 22-181 mentioned in the financial analysis. This funding is through December 2026 with the intention of developing and advancing behavioral health programs.

Faculty and Staffing analysis:

CCA currently has two full time personnel in the grant, a department chair/faculty and a navigator. The costs that are indicated on the financial analysis, include a percentage of the current staff, marketing, and recruitment dollars specific to the BAS and a simulation program at the BAS level for students to engage in prior to attending internship placements. The initial cost is proposed to be purchased by the college, as assessment of the available platforms are considered. Once a platform has been decided on then this will more than likely be moved to a textbook or course fee.

Student Support Services Analysis:

All services integral to the success of students will continue to be supported through CCA's pathways advising model. The Department Chair/Faculty will not only be able to provide support but will also be the instructor in some of the BAS courses. The program navigator will assist students with their successful navigation and completion of the program as well as placement into jobs within the field. Additionally, they will help identify and build the internship sites, relationships, and ongoing job opportunities.

Additionally, CCA has robust student support services including the Writing Center, Online Math Tutoring, 24/7 tutoring in a variety of subjects through MyOnlineTutoring, 24/7 technology helpdesk through CCCS, and an associated student government with information on campus events available to all students. CCA also has a series of databases available for students through centralized library services, including EBSCO, JSTOR, ProQuest, etc., to provide BEH students with the necessary

resources. See *Appendix F* for a full report on the CCCS Centralized Library Behavioral Health resources available for this program.

5. The proposed program addresses the effect on existing programs in terms of finances, enrollment, and staff.

The new BEH BAS degree would not have any negative financial or enrollment effects on existing programs. There are excellent partnership opportunities with existing academic departments for growth and increased enrollment. There are new courses being added to the CCA Catalog in PSY, SPA, COM, and CRJ. Through utilization of existing staff in these areas, the increased course offerings and enrollment contribute to the success of other existing programs and departments.

While there are department specific courses through the BEH, PTE, CSL, and SWK prefixes, approximately 50% of the credits are general education courses that are currently offered and staffed. It is anticipated to have a positive impact on enrollment in those general education departments. The new degree could also create additional interest in CCA's psychology, sociology, and partnering programs. Faculty teaching in these program areas may be interested in teaching BEH courses as well, if qualified.

Recommendation: Therefore, CCA is requesting approval to develop a BAS in Behavioral Health and has conducted extensive research to determine program viability.

Appendices:

Appendix A:Lightcast Labor Market Data

Appendix B:BAS Behavioral Health Course List

Appendix C:Employer Engagement Survey

Appendix D:Student Survey

Appendix E:Financial Analysis

Appendix F:Behavioral Health Library Assessment Memo

STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION

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PRESENTED BY:	Dr. Marielena DeSanctis, President, Community College of Denver (CCD)
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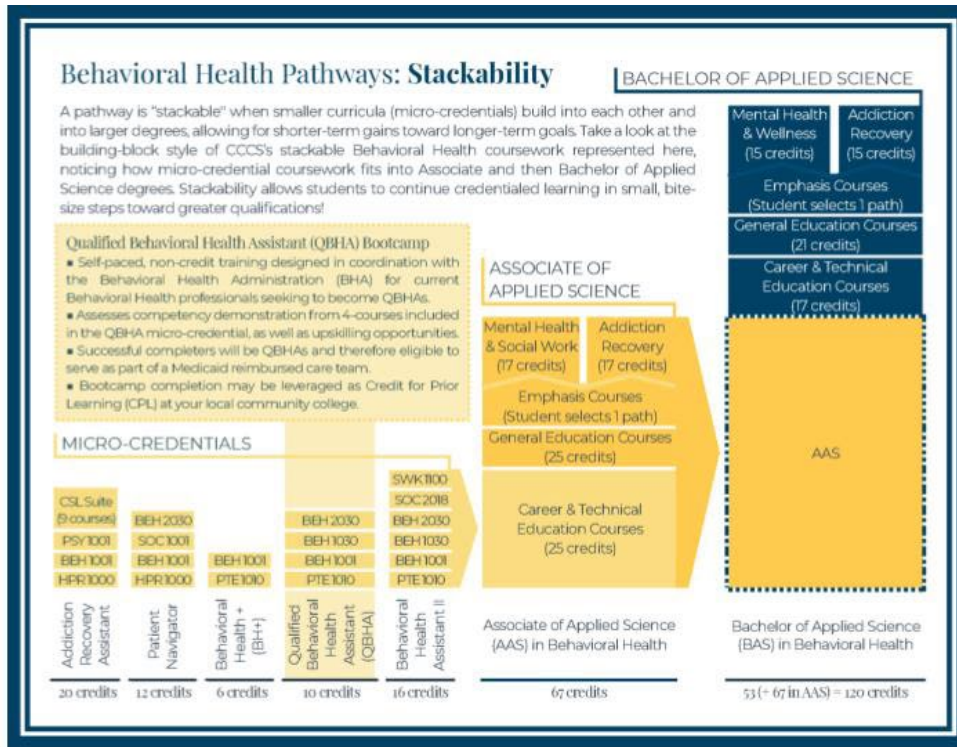
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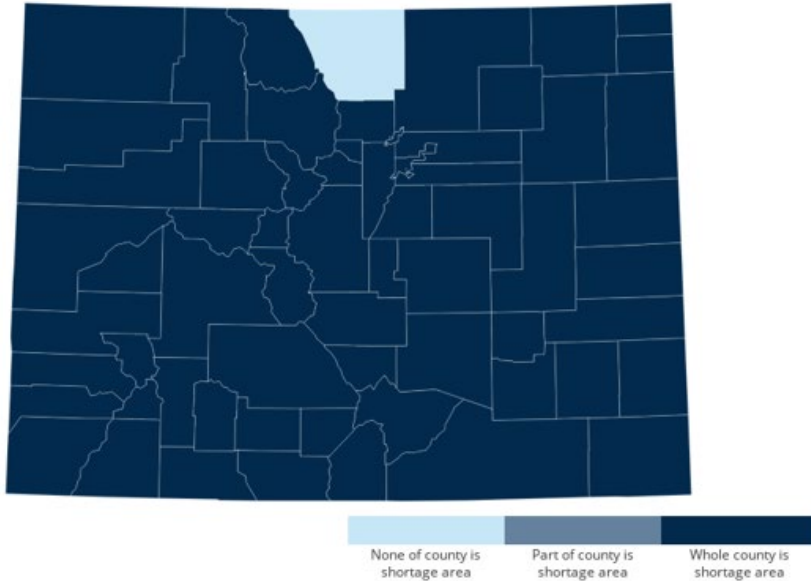
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Colorado Community College System
Behavioral Health Assistant - Qualified BHA
 A Micro-Pathway to Become a Behavioral Health Assistant

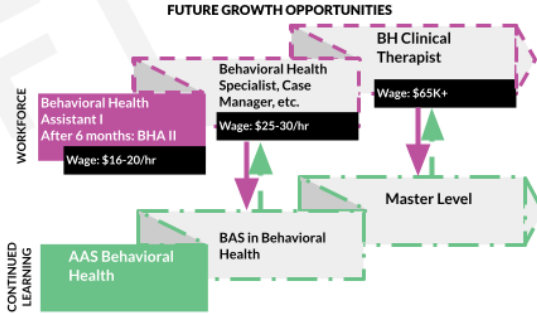
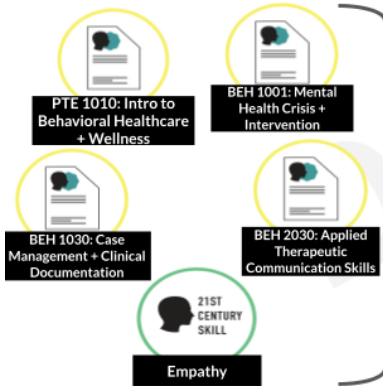


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⁶Lightcast. (2024). *Lightcast Q3 2024 Colorado data set*. <https://www.lightcast.io/>

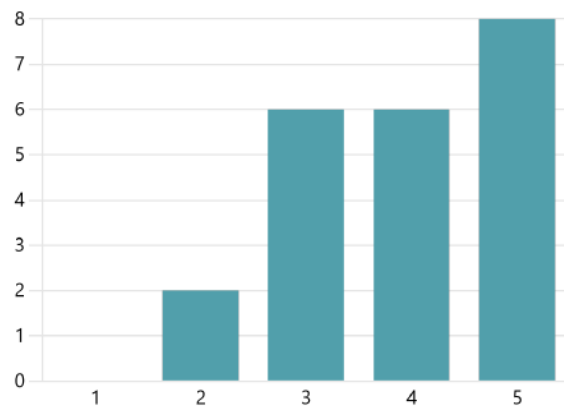
⁷Lightcast. (2024). *Lightcast Q3 2024 Community College of Denver data set*. <https://www.lightcast.io/>

Therefore, CCD is requesting approval to develop a BAS in Behavioral Health and has conducted extensive research to determine program viability.

