



CDE Professional Development Guidelines

The Colorado State Board of Education (SBE) recently adopted changes in the Rules applying to required professional development activities for educator licensure renewal. In summary, these changes:

- Require that professional development (PD) activities must be related to
 - Increasing the license holder's competence in his or her existing or potential endorsement content area; or,
 - Increasing the licensee's skills and competence in delivering instruction in his or her existing or potential endorsement area; or,
 - Increasing the licensee's skills and competence in teaching literacy or numeracy.
- Require that an educator involved in license renewal must complete PD activities totaling six semester hours or ninety clock hours within the five-year period preceding the date of expiration of the license to be renewed.
- Stipulate that professional development may include in-service education, or college or university credit from an accepted institution of higher education, or credit from an accepted community, technical, or junior college.
- Allow educational travel, documented and verified by a supervisor as applicable to the endorsement area of the professional licensee's license, and as demonstrated by the professional license held.
- Permit documented evidence verified by the licensee's supervisor of involvement in school reform, internships and other ongoing professional development training and experiences to apply toward educator licensure renewal.

The Colorado Department of Education has long recognized that continuing professional development activities promote higher quality teaching and learning. Recent studies are beginning to suggest that students taught by teachers who've had sustained, content-driven professional development reach higher levels of student achievement than other students in certain academic subjects, such as math.

Is there a direct link between professional development and student learning? The research to date is not conclusive. But, increasingly, researchers suspect that professional development relates to higher teacher quality and student achievement. Recognizing those possible links, the federal No Child Left Behind Act urges schools to increase annually the number of teachers who receive quality professional development, by offering more professional development experiences focused on academic content.

In Colorado, ongoing professional development is required for all public school educators – teachers and administrators. Professional development is prescribed for two major groups of public school educators:

1. Those teachers and administrators who seek and hold professional licenses. Documented professional development activities must be presented to the Colorado Department of Education at the time of license renewal.
2. Those teachers and administrators who seek and hold Master Certificates. Documented professional development activities must be presented to the Colorado Department of Education at the time of consideration for master certification.

CDE's guidelines for professional development related to licensure renewal are covered in detail in the **Rules for the Administration of the Educator Licensing Act of 1991 [2260.5-R-12.02]**. Here are some of the key guidelines for professional development activities:

- In-service education: Educators may earn credits for school or school district sponsored in-service programs.
- College or university credits: Professional development credits may be earned through accepted colleges and universities, and community, technical or junior colleges for courses "directly related to the standards for professional development as provided in the **Rules.**"
- Educational travel: Credits may be earned for travel directly related to the endorsement area(s) stipulated on the professional license.
- School Reform: Participating in school reform efforts – policy development, curriculum development, standards, assessment, etc. – directly related to the standards for professional development, may earn professional development credits for educators.
- Internships: advanced field experiences and professional internships directly related to the standards for professional development may earn credits.
- Ongoing Professional Development: Activities that directly relate to improving the educator's knowledge and skills that relate directly to the standards for professional development. Such activities include attendance at professional conferences, service on professional boards, serving as a mentor, supervision of student teachers and professional or occupational training.

Two general rules apply to all professional development activities: (1) They must be documented (by a supervisor, where appropriate); and (2), they "shall apply equally to renewal of any professional educator license or endorsement held by the applicant."

In addition to these general rules, two new rules applying to professional development criteria for licensure renewal have been added by the State Board of Education:

- Effective use of assessments in planning for instructional delivery and in individualizing student instruction has been added to the criteria for approved professional development activities for the renewal of a professional license.
- A complete set of fingerprints taken by a qualified law enforcement agency, unless previously submitted, must be provided to the CDE for licensure renewal.

Resources:

United States Department of Education: Teacher to Teacher Initiative
<http://www.ed.gov/teachers/how/tools/initiative/index.html>

PBS Teacherline
<http://teacherline.pbs.org/teacherline/>