

SECTION I

PART P EDUCATOR PREPARATION POLICY

1.00 Introduction

This policy describes the performance-based educator preparation model and outlines the criteria and procedures for review, initial approval, and reauthorization of schools, colleges, and departments of educator preparation (hereafter listed as “units” of educator preparation) and of educator preparation programs.

This policy states the statutory criteria and the corresponding performance measures that new and existing units of educator preparation must meet to qualify candidates for state licensure and against which adopted standards and performance measures are evaluated. The policy also describes the review and accountability processes for Colorado’s units of educator preparation.

The policy applies to all approved educator preparation units and programs at public, private, and proprietary institutions of higher education in Colorado.

2.00 Statutory Authority

The CCHE Educator Preparation Policy is based on section 23-1-121 C.R.S. that states:

The Commission shall adopt policies establishing the requirements for educator preparation programs offered by institutions of higher education. The department shall work in cooperation with the state board of education in developing the requirements for educator preparation programs. At a minimum the requirements shall ensure that each educator preparation program complies with section 23-1- 125, [and] is designed on a performance-based model.

3.00 Goals, Principles, and Terminology

3.01 Policy Goals

The primary goal of CCHE Educator Preparation Policy is to ensure high quality review of educator preparation programs based, when possible, on outcomes rather than inputs and to assist educator preparation programs with improving the effectiveness of their graduates by maintaining flexibility and encouraging creativity, rather than being strictly regulatory.

To achieve that goal, the policy:

- 3.01.01 Provides a basis for making decisions in the areas of approving new educator preparation programs proposed by institutions of higher education, reauthorizing existing educator preparation programs at institutions of higher education, and holding institutions of higher education accountable for addressing areas for improvement identified during the review process;
- 3.01.02 Requires a periodic review of educator preparation units, not more frequently than once every five years [section 23-1-121 (4) (a) (I) C.R.S.] and that may be offered concurrently or jointly with national accrediting bodies [section 23-1-121 (7) C.R.S.].
- 3.01.03 Provides a basis for the department to support educator preparation programs at institutions of higher education in complying with federal laws, national educator preparation standards and accreditation, and new state laws and policies regarding aligning the P-20 continuum; requires the department and department of education to work collaboratively to assist educator preparation programs in ensuring alignment with state board of education rules regarding the preparation and licensing of candidates, new P-12 academic standards and postsecondary and workforce readiness, and other state laws and policies that impact P-12 education and the preparation of educators;
- 3.01.04 Provides a basis for the department to support educator preparation programs in responding to state needs by helping to ensure the preparation of effective educators in high needs content areas and high-needs regions of the state and who are able to respond to the needs of local education agencies;
- 3.01.05 Allows the department and the department of education to implement procedures for collecting and reviewing evaluative data of educator preparation units and to share that data with the educator preparation units for program self-improvement.
- 3.01.06 Requires an annual report on the requirements and effectiveness of educator preparation to the legislative education committees [23-1-121 (6) C.R.S.].

3.02 Principles

CCHE Educator Preparation Policy is based on the following principles:

- 3.02.01 Educator preparation is a shared enterprise among the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, the Colorado State Board of Education (SBE), institutions of higher education, and school districts. The Colorado Commission on Higher Education has responsibility for the review and approval of units of educator preparation designed to prepare educators, while

the Colorado State Board of Education is authorized to develop the professional content standards for educator preparation programs and to license those who complete approved programs.

- 3.02.02 Units of educator preparation are evaluated on the criteria listed in Section 4.00 of this policy.

3.03 Terminology

An Approved Educator Preparation Unit is the college, school, department, or other administrative body in a college, university, or other organization with the responsibility for managing or coordinating all programs offered for the initial and advanced preparation of educators, regardless of where the programs are administratively housed in an institution., which has been reviewed and approved pursuant to this policy and the provisions of C.R.S. 23-1-121.

An Approved Educator Preparation Program is a planned sequence of undergraduate, post-baccalaureate, or graduate courses and experiences for the purpose of preparing teachers and other school professionals to be effective educators in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade settings. A program may lead to a degree, a recommendation for a state license by the department of education, both, or neither.

Assessment is defined as the process used to collect evidence of what a student knows and is able to demonstrate.

