



**ESSA Hub Committee  
January 9, 2017 Meeting**

**Decision Point: Defining “out of field” teachers for the purpose of reporting “the statewide rates at which low-income and minority students enrolled in schools receiving funds under Title I, Part A are taught by ineffective, out-of-field, and inexperienced teachers....”**

*Majority Voted:* To use the endorsement criteria already in place but without the requirement of a license; districts/charter schools would be responsible for tracking and reporting those data to CDE.

*Minority Voted:* To use the recommendation of the Spoke to utilize the licensing with endorsement process in current statute. The following summarizes their rationale for diverging from the majority.

1. We all agree that teaching is complex, challenging work. While content competency is extremely important, particularly in secondary grades (7-12), we think it's just as important for teachers to have a solid understanding of the theory and practice of teaching.

2. We fully understand that we are in the middle of a very serious teacher shortage throughout the state, particularly in our rural areas. Under these circumstances, we recognize that recruiting someone with content knowledge but without a license or an endorsement can be a challenge. Our goal is to ensure that all of our students receive a well-rounded education. Even here, the state affords districts the ability to look at the numerous alternative preparation program currently available.

3. Our bigger concern is that the majority of charters in the state of Colorado are located in urban and suburban areas where there is a greater likelihood of recruiting licensed teachers. As we heard, a majority of charter educators (72%) are licensed. As a common practice, charters often receive waivers for this requirement. We are fine with this since the intent of charters is to be able to "think outside the box." However, we are confident that many parents who choose to send their kids to charters aren't aware that they have a 1 in 4 chance of getting a teacher that isn't endorsed/licensed.

Further, there are other ramifications that impact kids. Nationally, teacher attrition rates at charters is two to three times higher than in public schools. Salaries at charters are about \$10,000 less than in public schools. Certainly, a major factor is that charters tend to hire less experienced teachers. However, if we are considering what this means longer term for teacher retention, both of these trends are not encouraging.

4. Our thinking about reporting on endorsed teachers isn't intended to be punitive. Rather, we honestly believe that we need to have this information so that a) parents are aware, and b) it should be an indicator of where the state should focus attention on school funding as a larger issue. If we settle for

less, we think we are covering up a potentially more significant and detrimental trend that will have even greater impacts on Colorado's economic and business climate as a whole.

5. Remember that the over encompassing issue around ESSA is that we are providing an equitable teaching experience for students, particularly to high risk students. The Spoke Committee's recommendation was grounded on that and doesn't prevent schools (charter schools included) from hiring a non-licensed teacher. If, though, high risk students within a school are not achieving as they should be commensurate with their non-risk peers, AND those high risk students are being taught by a non-licensed teacher, then indeed that should be reported as such and a plan should be put in place on how to address the inequity. That is the least that should be done for the sake of those students.

6. Using the endorsement definition for out-of-field puts the work to determine if a teacher is properly endorsed on the CDE licensing department and takes it off the local districts. This not only relieves the district of some work, but is also less subjective.

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