



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

# 2020-2021 Teacher of Record Program Report

Submitted to:

**Colorado House Education Committee  
Colorado Senate Education Committee**

By:

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## Executive Summary

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The Teacher of Record License and Teacher of Record Program were created in 2018. C.R.S. 22-60.5-201(1)(a.5) and C.R.S. 22-60.5-208.7.<sup>1</sup> They were designed to decrease the teacher shortage in Colorado by creating a unique pathway to licensure that meets the needs of individual communities. The purpose of this pathway to licensure is to provide districts, boards of cooperative services (BOCES), and charter schools with a means to partner with traditional educator preparation programs to fill critical teacher shortages. The 2019-2020 school year was the first year for which there were Teacher of Record License holders and Teacher of Record Program participants.

### Background

During the summer and fall of 2017, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE or Department) and the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) conducted an in-depth study of teacher shortages throughout the state. In response to documented teacher shortages, the legislature passed multiple initiatives aimed at alleviating these shortages. These included the Teacher of Record License and Teacher of Record Program, which create a recruitment pathway for districts, BOCES, and/or charter schools to hire individuals as teachers of record while completing the last 36 or fewer credit hours of their traditional undergraduate teacher preparation program.<sup>2</sup> This initiative aims to address teacher shortages by developing a recruitment and placement pipeline that enhances experiential training and preparation of teachers, customizes that training to the needs of individual communities, and increases the demographic representativeness of teachers in public schools across the state.

### Teacher of Record License and Teacher of Record Program

The Teacher of Record License is designed for individuals who do not hold a bachelor's degree and are in an undergraduate traditional teacher preparation program at an approved Colorado institution of higher education.<sup>3</sup> Under the Teacher of Record license, an individual can become the teacher of record in their own classroom while completing up to the remaining 36 credit hours of their teacher preparation program.

In order to qualify for a Teacher of Record License, individuals must be enrolled in a Teacher of Record Program. For the Teacher of Record Program, the hiring district/BOCES/charter school and the institution of higher education must collaboratively create an individualized program for the candidate to complete their teacher preparation program while employed as the teacher of record. Both the district/BOCES/charter school and institution of higher education are responsible for providing support services and training.

### Participant Information

There were eight Teacher of Record Program participants for the 2020-2021 school year. The eight Teacher of Record Program participants taught in seven different rural and small rural school districts across the state and attended Colorado-approved teacher preparation programs at four different institutions of higher education (IHEs). Seven of the eight Teacher of Record participants finished their program within its defined time, and five of those who finished their program plan on returning to teach at the same district for the 2021-2022 school year. Demographically, the distribution of participants' race/ethnicity is similar to the statewide distribution of teacher race/ethnicity, which has a shortage of teachers of color.<sup>4</sup> The distribution of 2020-2021 participants' gender is similar to that of Colorado's teacher population in that there are more women than men, which is not reflective of the relatively even gender distribution at the state level.



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## Conclusion

The pathway to licensure created by the Teacher of Record License and Teacher of Record Program allowed districts to fill teaching positions in critical shortage areas that otherwise may have remained vacant while providing customized training and preparation to participants. During the 2020-2021 school year, there were eight Teacher of Record Program participants, all of whom filled rural shortages.



## Introduction

The Teacher of Record License and Teacher of Record Program were created during the 2018 legislative session to address the teacher shortage in the state by developing a new pipeline for the recruitment and placement of teachers. C.R.S. 22-60.5-201(1)(a.5) and C.R.S. 22-60.5-208.7.<sup>5</sup> When a school district, BOCES, or charter school is in need of a licensed teacher in a designated shortage area, and no qualified applicants have applied for the position, this pathway may be used to fill the position.

### Designated Shortage Areas

Colorado's shortage areas are determined annually through the mandatory Educator Shortage Survey.<sup>6</sup> The shortage areas identified for the 2020-2021 school year for which one was eligible to have a Teacher of Record license<sup>7</sup> were: Rural (PK-12), Art (PK-12), Business (7-12), Early Childhood (PK-3), English as a Second Language (PK-12), Mathematics (7-12), Music (PK-12), and Science (7-12).

