

FAQ Supporting English Learners

Professional Development Pathways



English Learner Professional Development Pathways

At the request of the Colorado State Board of Education, 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 English Learner (EL) stakeholder group was tasked with examining a challenge -- grappling with the issues of acquiring the skills to teach our English learners, which include 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 to acquire these skills.

Rules have been proposed and the Board of Education is seeking feedback on a highly flexible approach to providing educators with the knowledge and skills they need to support English learners.

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.

Support existing core content endorsed teachers by requiring professional development that addressed the educational needs and opportunities of English learners, within their next **full** license renewal cycle 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.

Frequently Asked Questions

Below is a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the proposed English Learner Professional Development Pathways:

Q: Who are core content endorsed teachers?

A: Teachers who hold a professional license in math, science, social studies, English, or elementary.

Q: Does this apply to initial or professional licensed core content endorsed teacher?

A: The 45 clock hour renewal requirement applies to only professionally licensed core content endorsed teachers.

Q: Could I use professional development credit that I have already used in the past?

A: Yes. For purposes of meeting this requirements, educators could use any professional development that aligns to the standards that have been used in the past.

Q: Is the core content endorsed teacher renewal a state licensure requirement or a district requirement?

A: This would be a state teacher licensure requirement as part of the initial and renewal processes for professional licensure. CDE recognizes the fact that this requirement might impact district professional development offerings and support, but this is ultimately a requirement for an individual educators' Colorado license.

Q: Could my district provide this professional development to me?

A: Yes. Many districts already offer extensive PD that would meet this requirement. CDE is looking for any and all ways to help educators in meeting these requirements, and that support would be extended to supporting district-based professional development options.



Q: How much would this cost me?

A: Many districts already have English learner professional development embedded in their annual professional development and have done so for many years, which means this might cost nothing to educators. All of that professional development would count towards meeting these requirements. For core endorsed content teachers (math, English, science, social studies, elementary) who do not have any English learner professional development that meets the standards, the Colorado Department of Education is committed to creating a no-cost professional development option that would be available to all educators within the first year of implementation.

Q: What will happen if I don't meet the English learner professional development pathway requirements when I renew my professional license?

A: Licenses will not be renewed until educators demonstrate proof that they have met the CLDE PD requirements. Core content endorsed teachers will have a full 5 year renewal cycle to ensure they meet these requirements.

Q: How long do I have to meet the proposed English learner PD requirements, once they are approved?

A: Educators will have one full professional license renewal cycle, which could be as little as five years and as much as nearly 10 years.

Q: I am a new teacher to Colorado. Do I have to meet this requirement before I can be hired?

A: No. This is a one-time requirement for all professionally licensed core content teachers upon full renewal of their license.

Q: Will I have to do this every single time I renew my professional license as a core content endorsed teacher?

A: No. This is a one-time requirement that once it is met, the requirement has been fulfilled.

Q: Does my ELL, LDE, CLD or ESL, etc. endorsement count?

A: Yes. If educators hold or are eligible to hold an endorsement related to English language learner strategies, it would meet these requirements. That includes educators who obtained those endorsements in Colorado or outside of Colorado.

Q: If I have already taken English learner related courses and I have significant experience working with English language learners, does that count?

A: Yes. Any course, professional development, and experiences would count toward meeting these proposed requirements. You can use any professional development you have completed in your career.

Q: How will I know if my professional development courses meet the requirements?

A: Professional development courses that are aligned to the English learner standards will be accepted for renewal.

Q: Why is this requirement being implemented now?

A: The U.S. Department of Justice recently asked the Colorado Department of Education whether English learners have an opportunity to receive an equitable education in Colorado under the Equal Educational Opportunities Act. In response, the State Board of Education directed CDE to convene a group of stakeholders representing districts with the most English learners to develop recommendations for ensuring that all educators have at least basic knowledge about serving English learners.

Q: I'm currently a pre-service teacher in an educator preparation program in Colorado. Will the educator preparation program make sure I have met this requirement before I graduate?

A: Possibly. Many of our currently approved educator preparation programs already meet these proposed requirements. The Colorado Department of Education will conduct a review of all programs to ensure they meet the guidelines within 6 months of the adoption of the professional development pathways.



Q: Does this requirement apply to specialized service professionals, substitutes, adjunct educators, interim educators and emergency educators?

A: No. This is a proposed requirement for all pre-service educators and all current core content professionally licensed teachers in Colorado.

Q: My district has very few English learner students. Would this requirement still apply to me?

A: Rules do allow for a superintendent to issue an annual waiver to core content endorsed teachers who are teaching in districts that have 2% or fewer identified English language students on average over the course of three years.

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)