

Alternative Principal / Principal

Authorization Guidelines



COLORADO
Department of Education

Introduction

This guidance is intended for districts or BOCES working to support the development of a principal via an Individualized Principal Preparation Plan.

This document, together with the information and links provided on the Colorado Department of Education's (CDE's) [Obtaining a Principal Authorization](#) web page, provides everything candidates need to know to get started with developing individualized plans for candidates seeking a principal authorization from CDE. Principal authorization is the term for alternative licensure for principals and is used interchangeably.

Purpose of the Principal Authorization

The state authorizes school districts to design and implement individualized principal preparation plans to allow persons from outside the educational community to develop the skills and experiences necessary to successfully lead a public school and to qualify ultimately for licensure as principals (*C.R.S. 22-60.5-305.5*). The school district may work with a governmental, non-profit or for-profit entity in designing and implementing the individualized alternative principal plan. The individualized alternative principal plan shall be subject to approval by the Colorado State Board of Education. Once approved the candidate will be granted principal authorization.

Important Note: The qualifying candidate must be required, as evidenced by their job description, to hold a principal license to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of the role. If a license is not required, the individual wishing to pursue principal preparation may do so through a traditional principal preparation program.

A principal authorization may be issued to a person who does not hold or may not qualify for an initial principal license, but who holds an earned bachelor's or higher degree from an accepted institution of higher education and who is completing an individual, district-based alternative principal plan that has been approved by the Colorado State Board of Education (*C.R.S. 22-60.5-111 (14)*).

A school district may employ a person who holds a principal authorization to perform the duties of a principal or assistant principal in a school only when the person who holds the authorization is under the supervision of a Colorado professional principal license-holder.

A principal authorization shall be valid for three years and may not be renewed.

Requirements for a Principal Authorization

Before a candidate may apply for a principal authorization, the following three criteria must be met:

1. Due to a shortage of licensed principals available for employment by the school district, there is a demonstrated need for the candidate to serve in the role of principal or assistant principal;
2. A contract for the position of principal or assistant principal exists between the candidate and the school district or BOCES; and
3. An individualized principal plan has been developed and vetted by CDE as meeting established quality indicators (see page 3).



Requirements of an Individualized Principal Preparation Plan

To receive a principal authorization, an applicant collaborates with a school district to submit documentation to CDE that includes:

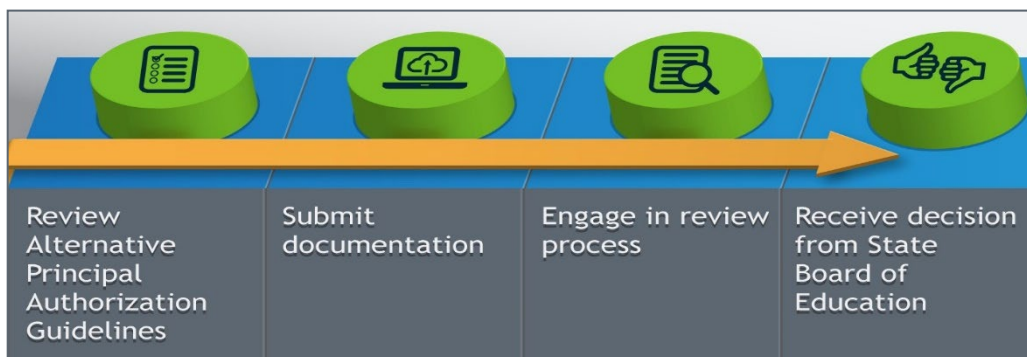
- A letter from the collaborating school district stating the school district’s intention to employ the applicant as a principal or assistant principal upon issuance of the principal authorization;
- Coursework, practicum and other educational requirements identified by the school district that will comprise the individualized principal preparation plan and which will be completed while the candidate is employed under the principal authorization; and
- A completed individualized principal preparation plan template.