### Teacher of Record License

The Teacher of Record License is designed for individuals who do not hold a bachelor's degree and are in an approved undergraduate traditional teacher preparation program at an institution of higher education.<sup>8</sup> Under the Teacher of Record License, individuals can be employed in a shortage area as the teacher of record in their own classroom while completing up to the remaining 36 hours of their teacher preparation program. In order to be eligible for a Teacher of Record License, individuals must be enrolled in a Department-approved Teacher of Record Program. Licenses are valid for two years and can be renewed once if the holder does not complete a bachelor's degree due to unforeseen circumstances.

### Teacher of Record Program

The Teacher of Record Program is an individualized one- or two-year program for candidates to complete their teacher preparation while employed as the teacher of record. Each Teacher of Record Program is created collaboratively between the hiring school district, BOCES, or charter school and the approved Colorado institution of higher education in which the individual is enrolled. Programs must include direct supervision by mentor teachers, performance evaluations, and teacher preparation program or other supports to help the teacher of record meet licensure requirements. Both the district/BOCES/charter school and Colorado institution of higher education are responsible for providing such support services and training. All Teacher of Record Programs must be approved by the Department in order for the individual to be eligible to apply for a Teacher of Record License.

### Teacher of Record Program

- The Teacher of Record Program and Teacher of Record License allow individuals to complete their teacher preparation program while employed as the teacher of record.
- To be eligible for a Teacher of Record License, an individual must:
  - Have no more than 36 credit hours remaining to complete their bachelor's degree requirements;
  - Have not completed the required field work;
  - Participate in a Teacher of Record Program; and
  - Be employed in a position aligned to their licensure program and in which there is a critical teacher shortage.
- Critical shortage areas for the 2020-2021 school year for which one was eligible to have a Teacher of Record License were:
  - Rural (PK-12);
  - Art (PK-12);
  - Business (7-12);
  - Early Childhood (PK-3);
  - English as a Second Language (PK-12);
  - Mathematics (7-12);
  - Music (PK-12); and
  - Science (7-12).