Attainment of this BAS will allow CCD graduates to qualify for positions that require a bachelor's degree, including the Certified Addiction Specialist, plan for progressive advancements in employment and earning potential, and gain equitable access to the profession through an affordable and applied education. An industry survey was sent (*Appendix C*) to local and state partners regarding the BAS. Twenty-two partners responded, and some results are highlighted below:

1. How would you rate the market value for a Bachelor of Applied Science in Behavioral Health?

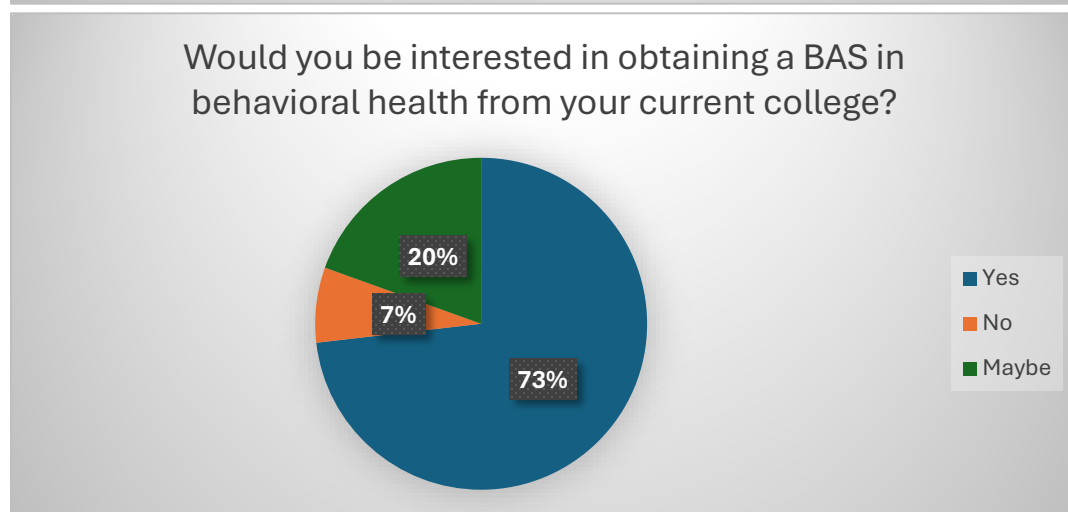
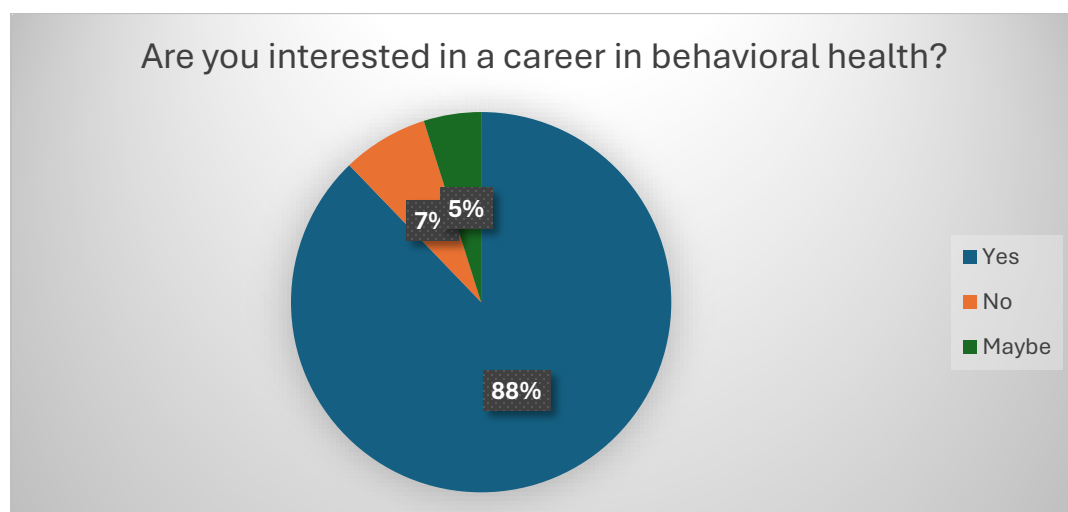
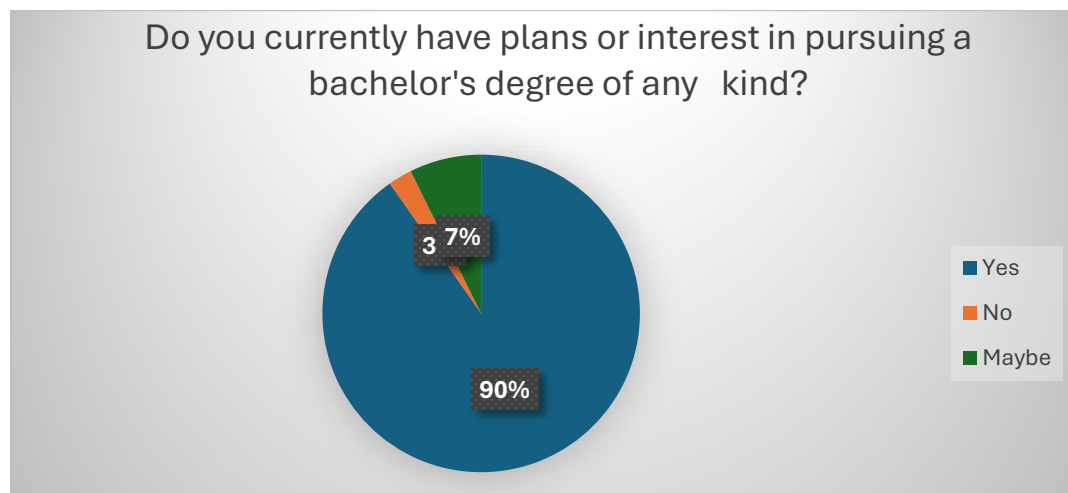
3.91
Average Rating

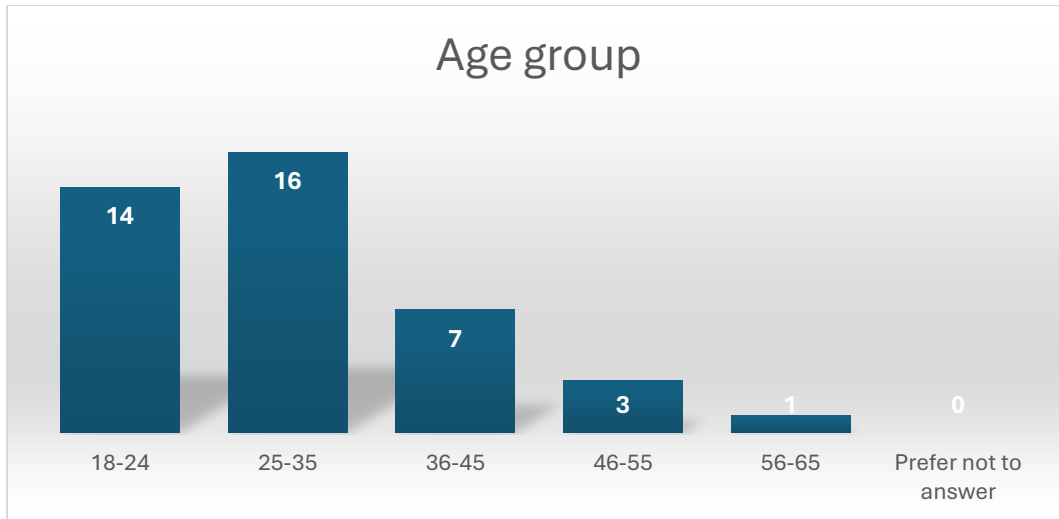


3. Which of the following award levels would be most valuable for students entering the behavioral health industry (rank from most valuable to least valuable)?



A student survey was sent to current students and alumni (*Appendix D*). The 41 responses revealed a positive outlook for student interest, motives for pursuing a BAS in Behavioral Health, training and skills desired from this degree, and how they would prefer to take classes. Some results are highlighted below:





Qualitative comments from students included:

- “Helping people is my calling. A bachelor's at my current college would be amazing.”
- “I am a single parent working full time. Online classes are easier.”
- “Already studying for human services, the credits should be applied if possible, plus financial aid is huge. I'm a single parent of four, working full time and obtaining a degree.”
- “I'm interested in learning about this program.”
- “I would heavily consider this option if it is available. I enjoy CCD and am looking to transfer but if this were to be available it would be an option.”
- “This option would benefit students hoping to transfer and obtain a degree in this field, allowing them to succeed in this field for future career success.”
- “I would be very interested in a certificate.”
- “I'm currently serving in the military, and behavioral health is something that comes up a lot as a need for soldiers. So, it just excites me to see this being offered as we could always use more aid in this profession.”
- “My goal is to pursue a career in Behavioral Health so this would be extremely helpful in accomplishing that goal. Please make it happen!”
- “I have a lot of interest in the military, and helping veterans recover from addiction and trauma would mean the world to me.”
- “My overall goal is to get a psychology degree to become a therapist, but it would be nice to have a behavioral health background to encourage growth and financial stability during this process of obtaining my master's in psychology down the line. My goal would be to obtain my behavioral Health, and once completed, I would like to obtain my master's in psychology. If possible, I wouldn't even mind majoring in one and minoring in another.”
- “I would be very interested in this degree. I personally believe this further education is needed now more than ever.”

- “I want to become a substance abuse counselor, so a behavioral health track would be extremely beneficial to me personally.”

Additionally, focus groups were conducted with students as part of the initial planning process, as well as student interest surveys, and students were excited about the stackability of the new pathway which allowed them to get started in the field faster (earning social and economic mobility by accruing years of experience) and ultimately complete their BAS at the College, followed by attainment of a well-paying career.

The BAS in BEH will serve multiple disciplines and graduates will be able to apply for positions such as addiction technicians and addiction specialists, social and community service managers, and more. This degree also provides the educational foundation of required courses that Colorado requires for Licensed Addiction Counselor (LAC). While a master’s degree in a mental health field is also part of the LAC educational requirements, the BAS in BEH does meet the academic prerequisites for application to many graduate psychology and graduate counseling programs, and articulation agreements with those partners are in development.

