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**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

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# **Online and Blending Learning Readiness: Overview of Blending Learning Initiative**

Schools of Choice: Topic-Based Webinar - November 8, 2022

# Welcome



## Introduction

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## Agenda

- *Overview of the Blended Learning Initiative (BLI)*
  - *Colorado's approach to flexible learning*
  - *BLI Stakeholder Engagement activities*
  - *Formal Variance Waiver Process*
- *More information about and next steps for the BLI*



COVID-19 caused many schools in Colorado to completely shift their instructional models from traditional in-person to remote learning instruction and other types of hybrid models.

This shift has in many ways upended what schools thought of as “normal” instruction for a large number of students.

Rather than going back to business as usual, it is an important moment to step back and reassess what we know, or thought we knew, about “what works” in terms of instruction, seat time/funding requirements and—fundamentally— achieving strong student outcomes.

# Timeline



## Question from the field

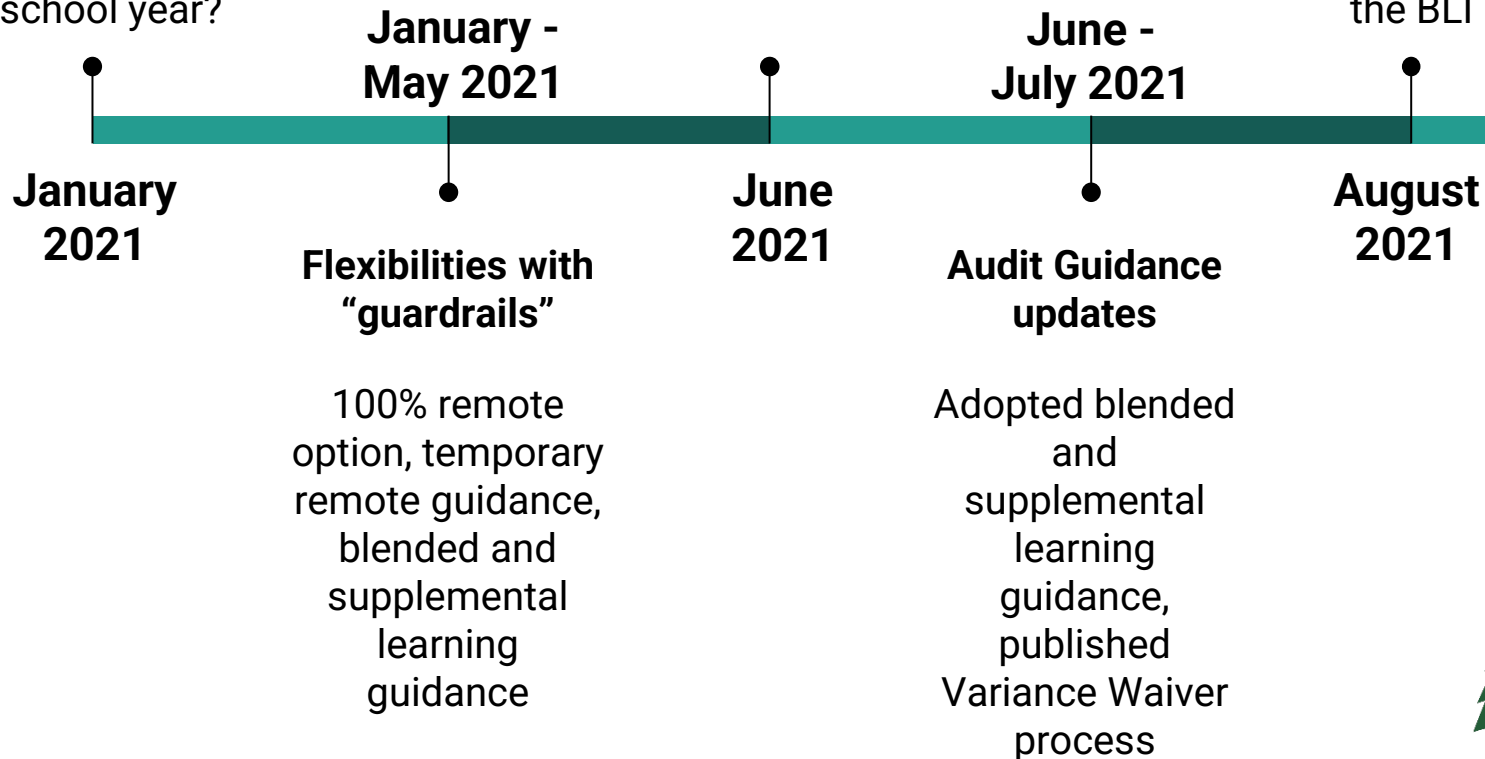
Will CDE extend remote learning flexibilities for the 2021-2022 school year?