## Program Participation

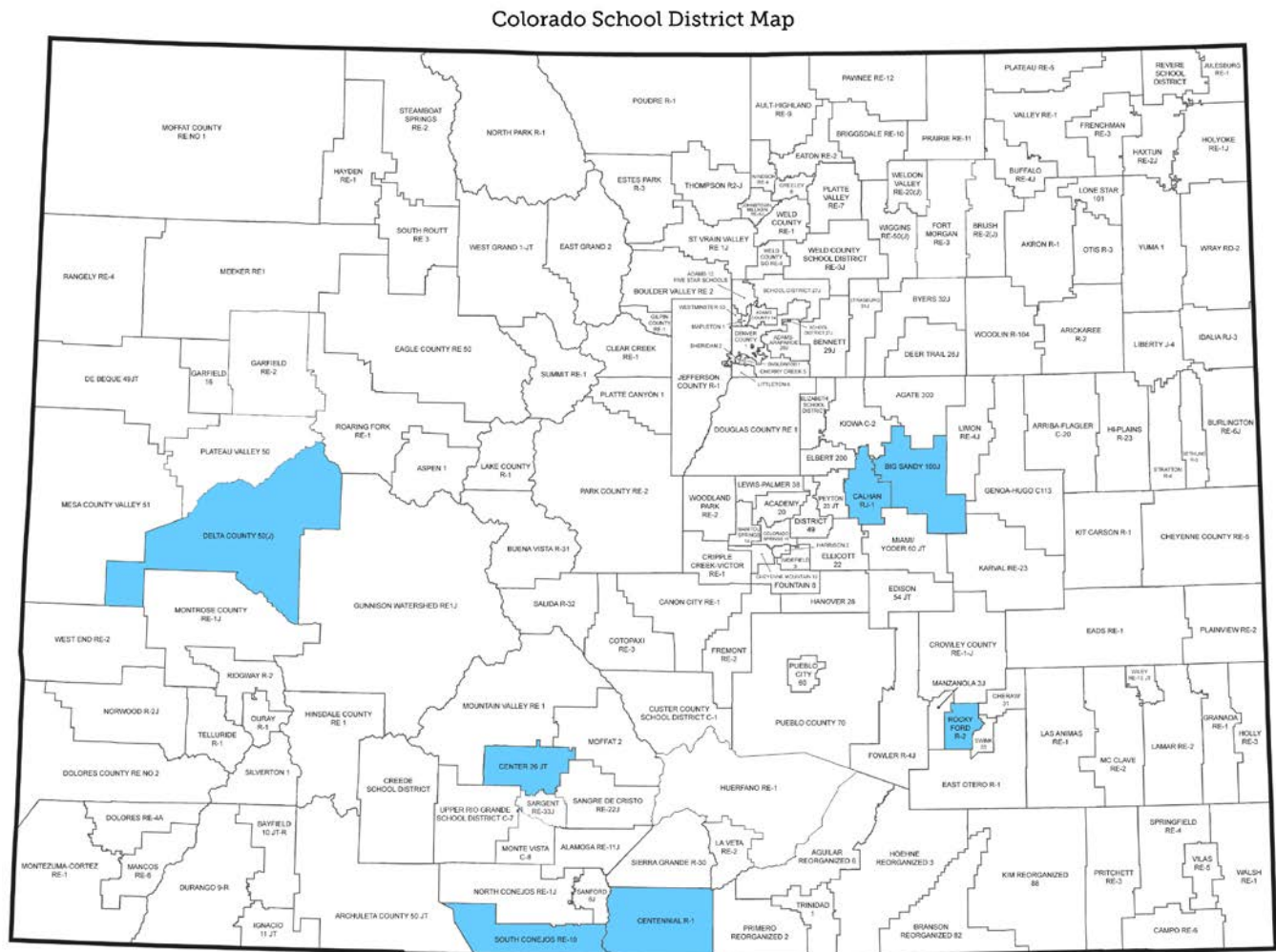
The 2020-2021 school year is the second year for which there were Teacher of Record Program Participants and thus Teacher of Record License holders. Over the course of the 2020-2021 school year, the Department received ten inquiries regarding the Teacher of Record Program. Of those, nine Teacher of Record Programs were submitted for approval. Nine plans were approved, and eight individuals for which a plan was approved participated in Teacher of Record Programs.<sup>9</sup>

## Teacher of Record Program

### Program Information

The eight Teacher of Record Program participants were employed by seven different districts across the state and attended four different institutions of higher education. All seven of the districts employing an individual in a Teacher of Record Program are identified as rural or small rural districts.<sup>10</sup> Figure 1 below highlights the districts with a Teacher of Record Program participant for the 2020-2021 school year.

**FIGURE 1: School Districts with Teacher of Record Programs in 2020-2021**





Although Teacher of Record Programs may last up to two years, all eight participants’ programs varied in length from one semester to one academic year. Of the designated shortage areas, all eight participants filled positions in rural or small rural school districts; five participants filled elementary positions, two filled secondary English positions, and one filled a secondary social studies position. In their roles as the teacher of record, participants instructed 324 students<sup>11</sup> from first to twelfth grade. Five participants instructed students in a single grade level, while the remaining three participants taught students across multiple grade levels.

