Reauthorization Guidance Document
for Traditional Preparation Programs

COLORADO
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Department of Higher Education

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Reauthorization Guidance Document for Traditional Preparation Programs
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2

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Reauthorization Guidance Document for Traditional Preparation Programs
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION | COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

3

Table of Contents

Reauthorization Guidance Document for Traditional Preparation Programs
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION | COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

4

Introduction

Colorado educator preparation programs (EPP) provide a pathway for preparing educators in Colorado in both traditional and alternative programs. The Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) and Colorado Department of Education (CDE) have joint authority in the authorization and reauthorization of traditional EPPs at Institutions of Higher Education (IHE). IHEs that offer traditional educator preparation programs are charged with preparing the breadth and depth of licensed educators who serve Colorado's children. Completion of preparation programs at IHEs leads to an array of licensure endorsement possibilities for candidates. This document, together with the information and links provided, offers everything necessary for current EPPs to submit for reauthorization of their programs.

> #### The goals of state review of EPPS are to:
>
> - Evaluate alignment of educator preparation programs to statutory performance standards.
>
> - Evaluate alignment of educator preparation program content to the CDE Rules and Regulations.
>
> - 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.

Reauthorization Guidance Document for Traditional Preparation Programs
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION | COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

5

Core principles of high-quality teacher 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.

It was from these principles that the performance-based standards for the evaluation of EPPs were derived and codified in Colorado Revised Statute (C.R.S.) §23-1-121 (SB20-158).

Reauthorization Guidance Document for Traditional Preparation Programs
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION | COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

6

Domains

The performance-based standards are captured in the following categories or domains used to review EPPs.

FIGURE 1: Domain definitions

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), and 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 and the context and the decisions for program choices.
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.
Clinical Experience	Through clinical experiences, candidates experience, observe, reflect on, and implement the practices that they are learning about and that are modeled in their coursework and field settings. Clinical experiences are aligned with program curricula so that candidates develop pedagogical skills and pedagogical content knowledge. Educator preparation programs provide multiple, intentional clinical experiences that happen early on and throughout preparation.
Program Impact & Continuous Improvement	Preparation program impact is determined by goals and measures established by the program. Continuous improvement is driven by the program engaging in ongoing 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.

To evaluate the quality and alignment of EPP operationalization of each domain, desired performance indicators were identified measuring subcomponents of the domains. When determining how each institution might meet the performance indicators, questions for consideration and possible evidence sources are identified.