## State Board presentation

Online and Remote Learning for Brick and Mortar Students

## Two-year BLI established

Field intent to seek the waiver and invited to participate in the BLI



# Timeline Cont.

## 2021-2022 BLI preparation

REL research, CDE consultant hiring, field outreach and recruitment

September - November 2021

## State Board presentation

BLI update and future stakeholder engagement on blended and online learning

February 2022

## State Board presentation

BLI update on findings from field waiver forms and BLI Convening meetings

June 2022

November 2021

BLI 21-22 activities begin

BLI Convening meetings monthly, field waiver participation with data and narrative forms

May 2022

21-22 activities conclude

November-May BLI Convening meetings finish, CDE summarizes 21-22 findings

# Timeline Cont.



## 2022-2023 BLI preparation

Contract with Keystone Policy Center for field engagement



**July 2022**

**August - October 2022**

**BLI 22-23 activities begin**

Summer survey, fall focus groups, prepare for 22-23 Variance Waiver



## Two-year BLI continuation

Field waiver participation, CDE summarizes 22-23 findings so far

far



**2022 into 2023**

**Anticipated for 2023**

**Potential policy reform drafting**

State Board updates, CDE to evaluate and propose policy recommendations



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# Flexible Learning in Colorado

# Current Colorado Policy

## Online Schools Act ([Colorado Revised Statutes, § 22-30.7-101 — 22-30.7-113](#))

- Multi-district online school
- Single district online school and programs
- Quality standards for online schools and programs

## State Board Rule (1 CCR 301-71)

- Rules for the Administration, Certification and Oversight of Colorado Online Programs

## Statewide Supplemental Online and Blended Learning Program ([Colorado Revised Statutes, § 22-5-199](#))

- Recognition and definition of blended and supplemental online
- Affordable supplemental online education courses and blended learning support
- “Each high school student in the state may take at least one supplemental online course per year.”



## Public School Finance Act (SB19-246), Rules for the Administration of the Public School Finance Act (1 CCR 301-39)

- Funded based on scheduled instructional hours and student membership (enrollment/attendance)
- Local boards define educational process
- Funding requirements
  - Students must be enrolled and meet attendance requirements
  - Students must meet instructional hours for full-time or part-time
- Calls out specific treatment for independent study
- Identifies when passing periods may count, and that lunch does not count
- Allows for work-study or work-based learning experiences
- Allows for post-secondary courses (Extended HS and Early College)

# Current Flexible Learning Opportunities

## Online School/Program

- MDOL (Multi District) and SDOL (Single District) Processes
  - [CDE Guidance](#)

## Blended/Supplemental Courses

- Blended Learning (BL) & Supplemental Online (SO) Courses
  - [CDE Guidance](#)

## Variance Waiver

- Formal Variance Waiver Process for Instructional Models
  - [CDE Guidance](#)

