

Supporting English Learners

Professional Development Pathways

Ensuring Educational Opportunities for All

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) is committed to supporting districts and schools to ensure that every child in Colorado has the full opportunity to thrive. Equity is at the heart of our purpose, and it is also our greatest challenge as an educational system. The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) works to increase educational achievement of all students through a variety of strategies and programs. One such strategy is to ensure that all Colorado educators have the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of the state's growing population of English learners.

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Colorado has the sixth-highest number of English learners in the country. Currently the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education (CLDE) and CLDE bilingual teacher endorsements are offered through the majority of Colorado colleges and universities and requires 24 semester hours of credit, focusing on the needs of effective teaching practices for English learners.

The U.S. Department of Justice made inquiries regarding equitable education for English learners in Colorado. In response, the State Board of Education directed CDE staff to convene stakeholders representing districts with the highest numbers and concentration of English learners to develop recommendations for pathways that ensure educators have at least basic knowledge to instruct English I learners in their classrooms.

Professional Learning Proposed

A group of educators, district leaders, Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) members, and educator preparation team members gathered many times during the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years. This EL stakeholder group was tasked with examining the challenge -- grappling with the issues of educator professional development, equity and diverse student needs, rural and urban contexts, etc. -- and identifying professional development pathways for all pre-service and in-service core endorsed educators.

The focus of the EL stakeholder group was to develop recommendations that:

- help educators effectively carry out their responsibility for the teaching and learning of ELs as well as to understand the social and cultural issues that contribute to and impact the education of ELs and students with diverse backgrounds.
- expand teachers' knowledge of how language functions within academic content teaching and learning, and how Colorado students with diverse backgrounds acquire English as a second language.

English Learners in Colorado

Over the last 10 years, the number of English learners in Colorado's public schools grew 26.2 percent, more than double the 11.2 percent rate of growth in the total student population.

There now are approximately 128,274 English language learners in Colorado, comprising approximately 14 percent of the total K-12 population.



The stakeholder group has proposed and is seeking feedback on a highly flexible approach to providing educators with the knowledge and skills they need to support English learners.

1. Help new educators (pre-service teachers, specialized service professionals, principals, administrators) meet the needs of English learners by integrating standards that address the educational needs and opportunities for English learners into all educator preparation programs statewide.
2. Support existing core content endorsed teachers by requiring professional development that addressed the educational needs and opportunities of English learners, during within their next **full** license renewal following this requirement's official date of implementation. The stakeholder group recommended multiple, flexible pathways for educators to meet this requirement, including online modules, district-offered programs, experience-based programs, Colorado Department of education professional development, and programs at institutes of higher education.

Proposed Requirements and Standards

The following are the two proposed pathways.

Educators Included		Standards (full description noted below)	Expectations	Estimation of Equivalent Semester/Clock Hours	Timeline
Pre-Service Teachers, Principals, Specialized Service Providers, Administrators	All Colorado college, university and alternative program participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Foundations• 1st / 2nd Language Acquisition• Literacy Development• Teaching Strategies	Complete preparation in the standards as identified.	Equivalent of 6 semester hours, or 90 clock hours , to be embedded in all Colorado approved educator preparation programs.	Upon graduation or completion of an accredited educator preparation program.
Educator Professional Licensure Renewal for Core Content Endorsed Teachers	Includes anyone holding a Colorado professional educator license endorsement in math, science, social studies, English language arts, elementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Foundations• 1st / 2nd Language Acquisition• Literacy Development• Teaching Strategies	Demonstrate knowledge of the standards as identified in one or a combination of ways, including but not limited to coursework, professional development experience, and/or endorsement.	Equivalent of 3 semester hours or 45 clock hours	Beginning 2018-19 school year within one full renewal cycle of the educator's professional license. This is a one-time requirement and upon completion will be documented on the educator's license.



Proposed Standards for Pre-Service Educators

To help all Colorado educators support the academic achievement of Colorado's diverse student population, all educator preparation programs -- including Colorado Institutes of Higher Education Educator Preparation entities and Colorado Alternative Educator Preparation entities -- must ensure the following standards are fully taught, addressed and practiced in their programs. The following **standards** are proposed for all Colorado approved educator preparation routes for teachers, specialized service providers, principals, and administrator as well as be the foundation for all current professionally licensed educators (both core and non-core educators).

- **Foundations of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) Education**
(1) be knowledgeable, understand, and be able to apply the major theories, concepts and research related to culture, diversity and equity in order to support academic access and opportunity for CLD student populations; (2) be knowledgeable, understand, and be able to use progress monitoring in conjunction with formative and summative assessments to support student learning.
- **First and Second Language Acquisition**
(1) understand and implement strategies and select materials to aid in English language and content learning; (2) be knowledgeable, understand, and be able to apply the major theories, concepts and research related to culture, diversity and equity in order to support academic access and opportunity for CLD student populations.
- **Literacy Development for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students**
(1) be knowledgeable, understand, and be able to apply the major theories, concepts and research related to literacy development for CLD students (2) understand and implement strategies and select materials to aid in English language and content learning.
- **Teaching Strategies: Methods, Materials and Assessment for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students**
(1) be knowledgeable, understand and be able to use the major theories, concepts and research related to language acquisition and language development for CLD students; (2) be knowledgeable, understands, and be able to use progress monitoring in conjunction with formative and summative assessments to support student learning.

Proposed Professional Development for Core Content Endorsed Teachers

Proposed professional development pathways for **core content endorsed teachers** identifies core content teachers **as anyone holding** a Colorado professional educator license and endorsement in math, science, social studies, English language arts, or elementary.

The professional development standards are the same as the **proposed** standards noted above.



Effective beginning in the 2018-2019 school year and every year thereafter, all core content endorsed teachers seeking a renewal of their professional license would need to demonstrate competency in the English Language Learner Professional Development Pathway standards within a **full five-year renewal cycle**.

Core content endorsed teachers **may demonstrate knowledge** of the standards when completing their educator license renewal in one or in a combination of the following ways:

- completion of any CDE-approved English Language Learner pathway, which may include district, college or university, BOCES or nonprofit programs;
- completion of a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD)/ CLD Bilingual or related endorsement or advanced degree (such as English as a Second Language) in or out of Colorado;
- demonstration through a collection of professional development, in-service credit, college/university credit and/or work experience that meet the standards as outlined; or
- completion of a Colorado Department of Education facilitated professional development pathway.

Timeline

- In February 2017 the State Board of Education directed department staff to continue working with stakeholders to develop proposed rules to implement flexible approaches to integrating English learner standards into educator preparation programs and professional development programs for new teachers.
- The state board was presented with pathways and options during the September 2017 and the December 2017 board meetings and gave staff further direction to develop highly flexible pathways at that time.
- Draft rules will be presented to the board for consideration and public hearings in March 2018.
- Public Hearings in May 2018
- Anticipated State Board of Education Approval in June 2018

Where can I learn more?

- <http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/teacherprepells>
- [View all CDE fact sheets: www.cde.state.co.us/communications/factsheetsandfaqs](http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/factsheetsandfaqs)