Reauthorization Guidance Document for Traditional Preparation Programs
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION | COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
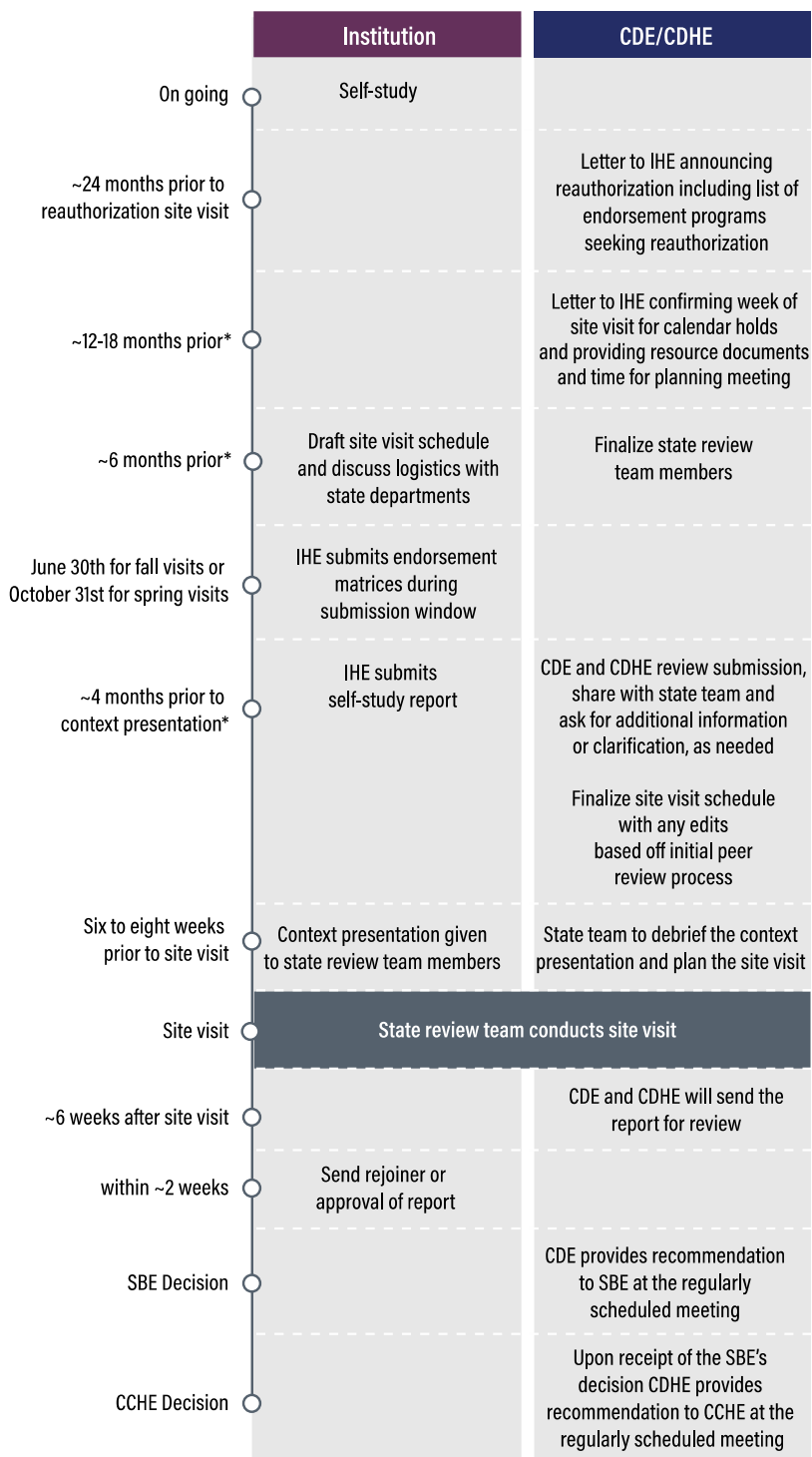
7

Reauthorization

CDHE and CDE review programs regularly for reauthorization per C.R.S. 23-1-121(4). Each IHE may not be reauthorized more frequently than once every five years and will align with specialized accreditors when possible. Please check the IHE reauthorization schedule to ensure timing.

Reauthorization comprises all endorsement areas leading to licensure that are located within the IHE. These endorsement areas may be housed within the college, school, or department of education, but there may also be some that reside elsewhere. For instance, IHEs that have an approved licensure program for the School Social Worker (Ages Birth-21) endorsement, may be housed in a different department or college outside of where other educator preparation programs take place. However, for the purposes of the reauthorization process, CDE and CDHE consider this endorsement and all others to be a part of the review. Therefore, details about the reauthorization process and requirements will need to be communicated by the dean or director overseeing educator preparation at the IHE.

Timeline

The following timeline depicts the major activities and due dates for reauthorization which are detailed further below.

FIGURE 2: Reauthorization Timeline

	Institution	CDE/CDHE
On going	Self-study	
~24 months prior to reauthorization site visit		Letter to IHE announcing reauthorization including list of endorsement programs seeking reauthorization
~12-18 months prior*		Letter to IHE confirming week of site visit for calendar holds and providing resource documents and time for planning meeting
~6 months prior*	Draft site visit schedule and discuss logistics with state departments	Finalize state review team members
June 30th for fall visits or October 31st for spring visits	IHE submits endorsement matrices during submission window	
~4 months prior to context presentation*	IHE submits self-study report	CDE and CDHE review submission, share with state team and ask for additional information or clarification, as needed Finalize site visit schedule with any edits based off initial peer review process
Six to eight weeks prior to site visit	Context presentation given to state review team members	State team to debrief the context presentation and plan the site visit
Site visit	State review team conducts site visit	
~6 weeks after site visit		CDE and CDHE will send the report for review
within ~2 weeks	Send rejoiner or approval of report	
SBE Decision		CDE provides recommendation to SBE at the regularly scheduled meeting
CCHE Decision		Upon receipt of the SBE's decision CDHE provides recommendation to CCHE at the regularly scheduled meeting