2. The regional and professional accreditation requirements for the degree program, if applicable, have been met.

Regional accreditation. This program will require approval by or notification to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). CCD has previously approved bachelor degree programs and will submit a [New Degree Program Screening Form](#) upon receiving all appropriate SBCCOE and state approvals.

Professional accreditation. CCD is not pursuing professional accreditation at this time for the BAS in Behavioral Health. However, after the second year, seeking national certification as an NAADAC Approved Education Provider is planned. This will allow students and community-based professionals to access nationally recognized education.

CCD is in progress with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) in Colorado for all the Certified Addiction Counseling (CAC) training course work, this is a CSL prefix in the Common Course Numbering System (CCNS). This MOU will cover the current CAC/CSL courses that are in the AAS level and will include the new CAC/CSL courses at the BAS level. This MOU is a benefit to both the college in securing qualified instructors and the students that are pursuing their CAT or CAS certification in tracking their course work with BHA.

3. Providing the degree program within the Community College System is cost-effective for the students and the Community College System.

The BEH pathway at CCD and other CCCS colleges was created based on a series of stackable options to provide a cost-effective program for students. Students can start the process by working towards a micro-credential/certificate, which will stack into the AAS in BEH in either the Addictions Recovery emphasis area or the Mental Health & Social Work emphasis area, these two emphasis areas have 50 out of 67 credits as common or core in the degree. The proposed BAS in Behavioral Health will have two emphasis areas to align and stack with the AAS, Addictions Recovery and Mental Health & Wellness. The BAS emphasis areas will have 38/53 credits that are common core with 21 credits of general education courses, which brings the total of general education between the AAS and BAS to 46 credits.

The first 67 credits of the 120 credits required to complete the BAS come directly from the AAS degree requirements. The BAS pathway will allow students to declare a double major so that they can be

enrolled and take courses concurrently in both the BEH AAS and BEH BAS; this ability for students could potentially decrease their time to completion for the BAS.

Tuition for the 3000- and 4000-level courses in the BAS has been agreed upon between the CCCS colleges that are requesting approval and is in alignment with several other BAS degrees within CCCS. This rate of tuition supports the necessary expenses of offering the degree, which is indicated in the financial analysis (*Appendix E*). The tuition rate that is proposed is lower than comparable degree programs available in Colorado and neighboring states and CCCS colleges will apply all 67 credits of the AAS to the BAS.

Due to the feedback from industry partners, the fact that the BEH program is new at all levels and that there are internship requirements at the BAS level, the CCCS BEH curriculum team has requested and been granted a 2 year opt out from CO Online for pooled sections in four prefixes: BEH, PTE, CSL, and SWK. However, to ensure consistency, the tuition rate has been set in line with comparable BAS programs, which also aligns with the CO Online tuition rate. Should the program transition to CO Online, no tuition adjustments will be needed.

4. Providing the degree program's projected facility and equipment costs are considered.

This program will not require any additional facility and equipment cost, as the current office and classroom space of the AAS degree program will meet the needs of the BAS. CCD currently is receiving grant funding from SB 22-181 mentioned in the financial analysis. This funding is through December 2026 with the intention of developing and advancing behavioral health programs.

Faculty and Staffing analysis:

CCD currently has one full time and is actively recruiting three full time grand funded personnel, a department chair/faculty, faculty, and coordinator. The costs that are indicated on the financial analysis, include a percentage of the current staff, marketing, and recruitment dollars specific to the BAS and a simulation program at the BAS level for students to engage in prior to attending internship placements. The initial cost is proposed to be purchased by the college, as assessment of the available platforms are considered. Once a platform has been decided on then this will more than likely be moved to a textbook or course fee.

Student Support Services Analysis:

All services integral to the success of students will continue to be supported through CCD's pathways advising model. The Department Chair/Faculty will not only be able to provide support but will also be the instructor in some of the BAS courses. The program coordinator will help identify and maintain internship sites, build industry relationships, track and monitor ongoing job opportunities in order to coordinate industry and student events. They will also coordinate with Academic Advising to assist students with their successful navigation and completion of the program as well as placement into jobs within the field.

Additionally, CCD has robust student support services including the EXCEL! Zone tutoring support for Writing/ESL, Math/ Science, and Digital Literacy via in person and online modalities. There is also 24/7 tutoring in a variety of subjects through BrainFuse, 24/7 technology helpdesk through CCCS, a CCD-MSU Career Hub (C² Hub) collaborative, and an associated student government with information on campus events available to all students. Through the Auraria campus library, CCD also has a series of databases available for students through centralized library services, including EBSCO, JSTOR,

ProQuest, etc., to provide BEH students with the necessary resources. See *Appendix F* for a full report on the CCCS Centralized Library Behavioral Health resources available for this program.

5. The proposed program addresses the effect on existing programs in terms of finances, enrollment, and staff.

The new BEH BAS degree would not have any negative financial or enrollment effects on existing programs. There are excellent partnership opportunities with existing academic departments for growth and increased enrollment. There are new courses being added to the CCD Catalog in PSY, SPA, COM, and CRJ. Through utilization of existing staff in these areas, the increased course offerings and enrollment contribute to the success of other existing programs and departments.

While there are department specific courses through the BEH, PTE, CSL, and SWK prefixes, approximately 50% of the credits are general education courses that are currently offered and staffed. It is anticipated to have a positive impact on enrollment in those general education departments. The new degree could also create additional interest in CCD's psychology, sociology, and partnering programs. Faculty teaching in these program areas may be interested in teaching BEH courses as well, if qualified.

Recommendation: Therefore, CCD is requesting approval to develop a BAS in Behavioral Health and has conducted extensive research to determine program viability.

Appendices:

[Appendix A: Lightcast Local, State, and National Labor Market Data](#)

[Appendix B: BAS Behavioral Health Course List](#)

[Appendix C: Employer Engagement Survey](#)

[Appendix D: Student Survey](#)

[Appendix E: Financial Analysis](#)

[Appendix F: Behavioral Health Library Assessment Memo](#)

STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION

- TOPIC:** Bachelor of Applied Science in Behavioral Health (BEH)
- PRESENTED BY:** Dr. Chato Hazelbaker, President, Pueblo Community College (PCC)
- RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:** Transform the student experience; Create education without barriers through transformational partnerships; Redefine our value proposition through accessibility, affordability, quality, accountability, resource development, and operational excellence.

EXPLANATION:

Pursuant to the Colorado Community College System’s (CCCS) role and mission (§23-60-201, C.R.S.), CCCS may offer technical, career, and workforce development Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree programs. Authority for CCCS to offer BAS degrees was made possible by SB14-004 (Community College Four-year Programs), signed by the Governor on February 27, 2014.

Additionally, in 2022, the Colorado State Legislature passed Senate Bill 22-181 which concerned the Behavioral Health Administration’s plan to address issues regarding the delivery of behavioral healthcare services in Colorado. Within that legislation was direction to the Colorado Community College System to develop a career pathway in behavioral health in order to increase and diversify the behavioral healthcare provider workforce (Behavioral Health-care Workforce, SB22-181, 2022¹). This directive and its associated appropriation led to collaborative partnerships with the Colorado Department of Higher Education, the Colorado Department of Healthcare Policy and Financing, the Behavioral Health Administration, and multiple employers. From that, CCCS and its partnering colleges created and implemented a fully stackable pathway from high school CTE to an AAS, then to the proposed BAS, thus completing the legislative directive of delivering a career pathway in the behavioral health workforce that is accessible to a more diverse student population, ultimately increasing and diversifying the workforce and increasing services in our community and beyond.

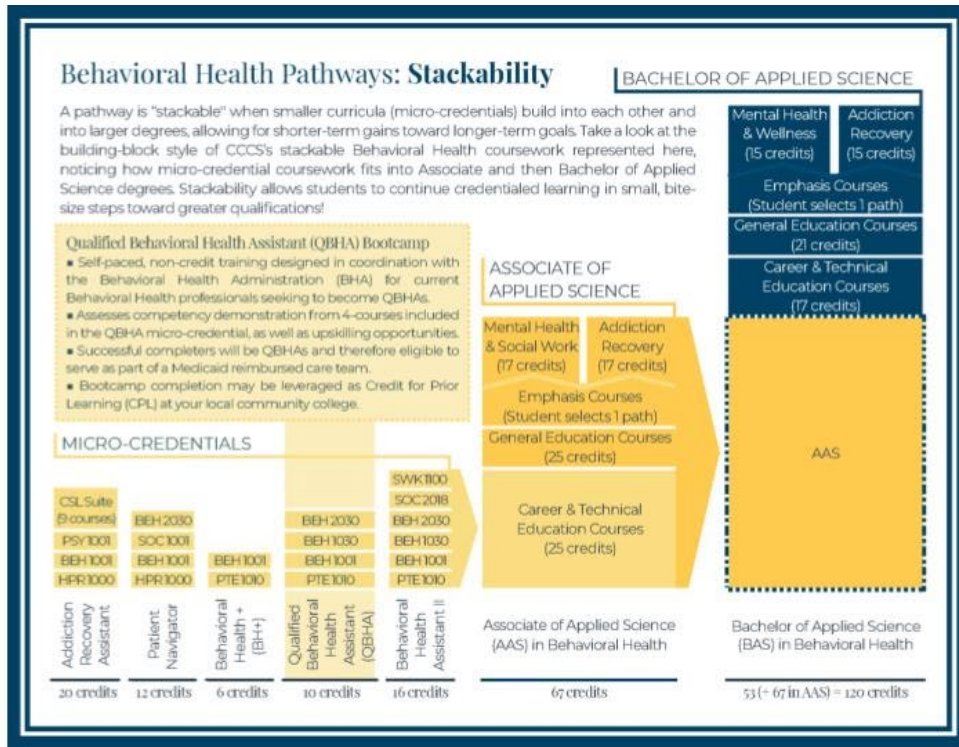
According to The State of Mental Health in America 2024 report (Reinert, Fritze, & Nguyen, 2024²), Colorado ranks 46th overall in the nation, indicating a higher prevalence of mental illness and lower rates of access to care. For the adult population, Colorado ranks 40th, and for youth, Colorado ranks 44th. This program and the culminating BAS degree seeks to change the current behavioral healthcare model in the state of Colorado to directly impact, and improve, these rankings.