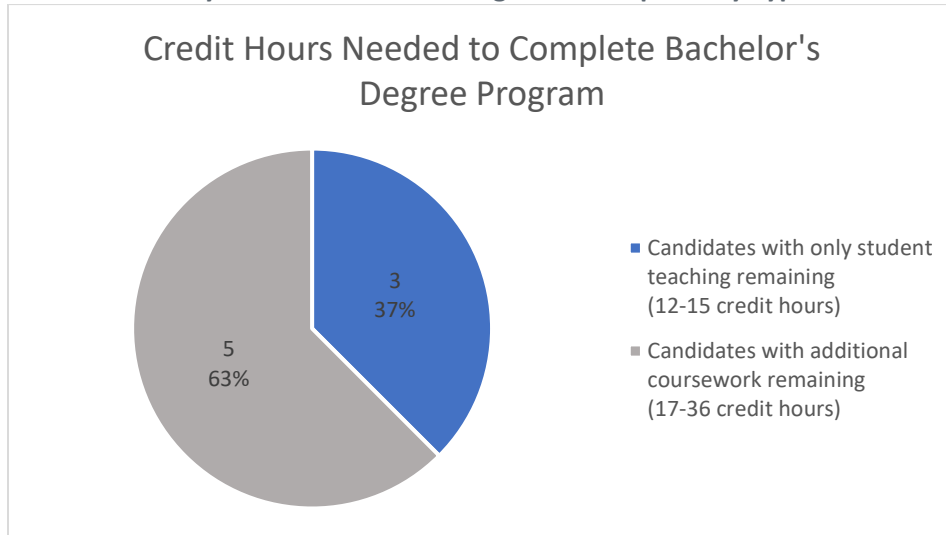
**TABLE 1: Program Information**

	Institute of Higher Education	School District	Shortage Area	Teacher of Record License Endorsement	School Level	Program Length
<b>Participant A</b>	University of Colorado – Colorado Springs	Big Sandy 100J	Rural (PK-12)	Elementary Education (K-6)	Elementary School (PK-5)	1 year
<b>Participant B</b>	Adams State University	Center 26 JT	Rural (PK-12)	Elementary Education (K-6)	Elementary School (PK-5)	1 year
<b>Participant C</b>	University of Colorado – Colorado Springs	Calhan RJ-1	Rural (PK-12)	Elementary Education (K-6) <sup>12</sup>	Elementary School (PK-5)	1 year
<b>Participant D</b>	Adams State University	Centennial R-1	Rural (PK-12)	Social Studies Education (7-12)	All Grades (PK-12)	1 year
<b>Participant E</b>	Colorado Mesa University	Delta County 50(J)	Rural (PK-12)	English Language Arts (7-12)	Middle School (6-8)	1 semester
<b>Participant F</b>	Adams State University	South Conejos RE-10	Rural (PK-12)	English Language Arts (7-12)	High School (9-12)	1 year
<b>Participant G</b>	Adams State University	Center 26 JT	Rural (PK-12)	Elementary Education (K-6)	Elementary School (PK-5)	1 semester
<b>Participant H</b>	University of Colorado – Denver	Rocky Ford R-2	Rural (PK-12)	Elementary Education (K-6)	Primary School (K-2)	1 year