* Scheduled planning meetings with state to engage and prepare prior to reauthorization site visit

Reauthorization Guidance Document for Traditional Preparation Programs
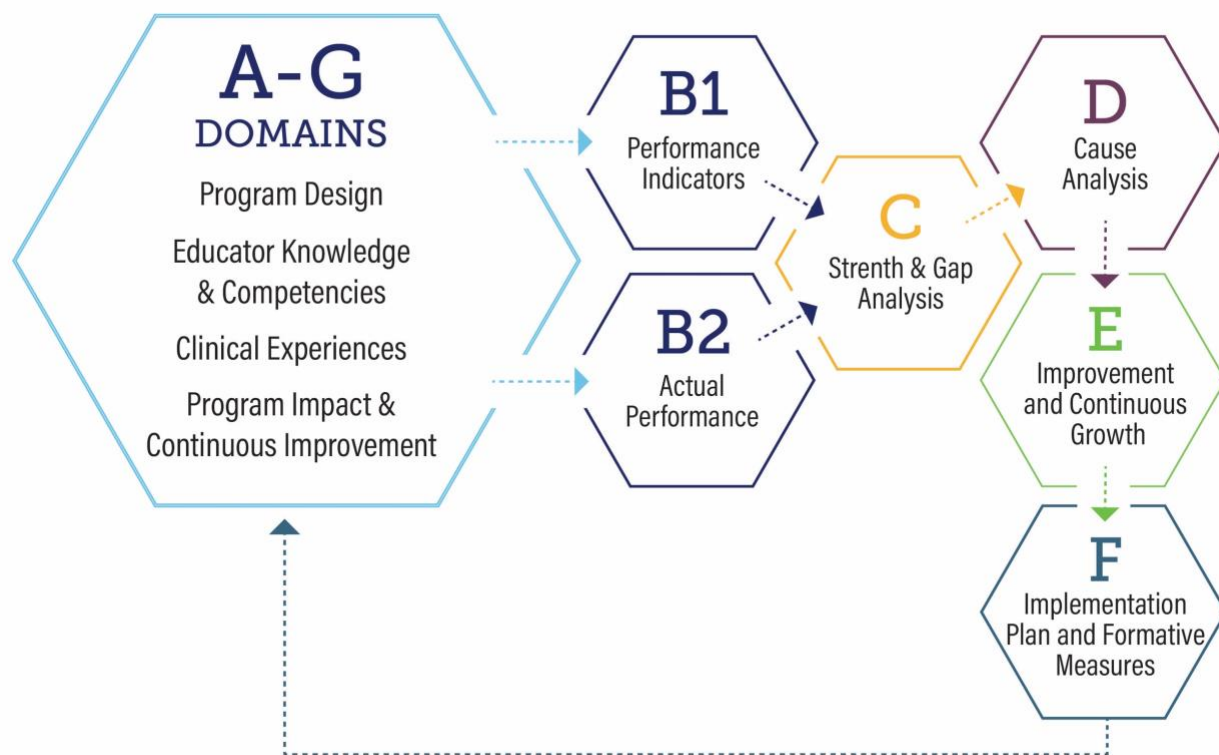COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION | COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

8

Self-Study Cycle

The self-study cycle will be used by educator preparation programs for continuous reflection and modification of programs. EPPs will describe how the process was completed and resulting decisions were made in the self-study report.

STEPS:

A.	IHEs review the Domains
B.	IHEs review EPPs against 1. the performance indicators and 2. the program's actual performance
C.	Analyze the strengths and gaps
D.	Analyze the cause
E.	Set goals for improvement and continuous growth
F.	Implement plan and collect formative data
G.	Reflect on the cycle and determine the focus of the next cycle

FIGURE 3: Cycle of Self-Study

Reauthorization Guidance Document for Traditional Preparation Programs
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION | COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

9

Content Review Process

CDHE and CDE must evaluate quality and depth of candidate experience to ensure that statutory performance measures (C.R.S. §23-1-121) and the Colorado State Board of Education rules are met within the educator preparation program. The Colorado Department of Education is tasked to review the content of educator preparation programs (C.R.S. §22-2-109). The review must be designed to ensure that the content of each program is designed and implemented in a manner that will enable a candidate to meet the requirements for licensure endorsement per C.R.S. §22-60.5-106. If it has been determined that programs do not meet this requirement, the State Board of Education shall recommend to the Colorado Commission on Higher Education that the program be placed on conditional approval, probation, or not approved (C.R.S. §23-1-121).