This proposal seeks approval from the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE) for a BAS degree in Behavioral Health (BEH) for Pueblo Community College. The legislative criteria for approval of a BAS degree are set forth below, with a summary of the supporting data demonstrating that the criteria have been met. Additional information is provided in the appendices.

¹ Behavioral Health-care Workforce, SB22-181. (2022). https://leg.colorado.gov/sites/default/files/2022a_181_signed.pdf

² Reinert, M., Fritze, D., & Nguyen, T. (2024, July). *The state of mental health in America 2024*. Mental Health America. <https://mhanational.org/sites/default/files/2024-State-of-Mental-Health-in-America-Report.pdf?eType=ActivityDefinitionInstance&eld=18ffe536-c4fd-4ab3-83b8-6b2a34118652>

See the Behavioral Health Pathways Stackability graphic below for a visual representation of this program.



1. Data demonstrating workforce and student demand for the degree program.

In the professional field of behavioral healthcare, a bachelor’s degree leads to significantly increased economic mobility. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2024³), those with bachelor’s degrees earn 35% higher than those with associate’s degrees. This is a significant increase in earnings compared to the 18% increase that those with associate’s degrees have over high school graduates. Additionally, there is a need for entry level employees and for those employees to have a pathway to mid-level roles. National data from Lightcast (2024⁴) indicates that 29% of employers require a bachelor’s degree for social and community service managers or substance use, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors nationally, while 39% prefer a master’s degree. This data set also noted that Denver is a top posting city for positions in this field. See *Appendix A* for local, state, and national Lightcast data sets.

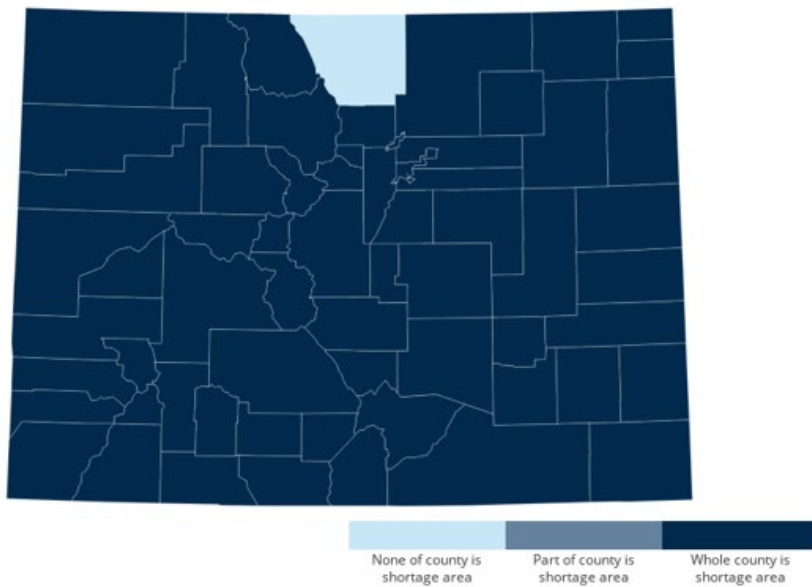
PCC has had an AAS in Behavioral Health since January 2020 and other colleges in the Colorado Community College System (CCCS) have begun to offer AAS degrees within this field Fall 2024, yet only some of those credits will transfer to four-year partners at this time. PCC currently has transfer agreements in place with the University of Colorado – Colorado Springs (UCCS) to their Human Services bachelor’s degree and to Colorado State University- Pueblo (CSU-P) to a BAS in Health Science and Administration, however there is still difficulty with all courses transferring and with any other 4-year university many of the credits will only transfer in as electives. To help meet these needs, PCC has developed a BAS in Behavioral Health and has conducted extensive research to determine program viability, while also working to ensure students who transfer to related pathways at 4-year

institutions do not lose credits. Additionally, every county in Colorado but one is identified as a federal Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA), see the map below, an issue specifically named in SB22-181.

³ National Center for Education Statistics. (2024). Annual earnings by educational attainment. *Condition of Education*. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cba/annual-earnings>

⁴ Lightcast. (2024). *Lightcast Q3 2024 National data set*. <https://www.lightcast.io/>

Health Professional Shortage Areas: Mental Health, by County, July 2024 - Colorado



Source: data.HRSA.gov, July 2024.

The behavioral health field traditionally relies on master’s level trained clinicians, which is a long and expensive pathway. These time and cost barriers result in a non-diversified and limited workforce, and one that takes six years of education and eight years before licensure (minimum). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2023⁵), 75% of mental health counselors were women, and 76% were white. These percentages were consistent for social workers, social and community service managers, and a variety of community and social service occupations (reaching as high as 88% female). PCC is a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). Having the ability for students to obtain their education in shorter increments that will stack to the AAS and then to the BAS is anticipated to increase the educational attainment in Pueblo County, the rural counties that PCC serves and beyond, positively impacting the access and success of historically excluded populations to gain entrance and advancement in the field.

The BAS in Behavioral Health will create an accessible, high-quality opportunity to enter this field at a faster rate while still ensuring economic mobility, achieving the SB22-181 goals. It will contribute to increased entry and mid-level practitioners that can help form a behavioral health care team versus a one-person support model. This increases opportunities to diversify the field with folks for whom a master’s degree is not currently accessible, prevent burnout for the folks able to complete a master’s degree, and increase the speed and quality of care Colorado citizens receive. A visual representation of this program and the aligning industry positions and pay is below.

⁵ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2019). Labor force statistics from the current population survey. <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.htm>

Colorado Community College System
Behavioral Health Assistant - Qualified BHA
 A Micro-Pathway to Become a Behavioral Health Assistant

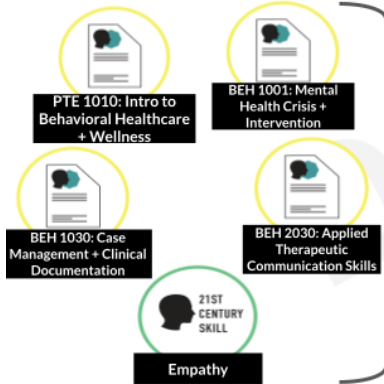


SUMMARY: The *Qualified Behavioral Health Assistant* micro-credential ensures students develop entry-level behavioral health knowledge and competencies. Upon completion of this coursework, they will be a Qualified Behavioral Health Assistant as outlined by the Behavioral Health Administration. The curriculum includes entry-level skills and foundational knowledge about behavioral health and wellness, intercultural competency, therapeutic communication, case management, and crisis intervention.

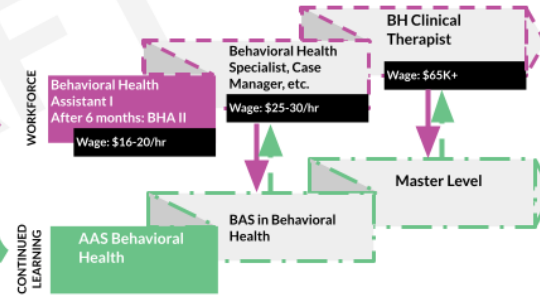
TOP SKILLS:

1. Understanding of Behavioral Health and Healthcare Systems
2. Empathy and Healthy Boundaries
3. Therapeutic Communication Skills
4. Case Management and Documentation
5. Crisis Intervention and Wellness
6. Trauma-Informed Care and Cultural Competency

CREDENTIALS EARNED
 6 months | 10 Credits towards higher credential | Hybrid



FUTURE GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES



Medicaid Competencies: (Under supervision), these individuals will be able to do elements of: Wellness Promotion, Education, Community Needs Assessment, Screening, Referral, Crisis Management, Case Management, Orientation to Services, and Individual & Group Interventions

Throughout the BEH BAS planning and design, industry partners were engaged to ensure the program best reflected current employer needs. Based on responses from industry, collected during listening sessions and surveys, this new BAS will prepare students for a competitive job market where they will be in high demand. The program curriculum (*Appendix B*) was designed with employer feedback at the center, driving the courses included and developed. Lightcast data trends by SOC codes are below.

