



Authorization and Reauthorization of Designated Agencies

Introduction

The Colorado Department of Education reauthorization process is an in-depth review of alternative educator preparation programs with the goal of continuous improvement to meet the standards established for each endorsement through the CDE Rules and Regulations. Alternative licensure programs are approved to help fill hard-to-fill positions and these programs lead candidates to initial licensure. Alternative teacher preparation programs offered via designated agencies must also meet standards defined in statute, rules, and policy. The approval process is carried out solely by the Colorado Department of Education and includes initial authorization and re-authorization not more than once every five years. The Colorado State Board of Education has authority to approve designated agencies for the purposes of operating one- and two-year alternative teacher programs to assist districts and BOCES that face a shortage of teachers and often struggle to find qualified persons to teach their students (C.R.S. 22-60.5-205 and the [Educator Licensing Act Rules](#)). Such programs shall:

- decrease the use of emergency authorizations to hire individuals who do not have teacher licenses and, in some cases, have not received any form of teacher preparation, thus jeopardizing a school district's goal of providing high-quality education for each student; and
- identify individuals with experience in areas other than education to help alleviate the teacher shortage faced by many school districts, so long as these individuals receive adequate supervision and education in teaching methods and practices.

C.R.S. 22-60.5-205 was intended to address teacher shortages in public schools. Thus, designated agencies must serve an identified need(s) of a Colorado school district(s) or BOCES. Designated agencies can create alternative preparation programs in numerous [teacher endorsements areas](#). State statute does not allow alternative licensure pathways for Specialized Services professionals.

CDE Reauthorization Goals

- Evaluate alignment of educator preparation program content to the CDE Rules and Regulations.
- Evaluate quality and depth of candidate experience to ensure CDE Rules and Regulations are met within the educator preparation program.
- Evaluate impact of completers/teacher candidates on student learning.
- Provide opportunities for reflection about the educator preparation program and support a process of continuous improvement.

Background

In 2019, the Colorado Legislature enacted Senate Bill 19-190, the *Growing Great Teachers Act*. The legislation declared that “high-quality teaching is the linchpin for effective, high-quality education in the schools of the state. To be an excellent, effective educator, an individual must receive comprehensive, rigorous, and effective training in the art and science of teaching and in the skills and subjects that the individual will teach.” The *Growing Great Teachers Act* directed CDHE and CDE to review research and identify best practices for teacher preparation programs. The resulting report, [Best in Class: Five Principles of Effective Educator Preparation](#) synthesized current research and identified a set of five principles for teacher preparation programs and several best practices under each principle. Taken together, the five principles demonstrate that teaching is a profession requiring specialized knowledge, clinical preparation, and ongoing candidate

development and learning. Educator preparation programs that employ these five principles establish the foundation for teacher candidates as emerging professionals. It was from these principles that the domains for the evaluation of EPPs were derived. In addition to the principles outlined below, the domains were cross walked with CAEP and AAQEP standards.

Core principles of high-quality educator preparation programs

- *Principle 1: Teacher preparation programs foster candidates’ deep understanding of content knowledge, content knowledge for teaching, and general pedagogical knowledge.*
- *Principle 2: Teacher preparation programs foster candidates’ deep understanding of P- 12 learners, including their cognitive and socio-emotional development.*
- *Principle 3: Teacher preparation programs provide intentional, coherent, and extensive clinical experiences for candidates.*
- *Principle 4: Teacher preparation programs regularly monitor, assess, and evaluate the progress of their candidates through multiple measures to support, coach, and determine best steps with candidates.*
- *Principle 5: Teacher preparation programs engage in robust, continuous improvement efforts.*

Domains

Figure1: Domain definitions

Domain	Definition
Program Design	Education is a profession requiring specialized knowledge and skills. Preparation programs establish the foundation for candidates as emerging professionals. Program design includes decisions about partnerships (both informal and formal as well as internal and external to the program), the integration of integration of curricula, learners and educating across coursework and clinical experiences – tied to a shared vision of candidate proficiency and professionalism. This evidence (information) shows why the program is designed the way it is. The context and the decisions for program choices.
Educator Knowledge & Competencies	Educator preparation programs map, plan, develop, assess and support candidate proficiencies including candidates’ deep understanding of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, the content knowledge required for educating, and the dispositional and professional qualities necessary to be successful.
Candidate Support Team	As teacher of record, candidates have support from a mentor, their principal and from the program. Together, at a minimum, these stakeholders comprise of the candidate support team. In addition, alternative licensure programs support mentors through guidance and ongoing training from the program.
Program Impact & Continuous Improvement	Preparation programs establish goals and ways to measure those goals, engaging in continuous evidence-based cycles of self-reflection and reviewing the impact of their programs to improve their work. These cycles include data on current candidates throughout the program and available data on program completers.

Quality Performance Indicators

To evaluate the quality of EPPs operationalization of each domain, desired performance indicators were identified. These indicators are the measurable subcomponents of the domains.

Figure 2: Quality Performance Indicators

Domain	Definition	Performance Indicators
Program Design	Education is a profession requiring specialized knowledge and skills. Educator preparation programs establish the foundation for candidates as emerging professionals. Program design includes decisions about partnerships (both informal and formal as well as internal and external to the program), the integration of curricula, learners and educating across coursework and clinical experiences – tied to a shared vision of candidate proficiency and professionalism. This evidence (information) shows why the program is designed the way it is. The context and the decisions for program choices.	<p>1-1 Program has a shared vision and values.</p> <p>1-2 Program design demonstrates developmental sequence and progression across all program pathways.</p> <p>1-3 Program identifies candidate thresholds or developmental benchmarks track candidates’ development and progression across learning experiences including critical-check points and aligned evidence sources.</p> <p>1-4 Program includes intentional partnerships, with a clear purpose and structure that benefit the candidates, the program and/or the local education agency, including attending to local needs.</p>
Educator Knowledge & Competencies	Educator candidates’ knowledge and competencies include deep understanding of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, the content knowledge required for educating, and the dispositional and professional qualities necessary to be successful. Educator preparation programs map, plan, develop, assess, and support candidate development of these competencies.	<p>2-1 Systems and procedures are in place to ensure alignment of content and pedagogy with state standards (educator quality standards and endorsement standards, which include student academic standards) and include necessary depth and breadth.</p> <p>2-2 Dispositional and professional candidate qualities are embedded and woven throughout the program.</p>
Candidate Support Team	As teacher of record, candidates have support from a mentor, their principal and from the program. Together, at a minimum, these stakeholders comprise of the candidate support team. In addition, alternative licensure programs support mentors through guidance and ongoing training from the program.	<p>3-1 Candidate support teams exist to support each candidate across the program.</p> <p>3-2 Mentor teachers participate in ongoing training and support from the program.</p>

<p>Program Impact & Continuous Improvement</p>	<p>Preparation program impact is determined by goals and measures established by the program. Continuous improvement is driven by the program engaging in continuous evidence-based cycles of self-reflection and reviewing program impact to improve their work. These cycles include data on current candidates throughout the program and available data on program completers.</p>	<p>4-1 Program regularly engages in processes to evaluate program strengths, challenges, and improvement foci. Systems and protocols are in place for ongoing review and reflection.</p> <p>4-2 Program has in place formal and informal processes for gathering stakeholder feedback and other impact evidence from candidates, faculty, staff, partners, and others.</p>
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Approved Provider Reauthorization: Self-Study Cycle

This self-study cycle will be used by educator preparation programs for continuous reflection and modification of programs and will be utilized as part of the state reauthorization process.