Additional statutory references regarding educator preparation program content approval and the evaluation of endorsement standards and initial licensure requirements:

- C.R.S. §23-1-121(2)(c.5) Course work that teaches teacher candidates the science of reading, including the foundational reading skills of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency including oral skills, and reading comprehension, and the skills and strategies to apply to ensure that every student learns to read. Reading coursework and field practice opportunities must be a significant focus for teachers preparing for endorsement in elementary, early childhood, or special education.

- C.R.S. §23-1-121(2)(d.5) A requirement that each teacher candidate in an initial licensure program complete at least one semester or quarter-length course in behavioral health training using culturally responsive and trauma- and evidence-informed practices.

- C.R.S. §23-1-12(2)(e) A requirement that each candidate, prior to graduation, must demonstrate the skills required for licensure, as specified by rule of the state board of education pursuant to section 22-2-109(3), in the manner specified by rule of the state board.

- C.R.S. §22-2-109(3)(h) The ability to demonstrate a high level of content area knowledge and professional competencies in the areas identified by rule of the state board pursuant to section 22-60.5-203.

Endorsement and Educator Quality Standards Matrices (1 CCR 301-37 & 1 CCR 301-101)

To show alignment to the standards, programs seeking reauthorization of endorsements must complete the content matrices provided by CDE and submit them for review. Content matrices were updated in 2021 allowing programs to reflect on the level of implementation of each standard. These updates were based on feedback from peer reviewers and program leaders who recently participated in the reauthorization process. The program will identify which course(s) address the standard and course outcomes/evidence either within the matrix or through submission of a syllabi that defines the outcomes/evidence. Along with the matrix, programs submit course sequence schedules for each endorsement and pathway seeking reauthorization.

Reauthorization Guidance Document for Traditional Preparation Programs
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION | COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

10

Content Submissions and Initial Review Process

Prior to the site visit, programs submit[1] their matrices to CDE for review either by June 30, (for fall site visits) or by Nov. 30 (for spring site visits) depending on which semester their site visit is scheduled. Once the matrices are submitted CDE establishes a peer review of the content. The reviewers include representatives from Institutions of Higher Education, BOCES, District/School, self-employed/retired content experts, and/or CDE staff. Peer reviewers calibrate as a team prior to reviewing the endorsement content independently. The content review is the start of the reauthorization process and allows programs to share how their program content aligns to the state standards and on the depth and breadth of that content across courses. The primary outcome of this initial review process is to ensure content of programs is aligned to specific endorsement and educator quality standards and provide that review to CDE staff and the state review team who will conduct the site visit. The peer reviewers may:

● Identify any areas where more information is needed

● Note perceived strengths or areas that require adjustments to meet standards

● Provide feedback and/or questions that arose from the review of course content for state review team members to address during site visit

Concluding the review, if more information is needed, CDE will engage with the program for additional information. This could happen prior to/during/after the site visit. The information gathered from this initial peer review process of course content builds a baseline foundation for the reauthorization process. The content submissions are a large piece showing the program's inputs for candidates.

Content Review Triangulation

The peer reviewers findings are used by the state review team while conducting the site visit to triangulate the data and evidence gathered with the outcomes seen throughout the whole reauthorization process. Initial peer review can require adjustments or additions to the site visit schedule including things such as additional time during stakeholder conversations focused on a specific area of content or targeted course observations. The state review team uses the peer review information as they conduct stakeholder conversations with current and former candidates, program leadership and faculty members, and K-12 partners. The findings for content alignment in the final reauthorization report are based upon both the inputs (content alignment to state endorsement standards) and impact or outputs triangulated throughout the reauthorization process.

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[1] Beginning with content submissions due by June 30, 2022, EPPs will submit content through their CDE Colorado Online Licensing (COOL) system portal. Detailed instructions for how to do so will be forthcoming in spring 2022.