Table 1. Lightcast 10-Year Employment Projections by combined SOC Codes (2023 – 2033)

	Colorado	PCC 8 Counties served but 5 counties included in data: due to the other 3 having insufficient data due to size	National Average
Social & Community Manager (11-9151) and Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors (21-1018)	22%	13%	22%

Table 2. Lightcast Educational Attainment of Current Workers – National Data

	High School	Some College	Associate's degree	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree
Social & Community Manager (11-9151) and Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors (21-1018)	13%	5%	22%	27%	7%

Table 3. Lightcast CO Wage Percentiles 2023 Wages PCC, 8 counties served, however only 5 counties included due to insufficient data in the other 3 due to size – Combined SOC Codes

	25th Percentile	Median	75th Percentile
Social & Community Manager (11-9151) and Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors (21-1018)	\$40,950-\$48,561	\$47,709-\$66,091	\$64,343-\$76,087

⁶Lightcast. (2024). *Lightcast Q3 2024 Colorado data set*. <https://www.lightcast.io/>

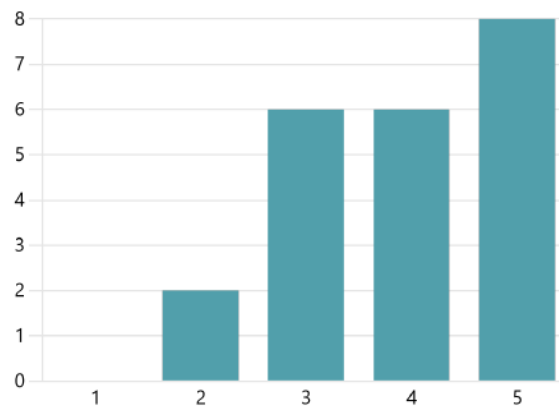
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Therefore, PCC is requesting approval to develop a BAS in Behavioral Health and has conducted extensive research to determine program viability.

Attainment of this BAS will allow PCC graduates to qualify for positions that require a bachelor's degree, including the Certified Addiction Specialist, plan for progressive advancements in employment and earning potential, and gain equitable access to the profession through an affordable and applied education. An industry survey was sent (*Appendix C*) to local and state partners regarding the BAS. Twenty-two partners responded, and some results are highlighted below:

1. How would you rate the market value for a Bachelor of Applied Science in Behavioral Health?

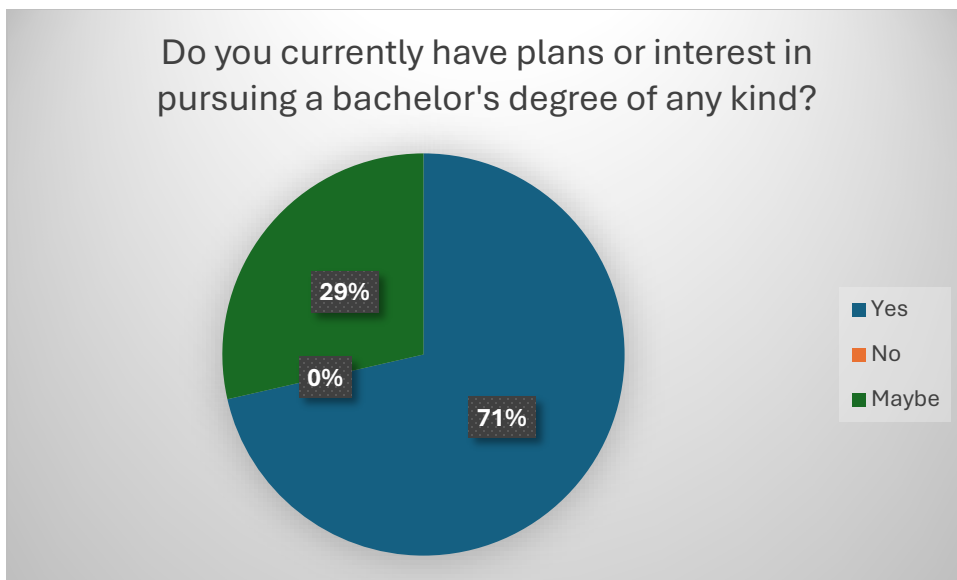
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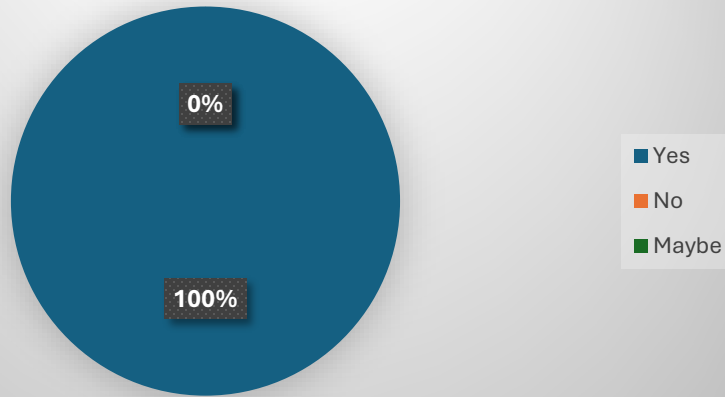
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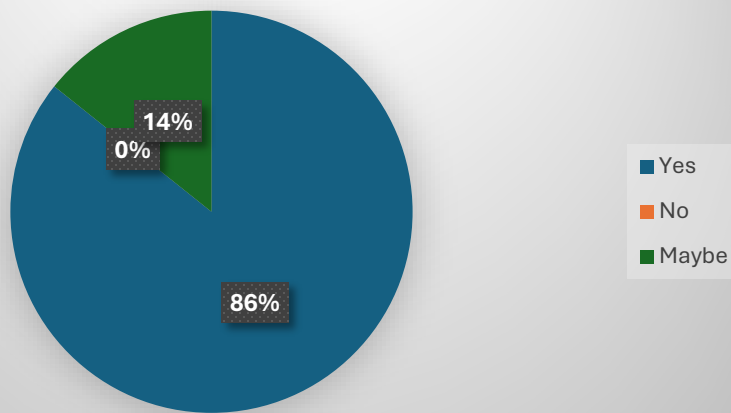
A student survey was sent to current students and alumni (*Appendix D*). The 14 responses revealed a positive outlook for student interest, motives for pursuing a BAS in Behavioral Health, training and skills desired from this degree, and how they would prefer to take classes. Some results are highlighted below:

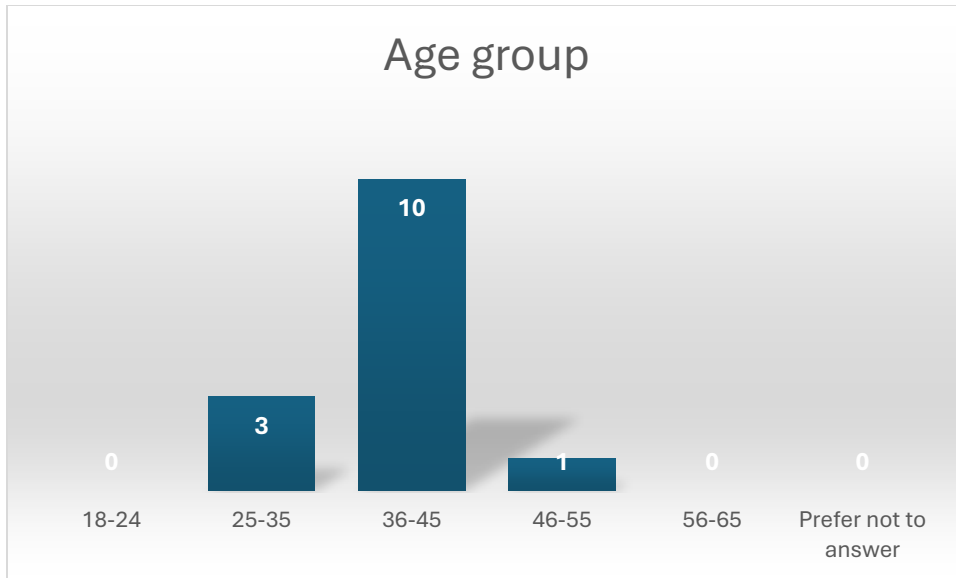


Are you interested in a career in behavioral health?



Would you be interested in obtaining a BAS in behavioral health from your current college?





Additionally, focus groups were conducted with students as part of the initial planning process, as well as student interest surveys, and students were excited about the stackability of the new pathway which allowed them to get started in the field faster (earning social and economic mobility by accruing years of experience) and ultimately complete their BAS at the College, followed by attainment of a well-paying career.

The BAS in BEH will serve multiple disciplines and graduates will be able to apply for positions such as addiction technicians and addiction specialists, social and community service managers, and more. This degree also provides the educational foundation of required courses that Colorado requires for Licensed Addiction Counselor (LAC). While a master's degree in a mental health field is also part of the LAC educational requirements, the BAS in BEH does meet the academic prerequisites for application to many graduate psychology and graduate counseling programs, and articulation agreements with those partners are in development.

PCC currently has 175 students considered active (in the past year) and 110 of those enrolled for Fall 2024 semester for the micro-credentials/certificates and AAS programs, in varying stages of completion, this provides a strong base of potential students for the BAS.

2. The regional and professional accreditation requirements for the degree program, if applicable, have been met.

Regional accreditation. This program will require approval by or notification to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). PCC will submit a New Degree Program Screening Form upon receiving all appropriate SBCCOE and state approvals of the program. Because PCC already has seven programs at the BAS credential level, with two pending, notification is the most likely outcome. This process will likely take one to three weeks and will not require a site visit.

Professional accreditation. PCC is not pursuing professional accreditation at this time for the BAS in Behavioral Health. However, after the second year, seeking national certification as a National Association for Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors (NAADAC) Approved Education Provider is

planned. This will allow students and community-based professionals to access nationally recognized education.