P12 Academic Post-Secondary & Workforce Readiness Standards are the specific statements of what a P-12 student should know or be able to do in specified academic areas.

Field-based Experiences are experiences that allow candidates to apply content and professional knowledge in authentic school settings under the direct supervision of licensed educators and college or university faculty. Field-based training may include a variety of experiences in supervised settings—classroom observations, assisting licensed educators in school settings, practica, student teaching and internships—or a combination of experiences under a partner school model.

Endorsement is the designation on a license that the holder is authorized to work in a P12 school in a specific grade or developmental level (e.g., elementary); a subject area (e.g., language arts); a school leader (e.g., principal); or as a special services provider (e.g., speech/language pathologist).

Licensure refers to the system and criteria that authorizes individuals to work in Colorado public schools. The Colorado State Board of Education is the entity authorized to license candidates following recommendation from the Colorado Department of Education.

Educator standards refers to sets of prescribed standards, adopted as rule by State Board of Education, which educator candidates must know and be able to demonstrate.

Licensure Competencies refers to sets of prescribed standards for each endorsement area, adopted as rule by State Board of Education.

Performance-Based Model refers to a system that evaluates an educator preparation unit against the statutory performance criteria in Section 4.00 of this policy and the State Board of Education Educator Standards as well as the licensure competencies by endorsement area. Section 4.00 of this policy specifies the performance criteria that apply to the initial approval or reapproval of educator preparation units. Educator preparation units that fail to meet the performance criteria will not be approved, will be placed on probation, or will be discontinued.

Post-Baccalaureate Educator Preparation is for candidates pursuing initial or advanced non-degree educator preparation who already have an undergraduate degree (e.g. Bachelor of Arts [BA] or Bachelor of Science [BS]).

Graduate Educator Preparation is for candidates pursuing initial or advanced educator preparation that is part of a graduate degree program (e.g., Master of Education [M.Ed.]).

Candidate is a person who is participating in an approved educator preparation program.

4.00 Criteria for Performance-Based Educator Preparation Units or Programs

The Commission shall use performance-based measures specified in section 23-1-121 C.R.S. to review and approve educator preparation units and programs within units, including proposals for new programs. The approved sequence of coursework and field experiences will be evaluated on evidence supporting a performance-based model. Recommendation for approval by the State Board of Education (see 4.06) is a necessary precondition for Commission approval. In its review, the Commission will evaluate whether units requesting educator preparation approval meet criteria described in sections 4.01 through 4.07.

4.01 Public institutions shall ensure that undergraduate educator preparation programs are designed and implemented in accordance with C.R.S.23-1-125, in regards to degree requirements, core courses, competency testing, and prior learning.

4.01.01 Baccalaureate degrees leading to licensure as an educator may not exceed 126 credit hours.

4.02 Each program is designed around a shared vision of candidate proficiency and professionalism that supports decision making about partnerships and the integration of curricula, learners, and coursework and clinical experiences. [23-1-12 (2) (a).

- 4.03** Each program can demonstrate mapping, planning, development, assessment, and support of candidate proficiencies including candidates' deep understanding of content knowledge (such as that described in part 10 of article 7 of title 22, specifically in teaching to the state preschool through elementary and secondary education standards adopted pursuant to section 22-7-1005), pedagogical knowledge, the content knowledge required for educating, and the dispositions and professional qualities necessary to be successful [23-1-121 (2) (b)]
- 4.04** Teacher and principal preparation programs courses provide content knowledge as described in part 10 of Article 7 of Title 22, specifically in teaching to the state preschool through elementary and secondary education standards adopted pursuant to section 22-7-1005; and include
- 4.04.01 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.
- 4.04.02 Course work that provides educator candidates with an overview of Title II of the federal "Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990", 42 U.S.C. sec. 12101 et seq., as amended, and its implementing regulations; section 504 of the federal "Rehabilitation Act of 1973", 29 U.S.C. sec. 701 et seq., as amended, and its implementing regulations; the "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act", 20 U.S.C. sec. 1400 et seq., as amended, and its implementing regulations; individualized education programs; and child find and that teaches educators effective special education classroom practices, including but not limited to inclusive learning environments;
- 4.04.03 A requirement that each teacher candidate in an initial licensure program complete at least one semester or quarter-length course in behavior health training using culturally responsive and trauma- and evidence-informed practices.
- 4.04.04 Each unit will document that, prior to graduation, candidates can demonstrate the skills required for licensure, as determined by the State Board of Education [23-1-121(2) (e) C.R.S.].
- 4.05** Intentional clinical experience, early and throughout preparation, relating to predetermined state content standards, which experiences afford candidates multiple intentional experiences to learn from practice. Clinical experiences must be aligned with program curricula so that candidates develop pedagogical skills and pedagogical content knowledge. Teacher preparation candidates must complete a minimum of eight hundred hours, and principal and administrator candidates must complete a minimum of three hundred hours of clinical practice. A teacher candidate must