Reauthorization Guidance Document for Traditional Preparation Programs
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION | COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

11

Self-study Report

Approximately 12 weeks prior to the site visit (4 weeks prior to the context presentation) the IHE will submit a written report documenting the self-study cycle process, lessons learned, and goals that have been set. IHEs can decide how this information will be broken down and what evidence will be shared to support it. Please take care to ensure that uninterpreted data or findings are not merely reported but shared in the context of the resulting decisions that were made.
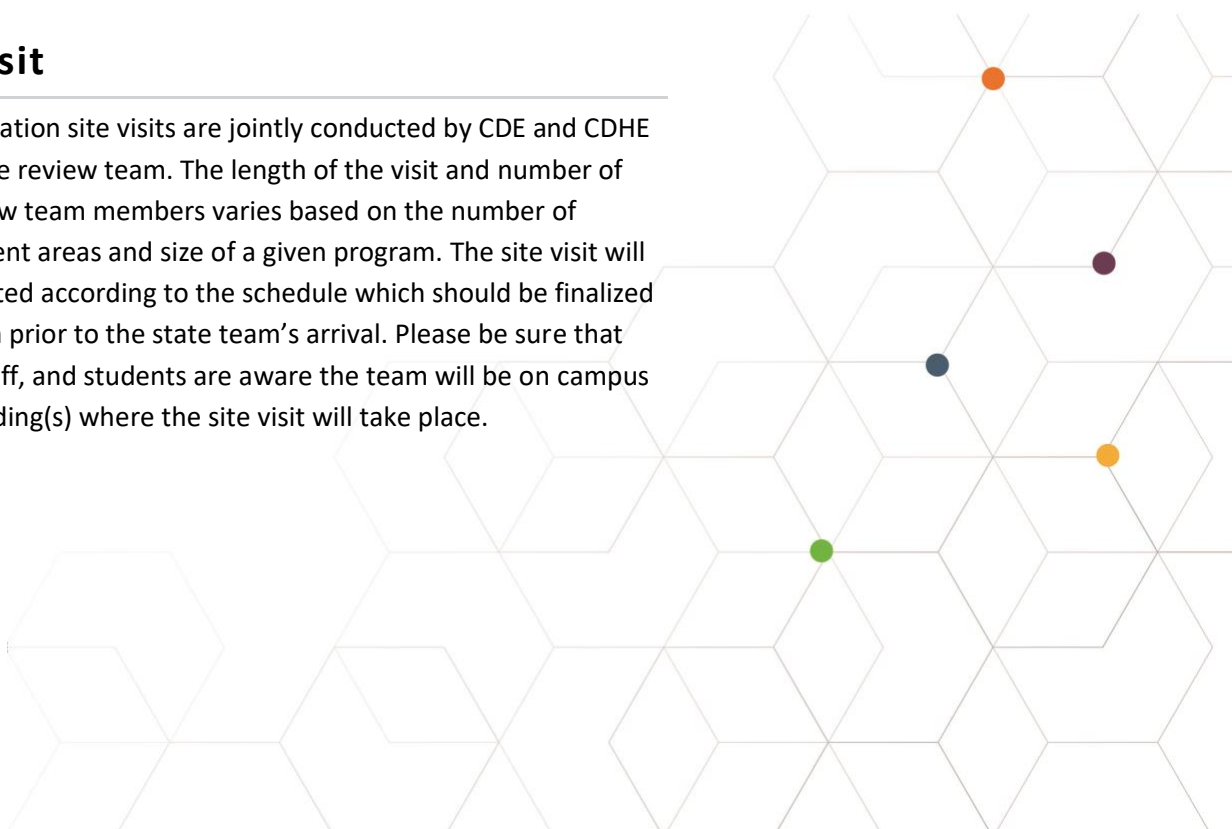
Context Presentation

The context presentation is an opportunity for IHEs to share a description of the EPPs and how they are situated in the institution and community. IHEs will "share their story" through a high-level overview of the self-study report and discuss the cycle(s) of self-study; what was learned, celebrated, and what new goals were set. The context presentation will include the full state review team. Attendees may also include university and program leadership, faculty, advisory group/board members, or other guests that the IHE would like to invite.

Site Visit

Reauthorization site visits are jointly conducted by CDE and CDHE with a state review team. The length of the visit and number of state review team members varies based on the number of endorsement areas and size of a given program. The site visit will be conducted according to the schedule which should be finalized one month prior to the state team's arrival. Please be sure that faculty, staff, and students are aware the team will be on campus at the building(s) where the site visit will take place.

