



COLORADO
Department of Education

**ALTERNATIVE EDUCATOR
PREPARATION PROGRAM
AUTHORIZATION GUIDE**

Introduction

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) authorization process is an in-depth review of proposals submitted for consideration as an alternative educator preparation program (EPP). **CDE authorization goals are to evaluate the proposed alternative educator preparation program for:**

- alignment to requirements of alternative programs (C.R.S.§22-60.5-205).
- alignment of content to the performance-based teacher licensure standards adopted by the Colorado State Board of Education (SBE) (C.R.S.§22-2-109).
- quality and depth of alternative teacher candidate preparation to ensure alignment to [Colorado State Statute and SBE Rule](#) are met.

Purpose of Alternative Educator Preparation Programs

In Colorado, designated agencies are allowed to create alternative teacher preparation programs in order to:

- alleviate the teacher shortage faced by many school districts
- decrease the issuance of emergency teacher authorizations
- provide alternative candidates with adequate supervision and education in teaching methods and practices
- assist in recruiting and employing non-traditional candidates
- provide educator pathways to alternative candidates with experience in areas other than education

Designated agencies may be authorized to implement a one-year or two-year alternative program for endorsements in early childhood, elementary education, secondary education, and K-12 licensure areas. An program designed for the special education generalist endorsement may be completed in a maximum of three years, during which time the candidate must be teacher of record for a minimum of one year.

Alternative Program Organizational Requirements

The responsibilities of the designated agency include the organization, management, and operation of the program as follows:

- Establish an advisory council that provides the designated agency with information regarding the organization, management, and operation of the approved alternative teacher program. The council, at a minimum, includes:
 - Representatives from participating school districts or BOCES
 - At least one qualified mentor teacher
 - A representative from a partnering institution of higher education (if applicable)
- Identify an alternative teacher support team that is composed of, at minimum:
 - The alternative teacher's mentor and principal
 - A representative from the designated agency

- Provide a minimum of 225 clock hours of training for alternatively licensed teachers aligned to the endorsement requirements as described in CDE Rules and Regulations.
- Develop guidelines that the designated agency uses to differentiate among alternative candidates based upon an inventory of their proven knowledge and past experiences.
- Develop a mentor selection process which shall include, but not be limited to:
 - Evidence and/or confirmation of exemplary teaching and school leadership; the ability to model and counsel the alternative teacher; relevant coursework; and a valid license and endorsement in the alternatively-licensed teacher's content area, if available.
 - If a mentor teacher in the same endorsement area is not available, the designated agency may submit a plan for mentor support that provides a comparable level of mentorship.
 - An articulated, mandatory, and intensive supervision training program for mentors that provides direction with regard to structured guidance and regular ongoing support to new teachers.

Duties of the mentor teacher	Duties of the support team
Serve as a member of the support team	Ensure all documentation, including the <u>Statement of Assurance</u> , is completed in a timely manner
Counsel and coach the alternatively licensed teacher	Schedules appropriate time and compensation for mentor to plan, observe, and confer regularly with alternative teacher candidate
Document evidence of growth and development of the alternative teacher in alignment with state standards	Meets on a regular basis to discuss and document the alternative teacher's progress
	Makes determination regarding recommendation for initial licensure

Becoming a Designated Agency

As outlined on the CDE website, there are six steps that a prospective Designated Agency must go through to receive Colorado State Board of Education approval.

- 1) Review the Designated Agency Guide (this document).
- 2) Complete a pre-screening interview with CDE to determine eligibility to serve as a Designated Agency in Colorado. Contact [Educator Development](#) for this interview. Documentation of the organization's designation/status will be required after this interview.

- 3) After the prescreening meeting confirms your status as a Designated Agency, you would submit your proposal and accompanying documents (further explained in subsequent sections) by November 30th for consideration for the next school year. This deadline provides enough time for CDE to review documents and submit a recommendation to the Colorado State Board of Education. However, if reviewers require further documentation, the process may be delayed.
- 4) Engage in review process. CDE and expert reviewers from the field of education will review your submission. If more information or clarifications are needed, you will be expected to submit further documentation before the review can be completed.
- 5) After the proposal has been thoroughly reviewed and a determination has been made, CDE will submit a recommendation to the Colorado State Board of Education. If the November 30th deadline is met, the State Board of Education should be able to make a decision to approve/not approve the proposal by winter/spring of each year. However, if the State Board of Education requests further information, this date may not be met.

Submission Requirements

- I. Documentation of organizational status
- II. Documentation of District/BOCES shortages
- III. Alternative Educator Preparation Program Proposal (template provided)
- IV. Endorsement Matrices
- V. Endorsement Coursework Tables
- VI. Syllabi/Training Modules

I. Documentation of Organizational Status

Organizations must submit documentation that will serve to verify that the organization falls within the legal definition of an entity that can serve to prepare alternative educator candidates.