At a minimum, an individualized principal preparation plan shall ensure that:

- The candidate will attain and demonstrate evidence of experience, training, skills and proficiency comparable to a person who completed an approved principal preparation program and qualifies for an initial principal license and aligned to the:
 - [Principal Quality Standards](#),
 - Language Learner Standards (per [1 CCR 301-37, 5.12 - 5.15](#)), and
 - Professional competencies in leadership; communication and human relations; instruction, curriculum, design and assessment; problem-solving and decision-making; management, planning, organization and administration; personnel administration, staff development and evaluation; child growth and development; and knowledge and application of standards-based education. (*CRS 22-60.5-303*)
- The candidate will receive coaching and mentoring from one or more professionally licensed principals and administrators, as well as continuing performance-based assessment of the candidate’s skills and development.
- The candidate must be under the supervision of a Colorado professional principal license holder (*C.R.S. 22-60.5-111 (14)*).

Obtaining a Principal Authorization

There are four broad steps that school district and alternative principal candidates must complete for Colorado State Board of Education approval. Each of these steps is described in more detail and supported with links and resources at the Educator Preparation website.





Individualized Principal Preparation Plan Exemplars

To have their individualized principal preparation plan approved, plan must include specific strategies and resources that align with the evidence outcome for each principal quality standard. CDE defines strategy, resources, and evidence for the alternative individual principal plan as follows:

- Strategy = **how** the principal quality standard will be addressed over the course of the plan
- Resources = the **tools and support** utilized to address the principal quality standard
- Evidence = the **measurable outcome and/or deliverable** stemming from implementation of the strategy and use of the resources

Please note, for the end of plan reflection, candidates will elaborate on the impact of strategies and resources on the students, staff and community.

Individual Principal Preparation Plan Partial Example

Below is an example of several completed principal quality standards that met the review process. Each plan and the associated principal quality standard needs to be tailored to the candidate. The information provided below is to illustrate the depth and level of information that needs to be included on an alternative individual principal plan. The Alternative Individual Principal Plan template is available here [\(LINK\)](#).

	Strategies and Resources		Evidence that Strategy for Standard is Met
	Note: The strategies and the resources should align.		Note: The evidence or outcomes should align with the strategies and resources.
Standard 1 Element B 6.01(2)	<p>Strategy:</p> <p>Create a Leadership Team to collaboratively find solutions to school-wide challenges.</p>	<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u><i>The Adaptive School: A Sourcebook for Developing Collaborative Groups</i></u> (Garmston and Wellman) ● <u><i>School Leadership that Works</i></u> ● <u><i>From Research to Results</i></u> (Marzano, Waters, McNulty) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leadership team agendas and notes will reflect the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Leadership team membership includes teachers from all grade levels and is representative of the school staff. ○ Work is done to collaboratively establish norms. ○ Candidate uses tools of facilitation from the Adaptive Schools framework to make decisions and elevate all voices in the room.
Standard 2 Element C 6.02 (3)	<p>Strategy:</p> <p>Establish a school-wide SEL or PBIS Program</p>	<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Incorporate CASEL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School-wide professional learning calendar and materials will show: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Candidate facilitates discussion with faculty using “Everyday Anti-



		<p>strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institute of Anti-Bias Anti-Racism (ABAR) curriculum • CDE’s PBIS Webinar 	<p>racism” and implement a strategy as a staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Co-facilitate training for the learning specialists
<p>Standard 3 Element C 6.03 (3)</p>	<p>Strategy:</p> <p>Provide frequent, timely and specific feedback to teachers to strengthen their instruction and pedagogy</p>	<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Effective Supervision</u> Chapters 1 & 2 (Marzano, Frontier and Livingston) • <u>Classroom Instruction That Works</u> (Marzano) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared calendar with recurring observation and feedback meetings scheduled with all teachers on caseload a minimum of two times/month • Observation and feedback folder for each teacher containing set annual goals, copies of classroom observation tool and observation notes, coaching agendas and notes demonstrating reflective conversations supporting quality teacher practice • Grade level planning agendas demonstrate intentional conversations around effective unit and lesson planning
<p>Standard 4 Element B 6.04(2)</p>	<p>Strategy:</p> <p>Implement at least two strategies from a professional development opportunity that I attend during the current school year.</p>	<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>From Good School to Great Schools, What Principals Do Well</u>, Ch. 5 (Gray/Streshly) • <u>Resonant Leadership</u>, Ch. 1, 2, 5, 9 (Boyatzis/McKee) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance and agendas for professional development seminars that connect to my professional goals and that are aligned to the Principal Quality Standards. • Feedback, in the form of quarterly coaching conversations, from mentor principal regarding implementation of selected strategy.
<p>EL Standard 5.12(1)</p>	<p>Strategy:</p> <p>Conduct a faculty meeting to co-facilitate SIOP strategies to support teachers in developing rigorous lesson plans to support all learners.</p>	<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ideologies behind SDAIE (Specifically Designed Academic Instruction in English) • SIOP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning agendas and facilitation notes from vertical PLCs that focus on EL strategies. • Classroom observations documented on shared tool dedicated to EL strategies • Agendas from PLC meetings, detailing discussion and decisions regarding shared strategies for focus as well as debriefs after observations.