Reauthorization Guidance Document for Traditional Preparation Programs
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION | COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

12

Planning and Logistics

Each Dean or Director of an institution under review for reauthorization should appoint a contact person who will be the main point of contact with CDHE and CDE to ensure information to coordinate details and logistics is communicated through a single point of contact at the IHE. Questions and email correspondence should be addressed to both the [Director of Educator Preparation](#) at CDHE and the [Educator Preparation Specialist](#) at CDE.

Draft Site Visit Schedule

The CDHE and CDE value in-person and on-site visits. However, due to public health or weather conditions, some site visits may need to be conducted fully online. This decision will be made with the IHE and with as much notice as possible. Online site visits will follow the schedule as much as practicable. In person site visits may include remote meetings with stakeholders to allow for a greater participation of K-12 partners, candidates, alumni, etc. Sample site visit schedules can be found [here](#). Please note the following additional considerations:

- Approximately 2-3 days (based on enrollment size and # of endorsement areas)
- The IHE, CDHE, and CDE will identify and hold a full week and then clarify dates/times approximately two months prior to the site visit once the schedule has been confirmed.
- Primary focus of site visit is to meet with stakeholder groups (see below)
- Time built throughout the schedule for state review team discussions and EPP reauthorization leadership team members
- Possible school visits (current candidates and K-12 partner conversations)
- Time on the final day to meet with IHE leadership (president, provost, etc.)

Required Stakeholder Groups

The size of stakeholder groups can vary but should usually not exceed 10 participants per state review team pairing. Groups can be broken into subgroups with the state review team meeting with multiple stakeholder groups at the same time. The use of digital meetings, such as Zoom, can be used for some stakeholder conversations allowing for more participation from people that cannot easily be onsite.

- EPP Leadership
- Faculty (needs to be broken up into multiple groups by program/endorsement areas) including adjunct/affiliate faculty, as appropriate
- Current candidates (including candidates prior to and in their final field placement)
- Recent program completers (needs to be broken up into multiple groups by program/endorsement areas and should be graduates within the last four years)
- K-12 partners
  - Hiring managers (Superintendents., Human Resource Directors, Special Education Directors, etc.)
  - Leaders (Exec Directors, Principals/Asst. Principals, Instructional leads, etc.)
  - Mentor Teachers (has mentored a candidate in past three years)
- Field placement supervisors/coordinators

Reauthorization Guidance Document for Traditional Preparation Programs
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION | COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

13

State Review Team Members

The makeup of the state team can vary depending on the number of endorsements and size of the program under reauthorization. A small program reauthorization may consist of just three team members, whereas a large program may require up to eight members. The makeup of the state review team will consist of:

- CDE/CDHE (2-4)
- Peer Reviewers (2-3)
    - EPP peer reviewer (1) - to be decided by EPP
    - EPP peer reviewer (1 or 2) – to be determined by CDE/CDHE
        - from institutions with upcoming reauthorizations
- K-12 Partners (1-2)
- Additional content team members (as determined by CDE based on initial peer review)
    - Based on needs, this could include partial or full state team participation and may include being onsite or remote participation

Site Visit Expenses

Each IHE is responsible for the costs associated with an on-site visit to include transportation, lodging, and meals for the state review team. These expenses will be commensurate with IHE budget policies and realities and will in no way have any bearing on the review of the educator preparation programs.

- Transportation will be determined in advance with the IHE. Transportation includes air and/or ground travel to the IHE and between the IHE and hotel or meals. Air travel will be booked by CDHE for the state team ensuring expenses are not incurred by individual team members. Airport and campus parking, baggage fees, and mileage will be paid or reimbursed by CDHE per state fiscal rules and billed to the institution.

- Lodging should be reserved for each of the team members by the IHE even if the program is located within the Denver metropolitan area. A meeting room or some type of suite that can be used as a workspace for the team should also be reserved at the hotel for the state review team to use in the evenings. The IHE makes the arrangements and pays for the hotel directly.

- Meals during the site visit include working breakfasts and lunches that occur during the scheduled site-visit are to be arranged and paid for by the hosting IHE. Meals for state team members during the evening and enroute to the visit will be paid by CDHE and billed to the institution.

CDHE is responsible for reimbursing state review team members for travel expenses that may be incurred as mentioned above. CDE is responsible for covering the same related travel expenses for any additional CDE employees who join the review team to address specific content areas.

