



Alternative Principal Preparation Program Authorization Guide

Introduction and Purpose

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) has authority in the authorization and reauthorization of alternative educator preparation programs (EPP) at Designated Agencies (DAs). DAs that offer alternative educator preparation programs are charged with preparing the breadth and depth of licensed educators who serve Colorado's children. Completion of preparation programs at DAs lead to an array of licensure endorsement possibilities for candidates.

Alternative preparation programs offered through DAs provide a pathway for developing educators in Colorado. Each DA has a unique teaching and learning mission that guides the way that they serve educator candidates across the state. These guidelines apply to DAs looking to develop educator preparation programs or DAs that have existing alternative educator preparation programs that wish to add a new endorsement area. This document, together with the information and links provided offer everything necessary to begin and submit a program proposal.

Goals

- 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.

Purpose of Alternative Educator Preparation Programs

In Colorado, designated agencies are allowed to create alternative educator preparation programs in order to:

- alleviate the educator shortage faced by many school districts
- decrease the issuance of emergency educator authorizations
- provide alternative candidates with adequate supervision and education in teaching methods and practices
- assist in recruiting and employing non-traditional candidates
- provide educator pathways to alternative candidates with experience in areas other than education



Principal Authorization Defined

The state authorizes school districts to design and implement alternative principal preparation plans and programs to allow persons from outside the educational community to develop the skills and experiences necessary to successfully lead a public school and, ultimately, to qualify for licensure as principals (*CRS 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, including a number of organizations across Colorado. *The qualifying candidate **must** be required to hold a principal license to fulfill the job duties. 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.

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.
- It is valid only while the individual is completing the individualized plan or program and accruing three years of licensed experience required for an initial principal license, if the candidate does not already have that via licensed teaching or other experience in an elementary or secondary school.
- Upon completion of the individualized plan or program, the candidate will need to apply for an initial principal license.

Requirements for a Principal Authorization

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

1. There is a demonstrated need for the principal or assistant principal position in the partnering Colorado school district or BOCES;
2. An employment agreement for the position exists

Definitions (1 CCR 301-37)

- 2.01(3) Alternative principal: Any person employed as the chief executive officer or an assistant chief executive officer of any school in the state to administer, direct or supervise the education instruction program in such school or nonpublic school under a principal authorization and is actively participating in an alternative principal program or an individualized alternative principal program.



2.01(4) Alternative principal program: a program of study provided by a designated agency, as described in section 22-60.5-305.5(6), C.R.S., for principal preparation designed to provide the information, experience, and training to enable participants to develop the skills and obtain experience and training comparable to that possessed by a person who qualifies for an initial principal license.

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. We believe these same principles and best practices hold true for alternative principal preparation programs as well.

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.



It was from these principles that the domains for the evaluation of EPPs were derived.

Domains

- In addition to the principles outlined below, the domains were cross-walked with CAEP and AAQEP standards.
- Definition of “domain”?
 - Encompass both program/faculty and candidate level considerations

Figure1: Domain definitions

Domain	Definition
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 and the context and the decisions for those 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.
Program Experience	Through principal authorization experiences, principals experience, observe, reflect on, and implement the practices that they are learning about and that are modeled in their coursework. The plan/program is aligned with program curricula so that candidates develop leadership knowledge and skill.



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.
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To evaluate the quality of EPPs operationalization of each domain, desired performance indicators were identified.

Quality Performance Indicators

- 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 and the context and the decisions for those 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 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,</p>



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		<p>including attending to local, regional, or state 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>Program Experience</p>	<p>Through principal authorization experiences, principals experience, observe, reflect on, and implement the practices that they are learning about and that are modeled in their coursework. The plan/program is aligned with program curricula so that candidates develop leadership knowledge and skill.</p>	<p>3-1 Candidate support teams of exist to support each candidate across the program.</p> <p>3-2 All candidates have opportunities for experiences that align to educator licensure and state standards.</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 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.</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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To demonstrate the performance indicators have been met, consider the following questions and possible sources of evidence.