II. Documentation of District/BOCES shortages

Organization must provide documentation from district/BOCES leadership that the endorsement(s) proposed by the entity are in a shortage area(s) as established through evidence/data collection of the district/BOCES. Evidence/data collection procedures establishing this shortage must be collected by the organization from the district/BOCES in addition to signed documentation from the district/BOCES.

III. Alternative Educator Preparation Program Proposal

In the Alternative Educator Preparation Program Proposal, your organization will document the plans you have developed to meet the requirements and standards as described in Colorado Revised Statutes and CDE Rules and Regulations. [The Designated Agency Authorization Proposal](#)

[Template](#) includes the prompts or questions to which the organization should respond. Please contact [Educator Development](#) if you have questions while completing the template.

IV. Endorsement Matrices

Matrices will also be filled out for each endorsement your organization is proposing to offer. The standards matrices provide:

- an overview of the coursework/training your organization would implement to prepare candidates to meet the Colorado Department of Education standards for that endorsement
- the outcomes your organization would use to measure the extent to which candidates have met the Colorado Department of Education standards for that endorsement

CDE and expert reviewers will evaluate the alignment of all required coursework/training in each endorsement area to CDE Rules and Regulations.

These matrices are in the form of spreadsheets with tables. All matrices will have the Colorado Educator Quality Standards as the first sheet and then the specific endorsement standards as the second sheet, etc. Your organization may choose to complete one standards matrix or a number of matrices depending on the number and type of endorsements your organization is proposing to offer. For instance, if your organization is planning to prepare both elementary and secondary teachers, your organization may choose to fill out two separate matrices if the curriculum and instruction these teacher candidates receive is different. Another option would be to use one matrix but highlight the different groups in different colors. For instance, within the same matrix, you could choose to use three different colors to highlight the course(s)/training and outcome(s)/evidence that: elementary teacher candidates receive; secondary teacher candidates receive; or all teacher candidates receive. Matrix columns cannot be changed, but rows can be expanded to allow for more space.

Example #1:

#	Standard Description	Course	Outcome(s)/Evidence
8.02 (10)	The elementary educator is able to develop fluent, automatic reading of text:		
8.02 (10)(a)	understanding the role of fluency in word recognition, oral reading, silent reading, comprehension of written discourse and motivation to read.	TED 330	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: Reutzel/Cooter (2013), Chapter • Notecatcher on Reutzel/Cooter Ch. 7
8.02 (10)(b)	understanding reading fluency as a stage of normal reading development, as the primary symptom of some reading disorders and as a consequence of practice and instruction.	TED 331	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text level identification assignment • Guided reading lesson plan designed for instructional level text

Example #2:

#	Standard Description	Course	Outcome(s)/Evidence
9.07(1)	The special education generalist is knowledgeable about student literacy and the development of reading, writing, communicating and listening skills in order to provide specially designed instruction and facilitate access to the general education curriculum in a variety of settings, and is able to:		
9.07 (1)(a)	plan and organize reading and writing instruction and interventions informed by a variety of ongoing student assessment.	Orton Gillingham training Six Traits Writing professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignment: Conduct a full and complete assessment for reading on a student who has strong literacy skills and one who has weak strategy skill; develop an intervention plan; provide interventions • Assignment: Conducting a full and complete assessment for writing on a student who has strong literacy skills and one who has weak literacy skills; develop an intervention plan; provide interventions
9.07 (1)(b)	use knowledge of typical and atypical language and cognitive development to guide the choice of instructional strategies and interventions in meeting the learning needs of individual students.	TEP 4581: Colorado Mountain College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture: "Understanding typical and atypical human growth and development" Reading: "Identifying effects of cultural and linguistic differences on growth and development." • Exit slip assessing knowledge acquired from lecture and reading

V. Endorsement Coursework/Training Tables

CDE requires submission of separate tables with required coursework/training for each endorsement area, including course number, course title/training title, number of credits, and sequence/date of training. This information provides CDE with an overview of the experience of the candidate as they progress through their preparation to teach in that endorsement area.

Example:

Required Coursework for Elementary Education (K-6) Endorsement

Course Number	Course Title	Credits	Sequence
EDUC 325	Math Content for Elementary Teachers	3	Year 1-FA
EDUC 335	Mathematics Methods for Elementary Teachers	3	Year 1- SP

VI. Syllabi/Training Modules

Your organization will submit all syllabi, training module outlines, and/or detailed professional development agendas for required training, including objectives, assignments, and outcomes. All syllabi, training modules outlines, and professional development agendas must include tables that list CDE Rules and Regulations aligned with course outcomes. Each standard must be fully delineated and not only referenced by the standard number. This information provides CDE with an opportunity to review how CDE Rules and Regulations fit within the structure of each course and how the alignment of coursework to CDE Rules and Regulations is communicated to candidates, districts, BOCES, instructors, and other stakeholders.

Submission of Materials

You will submit all materials electronically. All documents must be submitted at one time. In addition to the Designated Agency Authorization Proposal and accompanying documentation for each endorsement area for which your organization is planning to prepare alternative candidates. You will submit two separate attachments, one attachment will be the standards matrix for that endorsement and the other attachment will be a combined document of the Endorsement Coursework Table and syllabi/training modules.