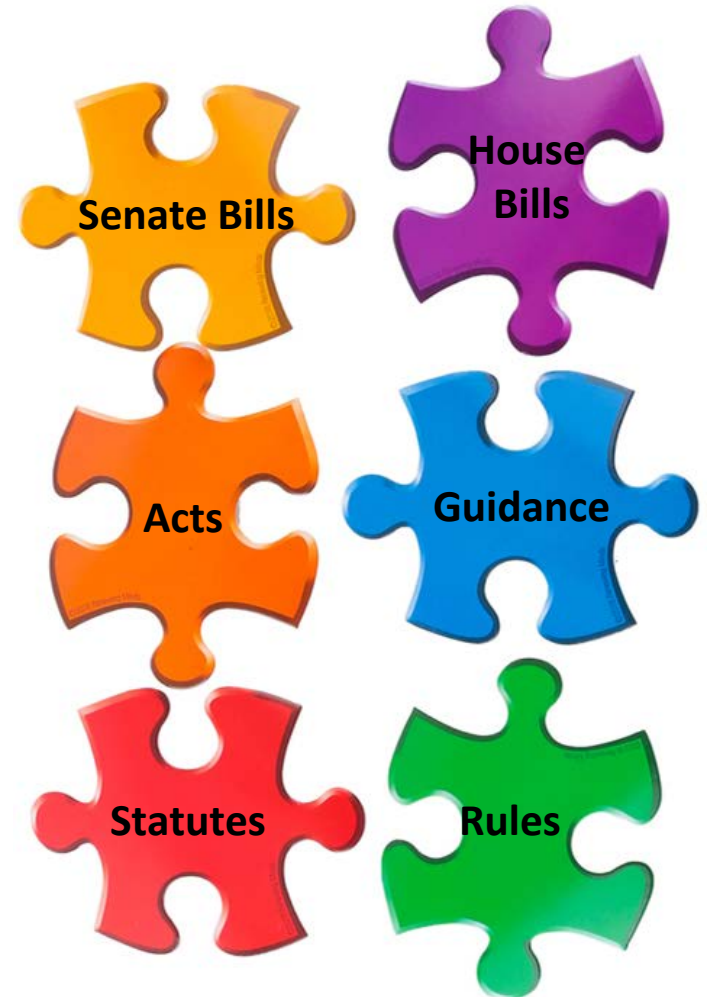
## Other Pathways

- Innovative Opportunities Pilot (ILOP)
- Teacher Recruitment Education Preparation (TREP)
- Accelerating Students Through Concurrent Enrollment (ASCENT)
- Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH)
- Work-based Learning Opportunities (WBL)