complete the hours of clinical practice while in an approved educator preparation program; except that a program, after review, may accept clinical practice hours completed before enrolling in the program. A majority of the clinical practice hours must be completed through a continuous placement. For every additional endorsement of advanced degree a candidate must complete and appropriate period of supervised field experiences that relate to predetermined standards including best practices and relevant national norms related to the candidate's endorsements.

- 4.06** A requirement that preparation program faculty, to improve their work, engage in continuous evidence-based cycles of self-reflection and review regarding the impact of their programs on their candidates' development throughout the programs. These cycles must include data on current candidates throughout the program and available data on program completers.

5.00 Approval Process for New Educator Preparation Programs

A unit of educator preparation that chooses to offer a new educator preparation program or by significantly modifying the content, field experiences, or delivery of a program that leads to licensure by CDE shall submit a proposal to both the, Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and the Department of Higher Education (DHE). DHE, in conjunction with the CDE, shall review each program proposal submitted by an institution of higher education. The CDE will first review the proposal for alignment with State Board of Education educator standards and licensure competencies by endorsement area and then submit to DHE its recommendation regarding approval. Program proposals for advanced degrees without licensure shall be submitted to DHE only.

- 5.01** DHE will follow the approval process described in section 4.00 to review educator preparation program proposals.

- 5.01.01 If a new unit is approved to offer educator preparation programs, initially approved programs will be reviewed within 12-24 months.
- 5.01.02 New units are not permitted to propose adding additional endorsements beyond those that are initially approved until after the unit's first reauthorization.

5.02 For programs leading to licensure, CDE is responsible for review and State Board of Education is responsible for approval of the content of each program prior to its consideration for approval by the Commission. The State Board of Education will review the proposal to determine if the program’s content is designed and implemented in a manner that is in compliance with section 22-2-109 (5) (a) C.R.S.

5.02.01 If the State Board of Education confirms that the content portion of the program is in compliance with its adopted standards, DHE shall review the proposal using the performance-based measures specified in Section 4.00 of this policy and present a recommendation to the Commission.

5.02.02 If the State Board of Education recommends that a program be placed on conditional approval or probation, the commission shall follow the recommendation by refusing initial approval of the program, placing the program on conditional approval, or placing the program on probation.

6.00 Reauthorization Process and Site Review of Units of Educator preparation

This section describes the reauthorization process for units of educator preparation.

6.01 The reauthorization of educator preparation programs at approved units of educator preparation will be conducted by DHE in collaboration with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). The process consists of seven steps: (1) scheduling the site visit, (2) institutional submission of evidence supporting the performance criteria, (3) review of submitted evidence prior to the site visit, (4) a site visit by the review team, (5) written notification of approval recommendations to the institutions by the CDE and DHE, (6) an appeals process, and (7) formal action by the SBE and the Commission.

6.01.01 DHE and CDE will notify the institution of its upcoming site visit, confirm the dates and provide a description of the materials the institution needs to submit prior to the site visit.

6.01.02 The institution will submit materials documenting how its unit and programs meet the criteria specified in Section 4.00.

6.01.03 The review team will review the submitted evidence prior to the site visit to identify the unit and programs’ strengths and areas for improvement or missing information needed to document the performance criteria defined in this policy.

6.01.04 The review team will conduct an on-site review that focuses on the results of the preliminary review and on those performance criteria best evaluated on-site.