		(Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collected data in the form of shared Google sheets detailing the frequency with which teachers use defined strategies during their classroom observations. Collaboratively developed agendas for unit and lesson planning meetings where teachers adapt plans to ensure ELLs can access district curriculum.
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Individualized Principal Preparation Plan Rubric (Quality Indicators)

To have their alternative principal plan approved, entities must meet or exceed the standard for all of the quality indicators below.

Definition of Ratings

- Does not meet standard: Misaligned to element or standard; incorrect information, form or attachment.
- Partially meets standard: Addresses elements at a surface level; reflective of an educator role, but not effectively demonstrating leadership of that element and/or does not address school-wide systems, structures and impact; partially addresses element or standard; and/or some misalignment to the element or standard.
- Meets or exceeds standard: Reflective of leadership, assistant/principal role, schoolwide reach and impact; how the candidate establishes systems and structures throughout the school

Quality Indicators	Explanation/Examples	Does not meet standard	Partially meets standard	Meets or exceeds standard	Comments
Principal Quality Standards	Alignment to the PQS; strategies and resources clearly outlined; evidence of outcomes clearly identified				
READ Act	Plan explicitly explains how the principal will complete evidenced-based training designed for school administrators in the science of reading that addresses the content of the principal literacy standards				
Colorado Academic Standards (CAS)	Plan demonstrates clear alignment to the Colorado Academic Standards				
Statement of Assurance	Reflects dates of the plan; Evidence indicates candidate is in the role				
Individual Plan	Evidence the mentor holds a professional principal				



	license; plan clearly states how the mentor will be providing feedback				
English Language Learner (EL) Preparation Standards	Plan demonstrates clear alignment to the EL standards; Articulates how the principal will address and practice each of the elements; Satisfies the hourly requirement				

Ongoing Commitments

Once an individual principal preparation plan is approved and a principal authorization issued, there are a few activities that districts, and the candidate will need to complete:

- Upon the fulfillment of the individualized program's requirements:
 - candidates will need to pass the Colorado State Board of Education-approved assessment for principals (PRAXIS 5412);
 - candidates will need to complete, sign and date the reflection document (which is part of the plan template); and
 - districts/BOCES will need to complete the verification form and provide it to the candidate.

Obtaining Initial or Professional Licensure

Candidates who hold alternative principal authorization are eligible for initial or professional principal licensure upon completion of their individualized principal plan, three years of licensed experience, passing the PRAXIS 5412 assessment and, for a professional license, participation in a principal induction program.

If candidates have three years of licensed teaching experience *prior* to obtaining the principal authorization, they are eligible for an initial principal license upon successful completion of the individualized alternative principal plan. If candidates have also completed a principal induction program, they may obtain a professional principal license.

If candidates have less than three years of licensed teaching experience prior to obtaining the alternative principal authorization, they must remain on the principal authorization until they meet the requirement of licensed experience (total of three years) in order to apply for their initial or professional principal license.

Based upon these two situations above, when candidates submit their individualized principal preparation plan, they will be asked whether this is a 1-year, 2-year, or 3-year plan. Candidates and their district/BOCES partners have the flexibility to create a multi-year plan based on the candidates' strengths and areas for growth.