Questions for Consideration and Possible Evidence Sources

Performance Indicators by Domain

Domain	Performance Indicators	Questions for Consideration	Possible Evidence Sources
<p>Program Design</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</p>	<p>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?</p> <p>How do candidates experience the program? How do candidates experience the core values and</p>	<p>Program vision/values and how they shape program design.</p> <p>Formal program description provided to students(i.e. degree plans, advising materials, handbooks, etc.)</p>



	<p>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, regional, or state needs.</p>	<p>shared vision of the program?</p> <p>What shortage areas exist and how is the program creating partnerships to help minimize these shortage areas?</p>	<p>Description of program sequence describing developmental progression across each pathway (program map and/or narrative) Such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Major candidate outcomes and associated performance expectations ● Description of aligned evidence sources ● Examples of measures (e.g., key assessments, dispositional measures, observation/feed back protocols, rubrics, tracking systems) ● Protocols to support candidates who struggle <p>Description of partnerships, how they are structured and the purpose for each.</p> <p>Other</p>
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<p>Educator Knowledge & 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>How does each program address: content knowledge, knowledge of pedagogy and pedagogical content knowledge?</p> <p>How do program leaders/faculty make decisions about content (what, when, why)?</p> <p>How do content and pedagogy interweave the issues of diversity, equity and inclusion embedded in the educator quality standards?</p> <p>How do candidates engage with student academic standards in courses and teacher of record experiences?</p>	<p>Endorsement Standard Matrices</p> <p>Description of Content Revisions (e.g., provide updates/revisions made in content areas based upon previous re/authorization)</p> <p>Aligned Syllabi</p> <p>Example of Assessments, Assignments, Performance Tasks</p> <p>Disposition rubrics or screening tools</p> <p>Stakeholder feedback (surveys)</p> <p>Content assessment data</p> <p>Observation trend data</p> <p>Faculty professional learning</p> <p>Other</p>
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<p>Program Experience</p>	<p>3-1 Candidate support teams of exist to support each candidate across the program.</p>	<p>What strategies/ philosophies impact how candidates in all pathways are supported in their experiences?</p> <p>What supports are in place to ensure quality experiences?</p>	<p>Program handbooks</p> <p>Observation and feedback forms/ protocols</p> <p>Candidate, mentor teacher, principal, coach, feedback surveys.</p>
	<p>3-2 All candidates have opportunities for experiences that align to educator licensure and state standards.</p>	<p>How are mentors selected/trained?</p> <p>How are candidates receiving feedback, from multiple observers, as they implement theory into practice?</p> <p>What systems are in place to support struggling candidates?</p> <p>How do field experiences build on prior field and course work?</p>	<p>Process for identifying quality mentors</p> <p>Mentor training and developing guides</p> <p>Other</p>