### Participant Information

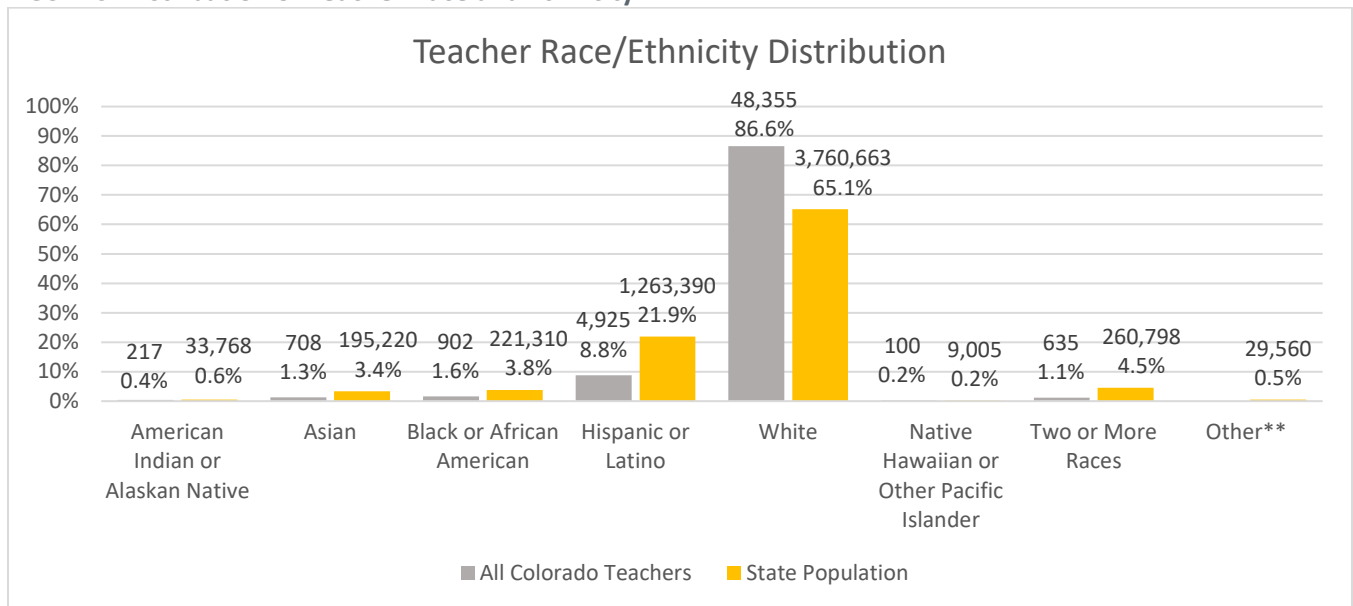
Teacher of Record Program participant ages ranged from 20 to 25, and six out of eight program participants graduated from a Colorado high school. All participants in the Teacher of Record Program entered their program while in their final, or senior, year of their undergraduate program. Although some had only their student teaching requirement remaining, many others had additional courses to complete in addition to student teaching. The number of credit hours that participants needed to complete in order to finish their undergraduate program ranged from 12 to 36 credit hours.

**FIGURE 2: Credit Hours Needed by Teacher of Record Program Participants by Type of Courses Remaining**



In order to gauge the Teacher of Record Program’s impact on the recruitment of demographically underrepresented groups to the teaching profession, Teacher of Record Program candidates’ demographic information is considered in comparison to the demographics of all Colorado teachers<sup>13</sup> and the state population<sup>14</sup>. As shown in Figure 3, by comparing the distribution of race/ethnicity for the state with the distribution of race/ethnicity for all Colorado teachers, it is apparent that people of color are underrepresented in the teaching profession in Colorado.<sup>15</sup> Similar to the state’s teacher population, the majority of Teacher of Record Program participants (six of eight) identify as white, with those identifying as Hispanic/Latino (two of eight) comprising the second largest racial/ethnic group. Given the small number of Teacher of Record Program participants, it is not possible to definitively determine the Teacher of Record Program’s impact on the recruitment of demographically underrepresented groups to the teaching profession.

**FIGURE 3: Distribution of Teacher Race and Ethnicity**

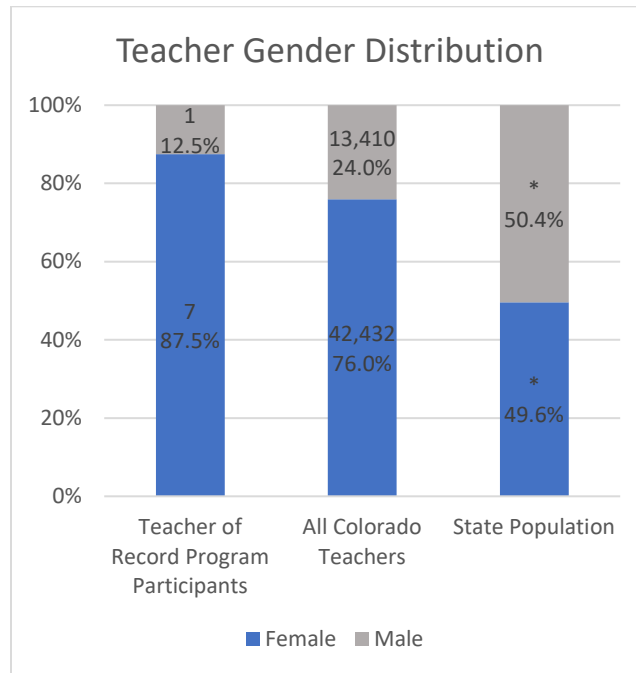


\*\*The 'Other' category is only available for the state population data.