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Additionally, PCC has robust student support services including the Writing Center, Online Math Tutoring, 24/7 tutoring in a variety of subjects through MyOnlineTutoring, 24/7 technology helpdesk through CCCS, and an associated student government with information on campus events available to all students. PCC also has a series of databases that are available for students through centralized library services, including EBSCO, JSTOR, ProQuest, etc., to provide BEH students with the necessary resources. See *Appendix F* for a full report on the CCCS Centralized Library, along with PCC resources available for this program.

5. The proposed program addresses the effect on existing programs in terms of finances, enrollment, and staff.

The new BEH BAS degree would not have any negative financial or enrollment effects on existing programs. There are excellent partnership opportunities with existing academic departments for growth and increased enrollment. There are new courses being added to the PCC Catalog in PSY, SPA, SWK, and CRJ. Through utilization of existing staff in these areas, the increased course offerings and enrollment contribute to the success of other existing programs and departments.

While there are department specific courses through the BEH, PTE, CSL, and SWK prefixes, approximately 50% of the credits are general education courses that are currently offered and staffed. It is anticipated to have a positive impact on enrollment in those general education departments. The new degree could also create additional interest in PCC's psychology, sociology, psychiatric technician and partnering programs. Faculty teaching in these program areas may be interested in teaching BEH courses as well, if qualified.

Recommendation: Therefore, PCC is requesting approval to develop a BAS in Behavioral Health and has conducted extensive research to determine program viability.

Appendices:

Appendix A: Lightcast Labor Market Data

Appendix B: BAS Behavioral Health Course List

Appendix C: Employer Engagement Survey Appendix D: Student Survey

Appendix E: Financial Analysis

Appendix F: Behavioral Health Library Assessment

STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION

TOPIC:	Bachelor of Applied Science in Behavioral Health (BEH)
PRESENTED BY:	Dr. Lance Bolton, President, Pikes Peak State College (PPSC)
RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:	Transform the student experience; Create education without barriers through transformational partnerships; Redefine our value proposition through accessibility, affordability, quality, accountability, resource development, and operational excellence.

EXPLANATION:

Pursuant to the Colorado Community College System's (CCCS) role and mission (§23-60-201, C.R.S.), CCCS may offer technical, career, and workforce development Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree programs. Authority for CCCS to offer BAS degrees was made possible by SB14-004 (Community College Four-year Programs), signed by the Governor on February 27, 2014.

Additionally, in 2022, the Colorado State Legislature passed Senate Bill 22-181 which concerned the Behavioral Health Administration's plan to address issues regarding the delivery of behavioral healthcare services in Colorado. Within that legislation was direction to the Colorado Community College System to develop a career pathway in behavioral health in order to increase and diversify the behavioral healthcare provider workforce (Behavioral Health-care Workforce, SB22-181, 2022¹). This directive and its associated appropriation led to collaborative partnerships with the Colorado Department of Higher Education, the Colorado Department of Healthcare Policy and Financing, the Behavioral Health Administration, and multiple employers. From that, CCCS and its partnering colleges created and implemented a fully stackable pathway from high school CTE to an AAS, then to the proposed BAS, thus completing the legislative directive of delivering a career pathway in the behavioral health workforce that is accessible to a more diverse student population, ultimately increasing and diversifying the workforce and increasing services in our community and beyond.

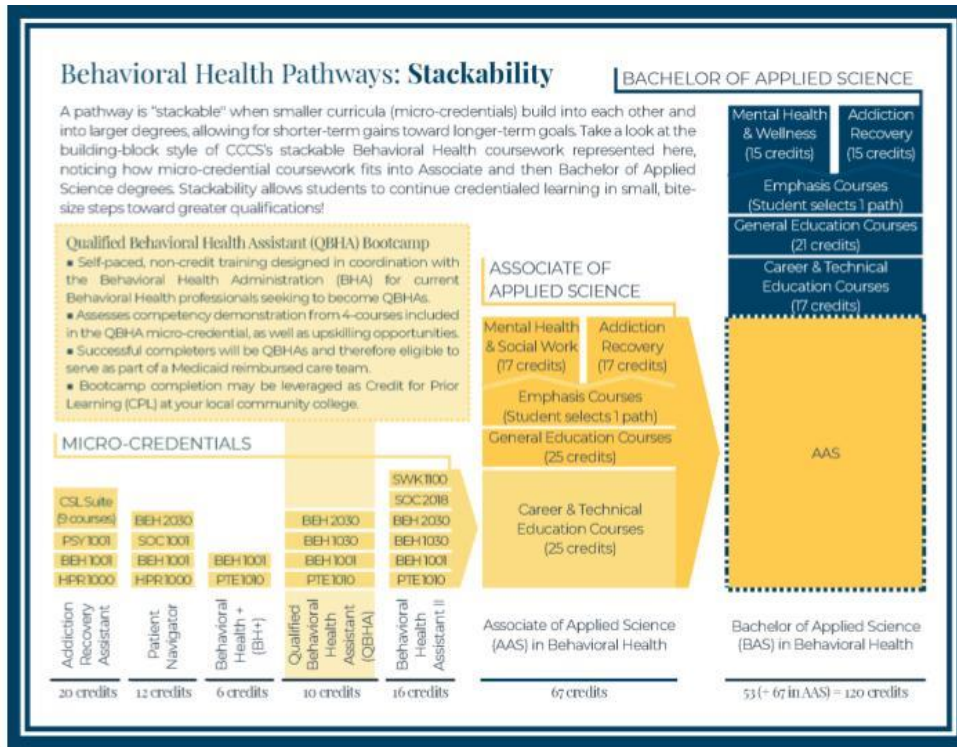
According to The State of Mental Health in America 2024 report (Reinert, Fritze, & Nguyen, 2024²), Colorado ranks 46th overall in the nation, indicating a higher prevalence of mental illness and lower rates of access to care. For the adult population, Colorado ranks 40th, and for youth, Colorado ranks 44th. This program and the culminating BAS degree seeks to change the current behavioral healthcare model in the state of Colorado to directly impact, and improve, these rankings.

This proposal seeks approval from the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE) for a BAS degree in Behavioral Health (BEH) for Pikes Peak State College. The legislative criteria for approval of a BAS degree are set forth below, with a summary of the supporting data demonstrating that the criteria have been met. Additional information is provided in the appendices.

¹ Behavioral Health-care Workforce, SB22-181. (2022). https://leg.colorado.gov/sites/default/files/2022a_181_signed.pdf

² Reinert, M., Fritze, D., & Nguyen, T. (2024, July). *The state of mental health in America 2024*. Mental Health America. <https://mhanational.org/sites/default/files/2024-State-of-Mental-Health-in-America-Report.pdf?eType=ActivityDefinitionInstance&eId=18ffe536-c4fd-4ab3-83b8-6b2a34118652>

See the Behavioral Health Pathways Stackability graphic below for a visual representation of this program.



1. Data demonstrating workforce and student demand for the degree program.

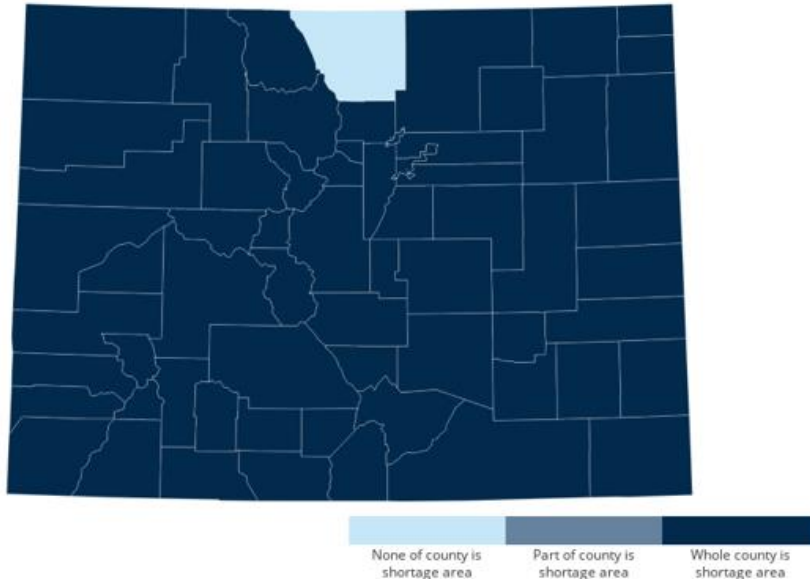
In the professional field of behavioral healthcare, a bachelor's degree leads to significantly increased economic mobility. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2024³), those with bachelor's degrees earn 35% higher than those with associate's degrees. This is a significant increase in earnings compared to the 18% increase that those with associate's degrees have over high school graduates. Additionally, there is a need for entry level employees and for those employees to have a pathway to mid-level roles. National data from Lightcast (2024⁴) indicates that 29% of employers require a bachelor's degree for social and community service managers or substance use, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors nationally, while 39% prefer a master's degree. This data set also noted that Denver is a top posting city for positions in this field. See *Appendix A* for local, state, and national Lightcast data sets.

The colleges in the Colorado community college system offer AAS degrees within this field, yet only some of those credits will transfer to four-year partners at this time. To help meet these needs, PPSC has developed a BAS in Behavioral Health and has conducted extensive research to determine program viability, while also working to ensure students who transfer to related pathways at 4-year institutions do not lose credits. Additionally, every county in Colorado but one is identified as a federal Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA), see map below, an issue specifically named in SB22-181.

³ National Center for Education Statistics. (2024). Annual earnings by educational attainment. *Condition of Education*. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cba/annual-earnings>

⁴ Lightcast. (2024). *Lightcast Q3 2024 National data set*. <https://www.lightcast.io/>

Health Professional Shortage Areas: Mental Health, by County, July 2024 - Colorado



Source: data.HRSA.gov, July 2024.