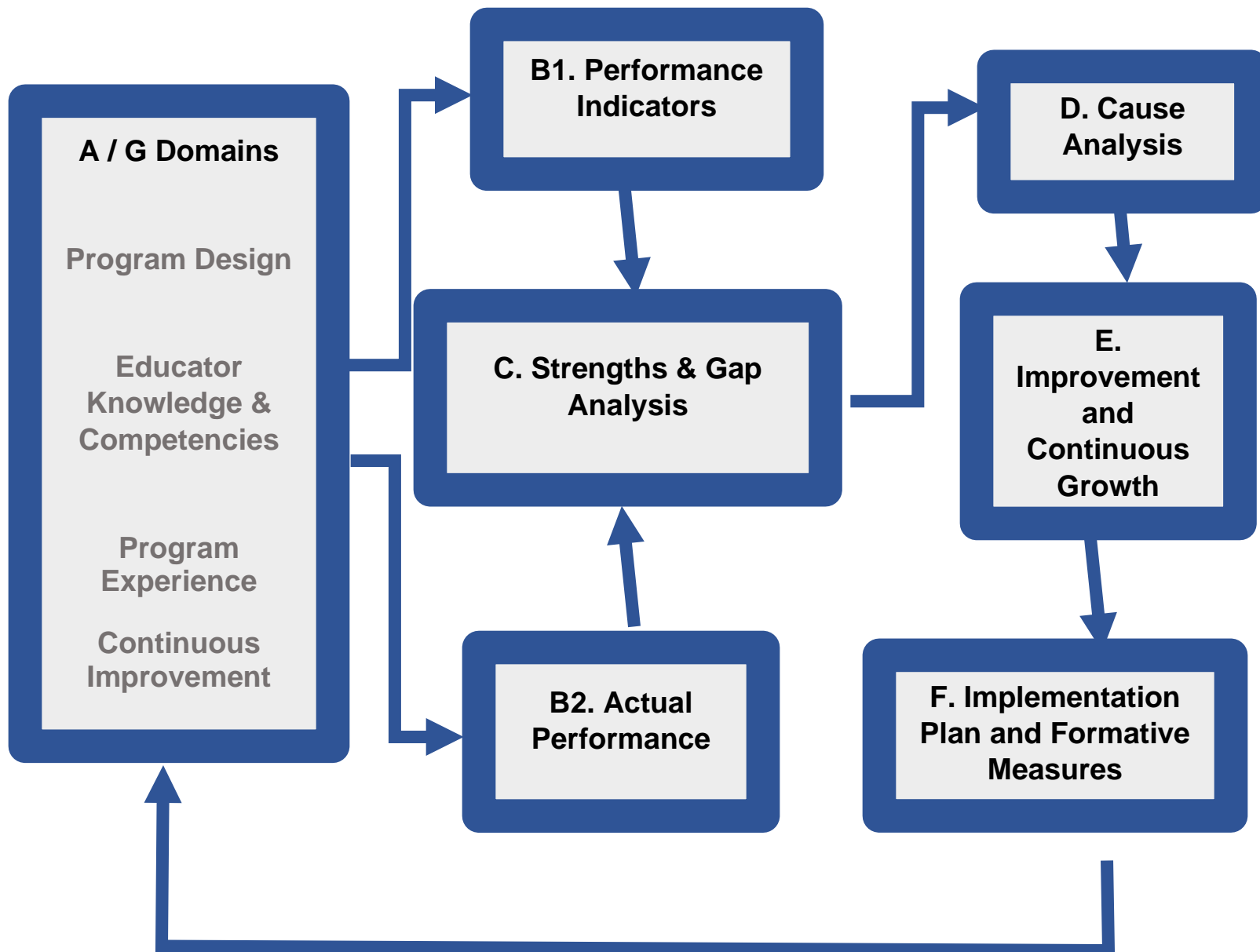


<p>Program Impact & Continuous Improvement</p>	<p>4-1 Program regularly engages in processes to evaluate program strengths, challenges, and improvement foci. Systems and protocols are in place for ongoing review and reflection.</p> <p>4-2 Program has in place formal and informal processes for gathering stakeholder feedback and other impact evidence from candidates, faculty, staff, partners and others.</p>	<p>What is the impact of the program in producing effective educators and how does the program determine effectiveness?</p> <p>How are workforce needs considered and what is the program impact in meeting the needs of Colorado schools?</p> <p>How do program faculty use feedback from candidate performance (during and after the program) to influence program improvement?</p>	<p>Trend data from perception surveys (candidates, faculty, partners)</p> <p>Trend data from common assessments</p> <p>Trend data from observation protocols</p> <p>EPP report data: enrollment/ completion trends, placement rates and contexts, effectiveness ratings (standards & MSL/MSOs), retention</p> <p>Content exams</p> <p>Process and outcomes from stakeholder gatherings, such as data retreats, that focus on program impact and continuous improvement.</p> <p>Other</p>
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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.





To access the Individualized Alternative Principal Programs and Alternative principal Programs (13.00) rules found in 1 CCR 301-37 refer to the educator preparation website page.

Program Submission Application Process

- Application (name, role, organization, email, which endorsement(s), narrative upload, matrices upload, syllabi, course sequence, and any other materials), commitment to ongoing engagement with CDE, for new approved designated agencies, agree to a site visit follow up in 12-24 months.
- Narrative response to domains, quality indicators, and guiding questions that address the minimum program requirements listed below.
- Completed Principal Quality Standards matrices
 - The standards matrices provide
 - an overview of the coursework/training your organization would implement to prepare candidates to meet the Colorado Department of Education standards for that endorsement
 - the outcomes your organization would use to measure the extent to which candidates have met the Colorado Department of Education standards for that endorsement
- Syllabi and course sequencing schedule for courses identified in the matrix. Please see the matrix template that goes into detail around suggested items to include in the syllabi.

Minimum program requirements (for a complete explanation of the following items listed, please reference the rules (13.00) found in 1 CCR 301-37). The reviewers will look to see that the items below are addressed in the application.

Program Design

- Overview of 225 hours
- Verification candidate is in the role
 - Change of status form
- Program can be completed 1-3 years
- Verification of licensed experience
- Partnerships
- Educator effectiveness evaluation training
- Content exam
- Need



Educator Knowledge and Competencies

- Submit syllabi/course outline that aligns to the Principal Quality Standards (PQS)
- Complete the principal matrix including the EL standards
- Sped law
- Address the CAS, READ Act, EL requirements

Program Experience

- Candidate evaluation to ensure candidate has met the PQS.
- Coaching/mentoring experience
- Demonstration of PQS

Continuous Improvement

- Advisory council
- Retention data
- Qualitative and quantitative feedback
- Address the self-study cycle