- 6.01.05 DHE and CDE will prepare a written report with recommendations using the findings of the joint review team and formally share a draft report with the unit's administration within 60 days of the site visit.
- 6.01.05.01 The institution shall note any errors of fact in the report and respond in a rejoinder with any supplemental information requested within 30 days.
- 6.01.05.02 An institution may submit a rebuttal to the findings or, if necessary, request a second visit to address the findings of the review panel. A final report of the on-site review will be made available reflecting necessary revisions, corrections, areas for improvement, and the results of any second visit.
- 6.01.06 The staff will recommend **full approval** of a program or unit that meets the criteria specified in Section 4.00 following confirmation of the SBE's approval of the program content.
- 6.01.07 The staff may recommend conditional approval, probation, or **termination** of a program or unit that does not meet the criteria specified in Section 4.00
- 6.01.07.01 A program on conditional approval may continue to accept new students.
- 6.01.07.02 A program on conditional approval may receive a performance plan and require a follow-up site visit.
- (a) If the Commission has placed a program or unit on conditional approval, or probation based upon the recommendation of the SBE, the Commission shall again consider the SBE recommendation
- (b) Any program or unit placed on probation shall not accept new students until DHE recommends that the program or unit be removed from probationary status and the Commission approves. The length of the probationary status shall not exceed one year.
- (b.1.) If after one year on probation the program or unit fails to correct any of its areas for improvement with regard to the performance criteria adopted by the Commission or the standards adopted by the SBE, the Commission shall order termination of the program or unit.

- (c) If the Commission determines that a program or unit should be terminated, the program or unit must not accept new students and must terminate within four years of the determination.

6.01.08 Within 30 days of the Commission’s action, a governing board may appeal a recommendation of conditional authorization, probation, or termination of an educator preparation program or unit.

6.01.08.01 To initiate an appeal, the governing board shall submit a written request that identifies the program or unit and cites the reasons why it is contesting the recommendation. This material will be included in the agenda materials for the Commission.

6.01.08.02 The representative of the governing board filing an appeal shall have an opportunity to testify at the Commission meeting at which the report is presented.

6.01.09 The Commission will act on the educator preparation approval recommendations, including any programs or units that have appealed a staff recommendation. The Commission’s action is binding.

6.01.09.01 If the Commission votes to terminate a program or unit, the decision is effective immediately. The institution may not admit, re-admit, or enroll new students effective on the date of the Commission vote.

6.01.09.02 Candidates enrolled in a terminated unit at the time of the Commission action may complete their programs of study under the original graduation requirements. Under state statute, these candidates have a maximum of four years to complete the graduation and licensure requirements.

6.01.09.03 Educator Preparation providers at public institutions shall reimburse CDHE for the costs of the site visit team to include hotel and meals

6.01.09.04 Educator Preparation providers at private institutions will be billed for reauthorization expenses per C.R.S. 23-2-101

6.02 Process for Discontinuing a Unit or Program by Institution Decision

6.02.01 Any institution wishing to discontinue an approved educator preparation program must submit notification to DHE in writing indicating the program to be discontinued, the reasons for the decision, and a schedule for ending the program. If students are still completing the program, a plan for moving them to completion of the program or into another degree plan must be described.

6.02.02 The Commission may discontinue any educator preparation program that has

not had any candidate successfully graduate during the previous five years [section 23-1-121 (4) (e) C.R.S.]. Enrollment data is collected annually in the Educator Preparation File in the SURDS database. The department reviews

and reports the data and will notify the institution if one or more of their programs has not had a candidate graduate during the previous five years.

7.00 Data Reporting and Accountability

7.01 DHE, in consultation with the educator preparation units, will define the necessary data elements required to monitor and evaluate the performance standards defined in statute and CCHE policy.

7.02 DHE will collaborate with CDE and the educator preparation unit administrators regarding the information and evaluation methodology used for the annual report to the education committees of the General Assembly.

7.03 CCHE will submit the annual report on the performance, quality, and effectiveness of educator preparation units and programs and the effectiveness of the review and approval process to the House and Senate education committees.

7.04 For the purposes of completing the report, DHE and CDE shall share any relevant data pursuant to C.R.S. 23-1-121(6).

7.05 Any educator preparation program that has not had candidates complete the program during the previous 5 years should be discontinued.

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