



Authorization and Reauthorization of Traditional Educator Preparation Programs

Introduction

The Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) and Colorado Department of Education (CDE) have joint authority in the authorization and reauthorization of traditional educator preparation programs (EPP) at Institutions of Higher Education (IHE). IHEs that offer traditional educator preparation programs are charged with preparing the breadth of licensed educators who serve Colorado’s children. Completion of preparation programs at IHEs lead to an array of licensure endorsement possibilities for candidates. Traditional preparation programs offered through IHEs provide a pathway for developing educators in Colorado. Each IHE has a unique teaching and learning mission that guides the way that they serve educator candidates across the state. These guidelines apply to IHEs looking to develop educator preparation programs or IHEs that have existing traditional educator preparation programs that wish to add a new endorsement area or program pathway.

Goals

- Evaluate alignment of educator preparation programs to statutory performance standards (C.R.S. §23-1-121).
- Evaluate quality and depth of candidate experience to ensure CDE Rules and Regulations are met within the educator preparation program.
- Evaluate impact of completers/educator 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 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.
Clinical Experience	Educator preparation programs provide multiple, intentional clinical experiences that happen early on and throughout preparation. Candidates experience, observe and use the practices that they are learning about and modeled in their coursework and in their field settings. Clinical experiences are aligned with program curricula so that candidates develop pedagogical skills and pedagogical content knowledge.
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.

Domain	Definition	Performance Indicators
<p>Program Design</p>	<p>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>	<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 experience, including critical check-points and aligned evidence.</p> <p>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 needs.</p>
<p>Educator Knowledge & Competencies</p>	<p>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>	<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>
<p>Clinical Experiences</p>	<p>Through clinical experiences, candidates experience, observe and use 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.</p>	<p>3-1 All candidates have opportunities for intentional, diverse clinical experiences throughout their preparation experience.</p> <p>3-2 All candidates have opportunities for clinical experiences throughout their preparation experience that align to educator licensure and state standards.</p>

Program Impact & Continuous Improvement	<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.