The gender distribution of Teacher of Record Program participants is similar to that of all Colorado teachers, in that there is an overrepresentation of females in comparison to the overall state population.<sup>16</sup> This is different from what was observed in 2019-2020 where Teacher of Record Program participants' gender was more evenly distributed between men and women than it was among all Colorado teachers. As mentioned regarding race/ethnicity data, the small number of Teacher of Record Program participants means it is not possible to conclusively determine the Teacher of Record Program's impact on recruiting demographically underrepresented groups to the teaching profession.

**FIGURE 4: Distribution of Teacher Gender**

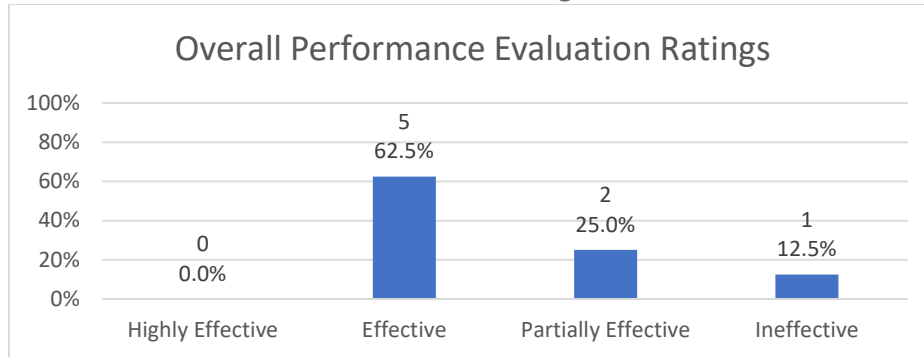


\*The number of males and females is not included at the state population level as the percentages represent estimates based on the American Community Survey.<sup>17</sup>

### Participant Outcomes

Seven of the eight 2020-2021 Teacher of Record Program participants completed their Teacher of Record Program within the defined period of their program, and all eight participants completed their bachelor's degree within that time. The one individual who did not complete their Teacher of Record Program but did complete their bachelor's degree chose to graduate with their bachelor's degree without completing the necessary requirements to be recommended for initial teacher licensure. As shown in Figure 5, the majority of 2020-2021 Teacher of Record Program participants were rated Effective on their district performance evaluation.<sup>18</sup> Five of the eight participants are planning on returning to teach in the same district for the 2021-2022 school year.

**FIGURE 5: Distribution of Overall Performance Evaluation Ratings**



Regarding the 2019-2020, or prior year, cohort of Teacher of Record Program participants, all seven served as regular classroom teachers in Colorado during the 2020-2021 school year. Five of the seven continued working in the same district and school where they completed their Teacher of Record Programs, one remained in the same district but in a different school, and one worked in a different district and school. Six of the seven advanced their Teacher of Record License to an initial teacher license for the 2020-2021 school year, while one chose to remain authorized under the Teacher of Record License.<sup>19</sup>

## Conclusion

The Teacher of Record License and Program provide an avenue for local education providers to recruit new teachers for critical shortage areas when there are no qualified applicants available by working in collaboration with institutions of higher education to meet local needs. During the 2020-2021 school year, eight individuals participated in a Teacher of Record Program. Participants were hired by seven different rural or small rural school districts across the state and attended four different institutions of higher education. This license and program allowed school districts to fill vacancies in critical shortage areas that may have otherwise remained vacant. All programs were for one semester or one year, and one hundred percent of participants completed their bachelor’s degree within that time although one participant did not complete their Teacher of Record Program. As with the 2019-2020 racial/ethnic distribution of program participants, the racial/ethnic distribution of 2020-2021 program participants closely mirrors that of the state’s teacher population. However, there are too few participants to determine if the program has had an impact on the recruitment of demographically underrepresented racial/ethnic and gender groups. Additional years of data would allow for more definitive conclusions to be drawn.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The Grow Your Own Educator Program was created in tandem with the Teacher of Record License as an alternative to the Teacher of Record Program. The Grow Your Own Educator Program, comprised of all the same requirements as the Teacher of Record Program, also provided grant funding for the individual’s tuition in exchange for three years of service in the district/BOCES/charter school after program completion. However, no qualified candidates applied for the program, and the program was repealed during the 2020 legislative session.