Reauthorization Guidance Document for Traditional Preparation Programs
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION | COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

14

Reauthorization Outcomes

Upon final review, programs can be: 1) fully reauthorized, 2) conditionally reauthorized, 3) placed on probation, or 4) recommended for termination. Programs that are fully reauthorized will receive a confirmation letter from CDE and CDHE. Programs that are conditionally reauthorized will be re-assessed as determined by the CDHE/CDE. Programs that are placed on probation may not enroll new students into the program and will be re-assessed as determined by CDHE/CDE. Programs recommended for termination will be notified by CDE and CDHE regarding next steps. An appeal process for program termination is being drafted by CDHE. Upon approval, this document will be updated to reflect those options[2].

Upon final review, programs can be:

1) fully reauthorized

2) conditionally reauthorized

3) placed on probation or

4) recommended for termination

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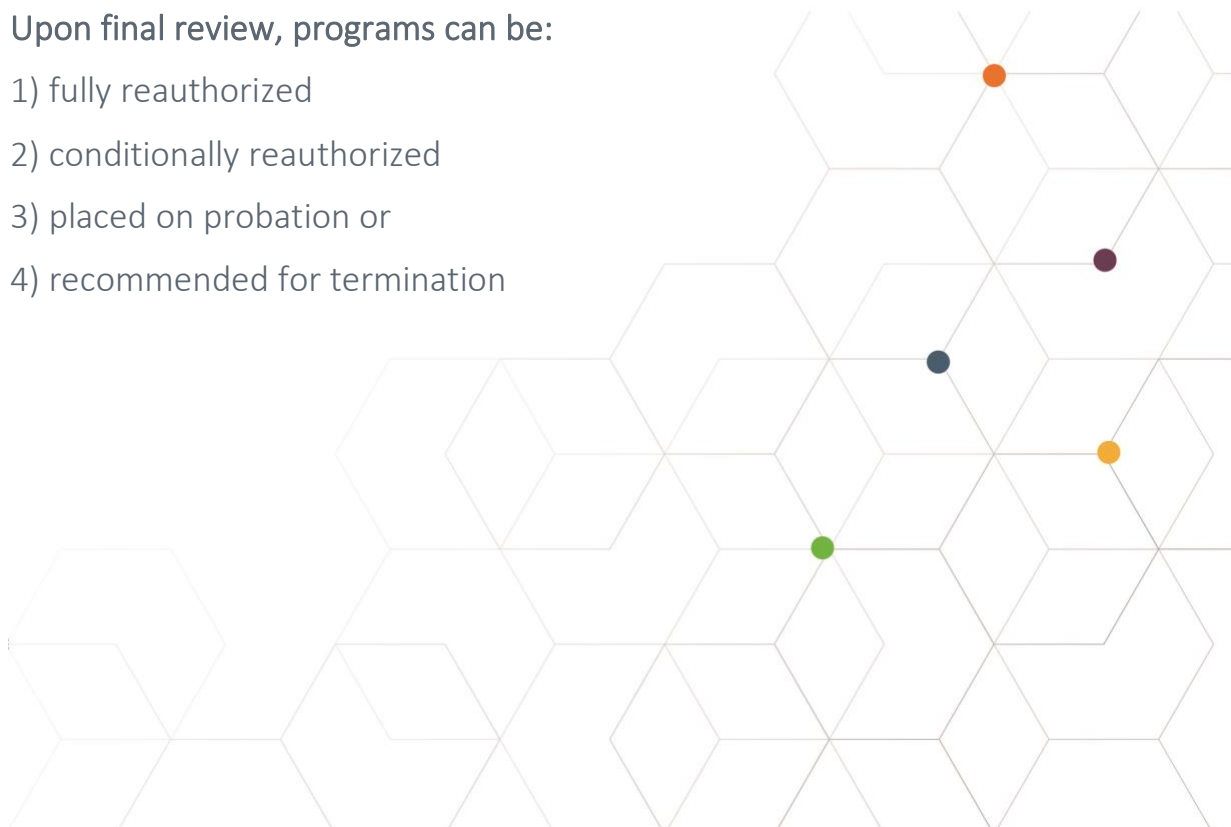
[2] The continued work to draft additional resources for programs to utilize in continuous improvement cycles or in preparation for program reauthorization will continue to be further developed in collaboration with the reauthorization subcommittee of CCODE and from the feedback of colleagues whose IHEs will be among the first to use these processes/materials.