The behavioral health field traditionally relies on master’s level trained clinicians, which is a long and expensive pathway. These time and cost barriers result in a non-diversified and limited workforce, and one that takes six years of education and eight years before licensure (minimum). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2023⁵), 75% of mental health counselors were women, and 76% were white. These percentages were consistent for social workers, social and community service managers, and a variety of community and social service occupations (reaching as high as 88% female). Having the ability for students to obtain their education in shorter increments that will stack to the AAS and then to the BAS is anticipated to increase the educational attainment in the Colorado Springs community and beyond, positively impacting the access and success of historically excluded populations to gain entrance and advancement in the field.

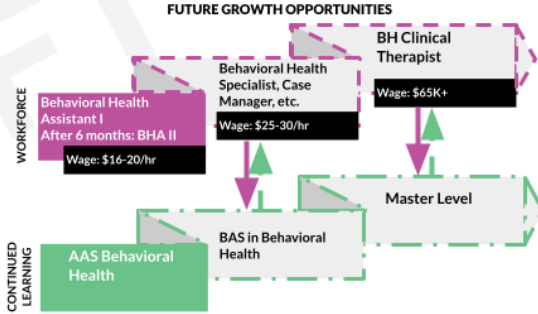
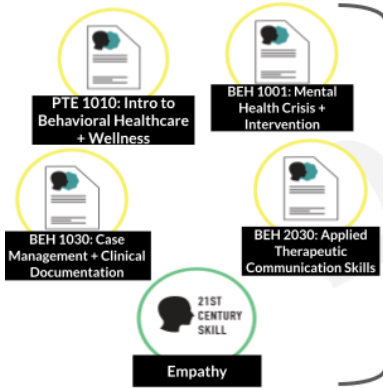
The BAS in Behavioral Health will create an accessible, high-quality opportunity to enter this field at a faster rate while still ensuring economic mobility, achieving the SB22-181 goals. It will contribute to increased entry and mid-level practitioners that can help form a behavioral health care team versus a one-person support model. This increases opportunities to diversify the field with individuals for whom a master’s degree is not currently accessible, prevent burnout for the individuals able to complete a master’s degree, and increase the speed and quality of care Colorado citizens receive. A visual representation of this program and the aligning industry positions and pay is below.

⁵ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2019). Labor force statistics from the current population survey. <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.htm>

SUMMARY: The *Qualified Behavioral Health Assistant* micro-credential ensures students develop entry-level behavioral health knowledge and competencies. Upon completion of this coursework, they will be a Qualified Behavioral Health Assistant as outlined by the Behavioral Health Administration. The curriculum includes entry-level skills and foundational knowledge about behavioral health and wellness, intercultural competency, therapeutic communication, case management, and crisis intervention.

- TOP SKILLS:**
1. Understanding of Behavioral Health and Healthcare Systems
 2. Empathy and Healthy Boundaries
 3. Therapeutic Communication Skills
 4. Case Management and Documentation
 5. Crisis Intervention and Wellness
 6. Trauma-Informed Care and Cultural Competency

CREDENTIALS EARNED
 6 months | 10 Credits towards higher credential | Hybrid



Medicaid Competencies: (Under supervision), these individuals will be able to do elements of: Wellness Promotion, Education, Community Needs Assessment, Screening, Referral, Crisis Management, Case Management, Orientation to Services, and Individual & Group Interventions

Throughout the BEH BAS planning and design, industry partners were engaged to ensure the program best reflected current employer needs. Based on responses from industry, collected during listening sessions and surveys, this new BAS will prepare students for a competitive job market where they will be in high demand. The program curriculum (*Appendix B*) was designed with employer feedback at the center, driving the courses included and developed. Lightcast data trends by SOC codes are below.

Table 1. Lightcast 10-Year Employment Projections by combined SOC Codes (2023 – 2033)

	Colorado	PPSC 3 Counties	National Average
Social & Community Manager (11-9151) and Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors (21-1018)	22%	23%	22%

Table 2. Lightcast Educational Attainment of Current Workers – National Data

	High School	Some College	Associate's degree	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree
Social & Community Manager (11-9151) and Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors (21-1018)	13%	5%	22%	27%	7%

Table 3. Lightcast CO Wage Percentiles 2023 Wages PPSC County Area – Combined SOC Codes

	25 th Percentile	Median	75 th Percentile
Social & Community Manager (11-9151) and Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors (21-1018)	\$35,901 - \$40,834	\$50,065 - \$57,582	\$73,875 - \$79,204

⁶ Lightcast. (2024). *Lightcast Q3 2024 Colorado data set*. <https://www.lightcast.io/>

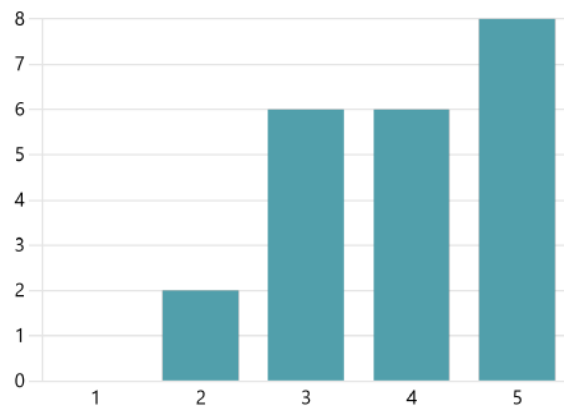
⁷ Lightcast. (2024). *Lightcast Q3 2024 Pikes Peak State College data set*. <https://www.lightcast.io/>

Therefore, PPSC is requesting approval to develop a BAS in Behavioral Health and has conducted extensive research to determine program viability.

Attainment of this BAS will allow PPSC graduates to qualify for positions that require a bachelor's degree, including the Certified Addiction Specialist, plan for progressive advancements in employment and earning potential, and gain equitable access to the profession through an affordable and applied education. An industry survey was sent (*Appendix C*) to local and state partners regarding the BAS. Twenty-two partners responded, and some results are highlighted below:

1. How would you rate the market value for a Bachelor of Applied Science in Behavioral Health?

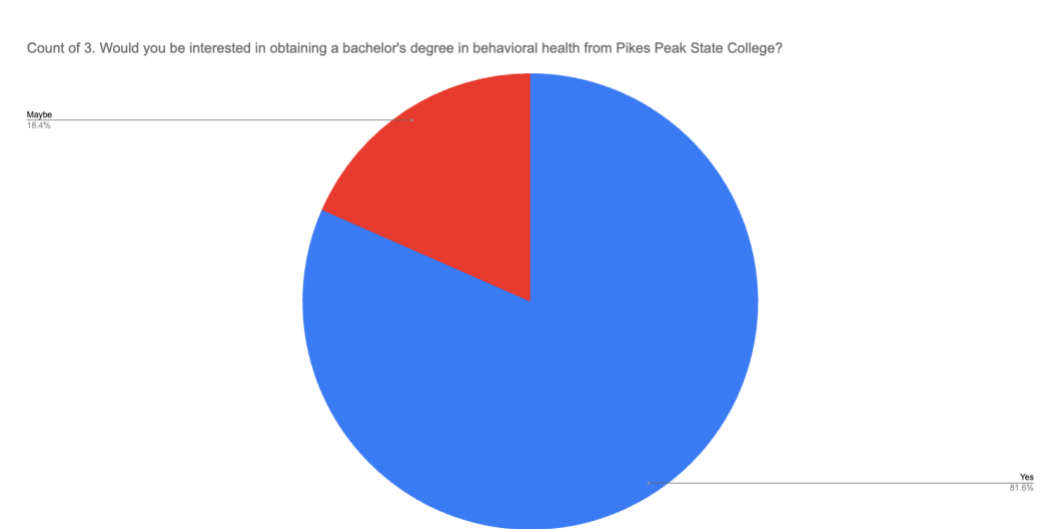
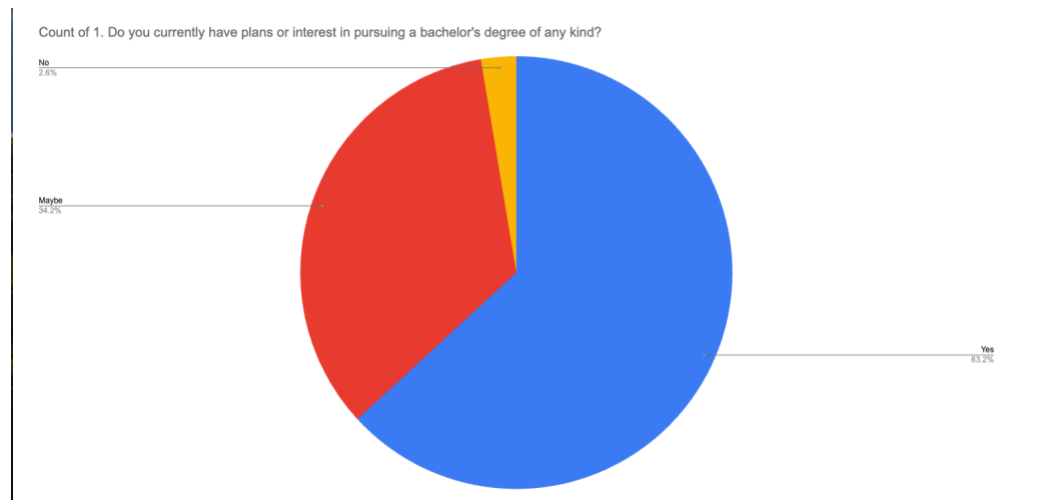
3.91
Average Rating



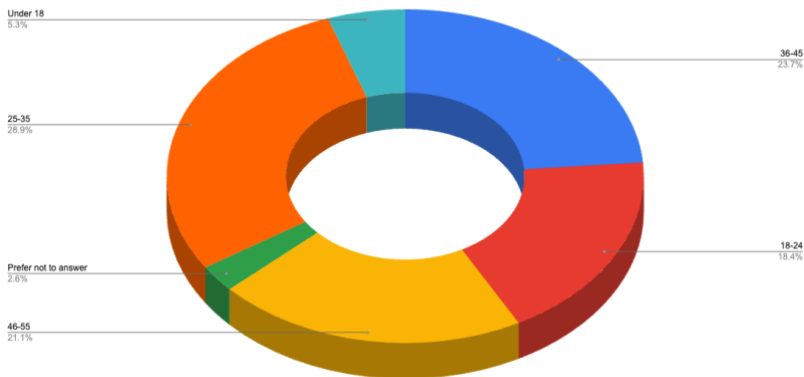
3. Which of the following award levels would be most valuable for students entering the behavioral health industry (rank from most valuable to least valuable)?