<sup>2</sup> See end note 1.

<sup>3</sup> The process of educator preparation program approval and re-authorization for institutions of higher education is carried out collaboratively by the Colorado Department of Higher Education and Colorado Department of Education and includes initial approval and re-authorization not more than once every five years. Initial approval and re-authorization are required for any institution offering



educator preparation programs leading to endorsement in Colorado, including public and private entities. For more information, see <http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatortalent/preparation>.

<sup>4</sup> See Figures 3 and 4 for a comparison of the most recent available data. For a historic perspective, see [https://highered.colorado.gov/Publications/Reports/teachereducation/2017/TeacherShortages\\_Nation\\_Colorado\\_Dec2017.pdf](https://highered.colorado.gov/Publications/Reports/teachereducation/2017/TeacherShortages_Nation_Colorado_Dec2017.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> See end note 1.

<sup>6</sup> Starting with the 2018-2019 school year, the Educator Shortage Survey is required by statute per Senate Bill 19-003 and to meet Federal requirements per 34 CFR 682.201(q), 34 CFR 674. 53(c), and 34 CFR 686.12.

<sup>7</sup> The Teacher of Record license cannot be issued with an endorsement in special education regardless of its identification as a shortage area due to requirements outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

<sup>8</sup> See endnote 3.

<sup>9</sup> Due to miscommunication, the hiring school, candidate, and preparation program were not aware their Teacher of Record Program had been approved, so the candidate did not participate in the approved program.

<sup>10</sup> Rural and small rural status is determined by the Rural Education Council. For more information, see <http://www.cde.state.co.us/ruraledcouncil>.

<sup>11</sup> This is not a unique count of students, meaning that if a participant instructed the same student in multiple classes, that student is counted once for each class.

<sup>12</sup> This participant did not apply for the Teacher of Record License and instead worked under a substitute authorization while enrolled in their Teacher of Record Program.

<sup>13</sup> State level data was calculated using publicly available staff statistics, which can be found here:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/staffcurrent>. This data is collected in the Human Resources Snapshot. For more information, see [http://www.cde.state.co.us/datapipeline/snap\\_hr](http://www.cde.state.co.us/datapipeline/snap_hr).

<sup>14</sup> State racial/ethnic data comes from the federal 2020 census, as published by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs. For more information, see <https://demography.dola.colorado.gov/census-acs/2020-census-data/#census-data-for-colorado-2020>. State gender data comes from the federal American Community Survey 2019 estimates, as gender data from the 2020 census was not available at the time this report was published. For more information, see <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?tid=ACSDP1Y2019.DP05&g=0400000US08>.

<sup>15</sup> See endnote 4.

<sup>16</sup> Teacher of Record Program participants had the option to select female, male, non-binary, or prefer not to say. Data for all Colorado teachers and state population data are available for female and male only.

<sup>17</sup> See endnote 14.

<sup>18</sup> CDE did not monitor the measures of student learning/outcomes (MSL/MSO) portion of the Educator Effectiveness requirements for educator evaluations in the 2020-21 evaluation cycle. The Educator Effectiveness process was maintained and districts/BOCES focused their efforts solely on the established professional practices. Monitoring and reporting of educator's overall performance evaluation rating were based on 100% on professional practices. The decision for this one-year pause on monitoring the MSL/MSO portion of educator evaluation was based on the impact COVID-19 had across the state and the lack of summative assessments at both the state and local levels from the 2019-20 school year. For more information about educator effectiveness, see <http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness>.

<sup>19</sup> Per statute (C.R.S. 22-60.5-201(1)(a.5)), Teacher of Record Licenses are valid for two years after the date of issuance.