Reauthorization Guidance Document for Traditional Preparation Programs
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION | COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

15

Appendix

Performance Indicators, Questions for Consideration, and Possible Evidence Sources

Domain	Performance Indicators	Questions for Consideration	Possible Evidence Sources
Program Design	**1-1** Program has a shared vision and values. **1-2** Program design demonstrates developmental sequence and progression across all program pathways. **1-3** Program identifies candidate thresholds or developmental benchmarks track candidates' development and progression across learning experience, including critical checkpoints and aligned evidence. **1-4** Program includes intentional partnerships with a clear purpose and structure that benefits the candidates, the program and/or the local education agency, including attending to local, regional, or state needs.	What are the core values and shared vision of the program? How is the program designed? Why? How are these reflected in the program map and narrative? How do candidates experience the program? How do candidates experience the core values and shared vision of the program? What shortage areas exist and how is the program creating partnerships to help minimize these shortage areas?	Program vision/values and how they shape program design. Formal program description provided to students (i.e., degree plans, advising materials, handbooks, etc.) Description of program sequence describing developmental progression across each pathway (program map and/or narrative) Such as: • Major candidate outcomes and associated performance expectations • Description of aligned evidence sources • Examples of measures (e.g., key assessments, dispositional measures, observation/feedback protocols, rubrics, tracking systems) • Protocols to support candidates who struggle Description of partnerships, how they are structured and the purpose for each. Other
Educator Knowledge & Competencies	**2-1** Systems and procedures are in place to ensure alignment of content and pedagogy with state standards (educator quality	How does each program address: content knowledge, knowledge of pedagogy and	Endorsement Standard Matrices Description of Content Revisions (e.g., provide updates/revisions

Reauthorization Guidance Document for Traditional Preparation Programs
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION | COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

16

Domain	Performance Indicators	Questions for Consideration	Possible Evidence Sources
	standards and endorsement standards, which include student academic standards) and include necessary depth and breadth. **2-2** Dispositional and professional candidate qualities are embedded and woven throughout the program.	pedagogical content knowledge? How do program leaders/faculty make decisions about content (what, when, why)? How do content and pedagogy interweave the issues of diversity, equity and inclusion embedded in the educator quality standards? How do candidates engage with student academic standards in courses and clinical experiences?	made in content areas based upon previous re/authorization) Aligned Syllabi Example of Assessments, Assignments, Performance Tasks Disposition rubrics or screening tools Stakeholder feedback (surveys) Content assessment data Observation trend data Faculty professional learning Other
Clinical Experiences	**3-1** All candidates have opportunities for robust clinical experiences throughout their preparation experience. **3-2** All candidates have opportunities for clinical experiences throughout their preparation experience that align to educator licensure and state standards.	What strategies/ philosophies impact how candidates in all pathways are placed in field experiences? In what ways do candidates participate in each field experience? What supports are in place to ensure quality field experiences? How are mentors selected/trained? How are candidates receiving feedback, from multiple observers, as they implement theory into practice? What systems are in place to support struggling candidates?	Handbooks for field experiences Observation and feedback forms/ protocols Candidate, mentor teacher, principal, coach, feedback surveys. Process for identifying quality classrooms, buildings, or districts Other

Reauthorization Guidance Document for Traditional Preparation Programs
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION | COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

17

Domain	Performance Indicators	Questions for Consideration	Possible Evidence Sources
		How do field experiences build on prior field and course work?	
Program Impact & Continuous Improvement	**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. **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.	What is the impact of the program in producing effective educators and how does the program determine effectiveness? How are workforce needs considered and what is the program impact in meeting the needs of Colorado schools? How do program faculty use feedback from candidate performance (during and after the program) to influence program improvement?	Trend data from perception surveys (candidates, faculty, partners) Trend data from common assessments Trend data from observation protocols EPP report data: enrollment/ completion trends, placement rates and contexts, effectiveness ratings (standards & MSL/MSOs), retention Content exams Process and outcomes from stakeholder gatherings, such as data retreats, that focus on program impact and continuous improvement. Other