Documentation will be submitted electronically in an online submission platform that will be provided after completion of the pre-screening interview with CDE.

Review of Materials

To become a designated agency, entities must meet or exceed standard for all of the five quality indicators below. As part of reauthorization, an agency must continue to demonstrate that these indicators are met. At any time, if a designated agency struggles to meet one or more of these indicators, CDE may engage the agency in an improvement process. The improvement process may include, but not be limited to, documentation, such as requirements for evidence, examples of outcomes, and feedback from participants.

Proposals to become a designated agency for alternative teacher preparation will only be considered if they demonstrate that they serve the direct needs of a Colorado school district(s) or BOCES. If a designated agency does not provide evidence for meeting specific public schools' needs, the proposal does not meet statutory requirements and the agency cannot be authorized by the State Board of Education.

Upon receiving the documentation, CDE and a team of expert reviewers from the field of educator preparation will conduct a review. Review teams consist of internal and external experts. Internal experts are CDE colleagues such as experts in literacy, math, or special education. External experts are practitioners, teacher educators and leaders from around the state. The Educator Preparation Specialist in the CDE Educator Talent unit synthesizes all feedback from the review team. If questions arise, CDE will compile a request for additional information from the organization.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact [Educator Development](#).

Evaluation

Quality Indicators	Explanation/Examples	Does Not Meet Standard	Meets or Exceeds Standard
Needs of the Field	Needs not fulfilled with current agencies to train non-traditional candidates, address shortage or high-needs endorsement areas, district(s) partnerships, provide unique delivery method, feedback from stakeholders, etc.		
If the review team has determined that the entity is eligible to apply to become a Designated Agency in Colorado, the following indicators will need to be met.			
State Statute and Rule Licensure Requirements	Candidate entry requirements, professional competencies rules, alternative licensure process, employment agreements, etc.		
Program Curriculum	Minimum 225 clock hours, alignment to teacher quality standards, method of delivery, instructor qualifications, etc.		
Candidate Support	Roles and responsibilities for advisory council, support team and mentor including depth, breadth and frequency of support; struggling candidate protocol, etc.		
Program Evaluation	Data reporting to state agencies, growth and continual improvement processes, documentation of candidate progress, stakeholder feedback, etc.		

Alternative Educator Candidates

In order to maintain the intended purpose of alternative educator preparation programs, designated agencies must ensure that candidates are eligible to participate in this pathway. It is the responsibility of the designated agency to be educated and up-to-date on all requirements and procedures for alternative educators and to provide accurate guidance to alternative candidates as they navigate the process. It is also the responsibility of the designated agency to respond promptly to communications from the Colorado Department of Education, as CDE is responsible for the quality of alternative educator preparation programs and candidates prepared through this pathway. The following links provide further information on the requirements for alternative licensure candidates and the process for becoming an alternative teacher :

- [Alternative Teacher Candidates: What You Need to Know](#)
- [Alternative Pathway-Alternative Teacher License](#)

Alternative teachers may receive an alternative license for one or two years (depending on the length of the approved program) and must have obtained that license prior to beginning an alternative educator preparation program and prior to entering the classroom. State statute and state board rule allow individuals employed as special education teachers to hold an alternative license for up to three years regardless of program length; as such, alternative licenses for special education generalists are issued for three years, though an individual certainly may complete the program according to its approved timeframe. Alternatively licensed educators are evaluated based on district and state requirements for licensed employees. After completion of an alternative educator program, the alternative teacher may submit an application to obtain a Colorado initial teacher license.

Alternative Teacher Change in Status

If a candidate leaves or discontinues your program for any reason, an [Alternative Teacher Change in Status](#) form should be submitted to your CDE evaluator to notify the department of the change. Upon receipt, the candidate's alternative license will be expired per the date included on the form (as an alternative license is valid only while an individual actively participates in an approved program). Should the candidate wish to re-enroll in an alternative program at a later date, he/she will need to complete and submit a new application.

Ongoing Responsibilities

If your organization is approved as a designated agency, this section details your responsibilities to alternative educator candidates.

Once approved, there are several ongoing activities the designated agency must complete to maintain status.

- Engage in annual preparation provider update. This includes:
 - Provide program updates including but not limited to: contacts for state and federal reporting, curricular changes, new endorsement areas, etc.

- Designated agencies are required to maintain records of individual candidate's participation, progress and completion.
- Submit required data reports to CDE per state and federal statutes (i.e. Title II, Designated Agency Data Collection, Educator Preparation Report, etc.)
 - Designated Agencies are required to comply with data requests from state and federal agencies.
- Participate in required State Board of Education reauthorization process including an onsite evaluation conducted not more than every 5 years. This includes:
 - Designated Agency Report submitted prior to site visit.
 - Site visit with stakeholders (alternative candidates, graduates, hiring principals, program instructors, etc.)
 - Final report from CDE and reauthorization decision by State Board of Education