A student survey was sent to current students and alumni (*Appendix D*). The 38 responses revealed a positive outlook for student interest, motives for pursuing a BAS in Behavioral Health, training and skills desired from this degree, and how they would prefer to take classes. Some results are highlighted below:



Count of 8. What is your age group?



Qualitative comments from students included:

- “Skill attainment, Earn a credential, certification, or further preparation, i want to be a therapist :) getting a BS from PPSC would be a blessing!”
- “i’m really excited to take these classes and already feel eager to learn. I heard one lecture from Professor Hull and I’m so excited to hear many more. Grateful for this opportunity and excited to see where it takes me”
- “I think this is such a great opportunity, and will garner lots of interest”
- “With the new behavioral health coming to light at pikes peak is amazing that the one who can get a degree in this area to help others to defeat and encourage people to turn their life around
- “I’m very excited for this new degree being offered!”
- “I have fought through a life of addiction and now 3 years clean, hope to help others save their lives in the fight against mental health and addiction.
- “Furthering the behavioral health community is whats needed”
- “I would love to be able to make the jump to a bachelors degree”
- “From what ive seen i feel this program is going to do wonders for future students
- “I have struggled with mental health and addiction, i found it so helpful to listen for those who also walked similar lives.”

Additionally, focus groups were conducted with students as part of the initial planning process, as well as student interest surveys, and students were excited about the stackability of the new pathway which allowed them to get started in the field faster (earning social and economic mobility by accruing years of experience) and ultimately complete their BAS at the College, followed by attainment of a well-paying career.

The BAS in BEH will serve multiple disciplines and graduates will be able to apply for positions such as addiction technicians and addiction specialists, social and community service managers, and more. This

degree also provides the educational foundation of required courses that Colorado requires for Licensed Addiction Counselor (LAC). While a master's degree in a mental health field is also part of the LAC educational requirements, the BAS in BEH does meet the academic prerequisites for application to many graduate psychology and graduate counseling programs, and articulation agreements with those partners are in development.

PPSC currently has 113 students who have declared Behavioral Health as a major and 27 certificate seekers. We have 51 unduplicated headcount for Fall 2024 semester enrollment in the micro-credentials/certificates and AAS programs, providing a strong base of potential students for the BAS.

2. The regional and professional accreditation requirements for the degree program, if applicable, have been met.

Regional accreditation. This program will require approval by or notification to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). PPSC will submit a New Degree Program Screening Form upon receiving all appropriate SBCCOE and state approvals of the program. Because PPSC already has five BAS degree programs, notification is the most likely outcome. This process will likely take one to three weeks and will not require a site visit.

Professional accreditation. PPSC is not pursuing professional accreditation at this time for the BAS in Behavioral Health. However, after the second year, seeking national certification as an NAADAC Approved Education Provider is planned. This will allow students and community-based professionals to access nationally recognized education.

PPSC does have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) in Colorado for all the Certified Addiction Counseling (CAC) training course work, this is a CSL prefix in the Common Course Numbering System (CCNS). This MOU covers the current CAC/CSL courses that are in the AAS level and will include the new CAC/CSL courses at the BAS level. This MOU is a benefit to both the college in securing qualified instructors and the students that are pursuing their CAT or CAS certification in tracking their course work with BHA.

3. Providing the degree program within the Community College System is cost-effective for the students and the Community College System.

The BEH pathway at PPSC and other CCCS colleges was created based on a series of stackable options to provide a cost-effective program for students. Students can start the process by working towards a micro-credential/certificate, which will stack into the AAS in BEH in either the Addictions Recovery emphasis area or the Mental Health & Social Work emphasis area, these two emphasis areas have 50 out of 67 credits as common or core in the degree. The proposed BAS in Behavioral Health will have two emphasis areas to align and stack with the AAS, Addictions Recovery and Mental Health & Wellness. The BAS emphasis areas will have 38/53 credits that are common core with 21 credits of general education courses, which brings the total of general education between the AAS and BAS to 46 credits.

The first 67 credits of the 120 credits required to complete the BAS come directly from the AAS degree requirements. The BAS pathway will allow students to declare a double major so that they can be enrolled and take courses concurrently in both the BEH AAS and BEH BAS; this ability for students could potentially decrease their time to completion for the BAS.

Tuition for the 3000- and 4000-level courses in the BAS has been agreed upon between the CCCS colleges that are requesting approval and is in alignment with several other BAS degrees within CCCS. This rate of tuition supports the necessary expenses of offering the degree, which is indicated in the

financial analysis (*Appendix E*). The tuition rate that is proposed is lower than comparable degree programs available in Colorado and neighboring states and CCCS colleges will apply all 67 credits of the AAS to the BAS.

Due to the feedback from industry partners, the fact that the BEH program is new at all levels and that there are internship requirements at the BAS level, the CCCS BEH curriculum team has requested and been granted a 2 year opt out from CO Online for pooled sections in four prefixes: BEH, PTE, CSL, and SWK. However, to ensure consistency, the tuition rate has been set in line with comparable BAS programs, which also aligns with the CO Online tuition rate. Should the program transition to CO Online, no tuition adjustments will be needed.

4. Providing the degree program's projected facility and equipment costs are considered.

This program will not require any additional facility and equipment cost, as the current office and classroom space of the AAS degree program will meet the needs of the BAS. PPSC currently is receiving grant funding from SB 22-181 mentioned in the financial analysis. This funding is through December 2026 with the intention of developing and advancing behavioral health programs.

Faculty and Staffing analysis:

Currently PPSC BEH has three administrative personnel that are grant funded (a program specialist (1.0), a program coordinator (.75), a program director (1.0)) as well as multiple grant funded part-time instructors. We have also been granted a one-year limited faculty out of our 2024-2025 general budget due to the high interest in the BEH AAS program. The costs that are indicated on the financial analysis, include a percentage of the current staff, marketing, and recruitment dollars specific to the BAS and a simulation program at the BAS level for students to engage in prior to attending internship placements. The initial cost is proposed to be purchased by the college, as assessment of the available platforms are considered. Once a platform has been decided on then this will more than likely be moved to a textbook or course fee.

Student Support Services Analysis:

All services integral to the success of students will continue to be supported through PPSC's current support model. Students have access to multiple success coaches and advisors. They also have access to the Learning Center which houses student study spaces, technology (e.g., computers, printing, scanning, copying, disability access software), learning resources (e.g., course related books), comprehensive tutorial services, and computer help. The center also hosts various student workshops each semester, including study skills, stress management, and scholarship workshops. The Learning Center also offers professional tutoring labs for all students enrolled in English, math, IT (computers), and science courses. Additionally, students will have access to in- person services during normal hours of operation at PPSC. Course development will include incorporating resources like video tutorials into the course shells, to address technical content. Students will also have access to 24/7 technology helpdesk through CCCS, and an associated student government with information on campus events available to all students. PPSC also has a series of databases available for students through centralized library services, including EBSCO, JSTOR, ProQuest, etc., to provide BEH students with the necessary resources. See *Appendix F* for a full report on the CCCS Centralized Library Behavioral Health resources available for this program.

The BEH department staff will also provide proactive advising to enhance student support and retention. This initiative involves staff members reaching out to students within the first two weeks of each

semester, ensuring timely and direct communication. In addition to the academic advising provided by PPSC, the BEH department will offer specialized guidance on degree planning and career advising. This strategy aims to address specific academic needs related to career goals, complementing PPSC's general academic advising. Proactive advising is offered based on the assumption that traditional academic advising may not fully address the academic needs which correlate with students' career objectives. To implement this initiative, the department will offer a variety of engagement options such as scheduled office hours with sign-ups through Navigate, sessions offered during the BEH mixer mid-fall and mid-spring semesters, introductory meetings for new BEH program students, and other flexible formats as needed. By providing this tailored support, the BEH department aims to improve program retention and graduation rates.

5. The proposed program addresses the effect on existing programs in terms of finances, enrollment, and staff.

The new BEH BAS degree would not have any negative financial or enrollment effects on existing programs. There are excellent partnership opportunities with existing academic departments for growth and increased enrollment. There are new courses being added to the PPSC Catalog in PSY, SPA, COM, and CRJ. Through utilization of existing staff in these areas, the increased course offerings and enrollment contribute to the success of other existing programs and departments.

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