# BLI Overview & Stakeholder Outreach

# BLI Goals

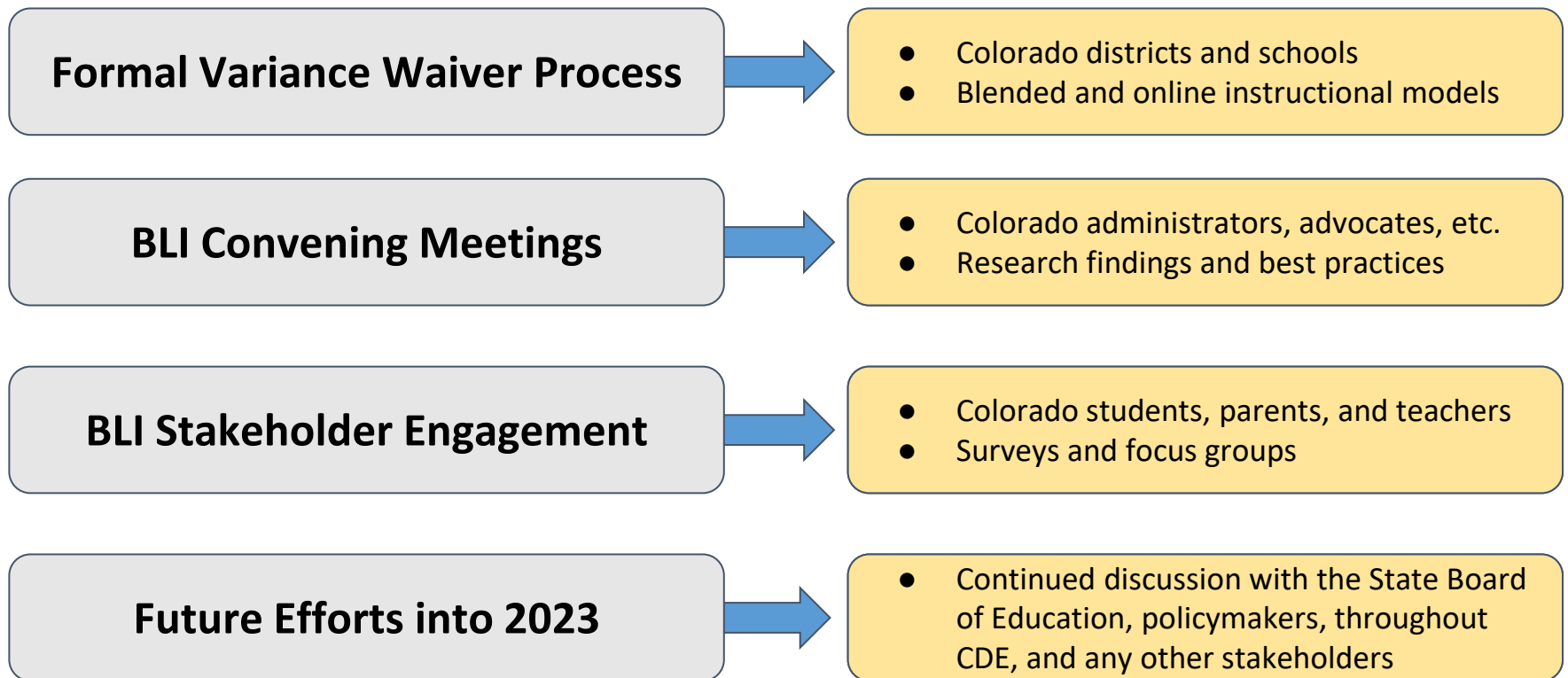
- Take a deeper look at existing policies and practices related to how and where students learn, to evaluate whether changes are needed
- Learn from schools and districts using blended learning and supplemental courses
- Explore research and what other states are doing
- Identify systems/policy solutions and stakeholder-informed recommendations
- Innovate with schools and districts to inform potential future policy
- Improve learning experiences for all students engaged in flexible learning opportunities such as remote and online learning models



# BLI Outreach Efforts



CDE outreach to understand field perceptions:



**2021-2022 school year:** CDE hosted monthly BLI Convenings with a broad representation from across the state of 53 school districts, 15 schools, and 14 stakeholder groups.

## Primary topics:

- Nationwide policy, rules, and regulations
- Colorado policy, rules, and regulations
  - Field feedback on barriers to current Colorado policy, the purpose of online and blended learning, the focus on student learning, how students demonstrate mastery and success
  - Field identification of both state and local considerations
  - Rethinking points, vision, and ideal state for future Colorado policy
- Colorado implementation of blended and online learning
  - Data from blended and online instructional models in the variance waiver
  - Presentations from districts and schools

**2022-2023 school year:** CDE contracted with Keystone Policy Center to conduct surveys and focus groups. The purpose of this 2022-2023 stakeholder engagement is to expand on the initial feedback gathered in 2021-2022 through the convening meetings for perspective from teachers, parents/guardians, and students.

## Primary activities:

- August-September 2022: public “CDE Blended and Online Learning Summer 2022 Survey”
- October 2022: public focus groups as a ‘listening tour’ throughout the state

# Variance Waiver Process & 21-22 Findings



# Formal Variance Waiver Process

The variance waiver allows districts and schools for the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years to waive course requirements for blended learning and supplemental online courses within their instructional models and programs.

## Primary objectives:

- Expand knowledge and understanding of the current policy structure for which blended learning and supplemental online learning can be implemented in brick and mortar schools.
- Provide a mechanism for schools and districts implementing practices outside of this policy structure, to continue their practices for two years while we see if more specific policies can be put in place.
- Come to a better understanding of the scope of policy conflict, where needs exist, how many students are impacted by current policies, and what practices are currently being used.



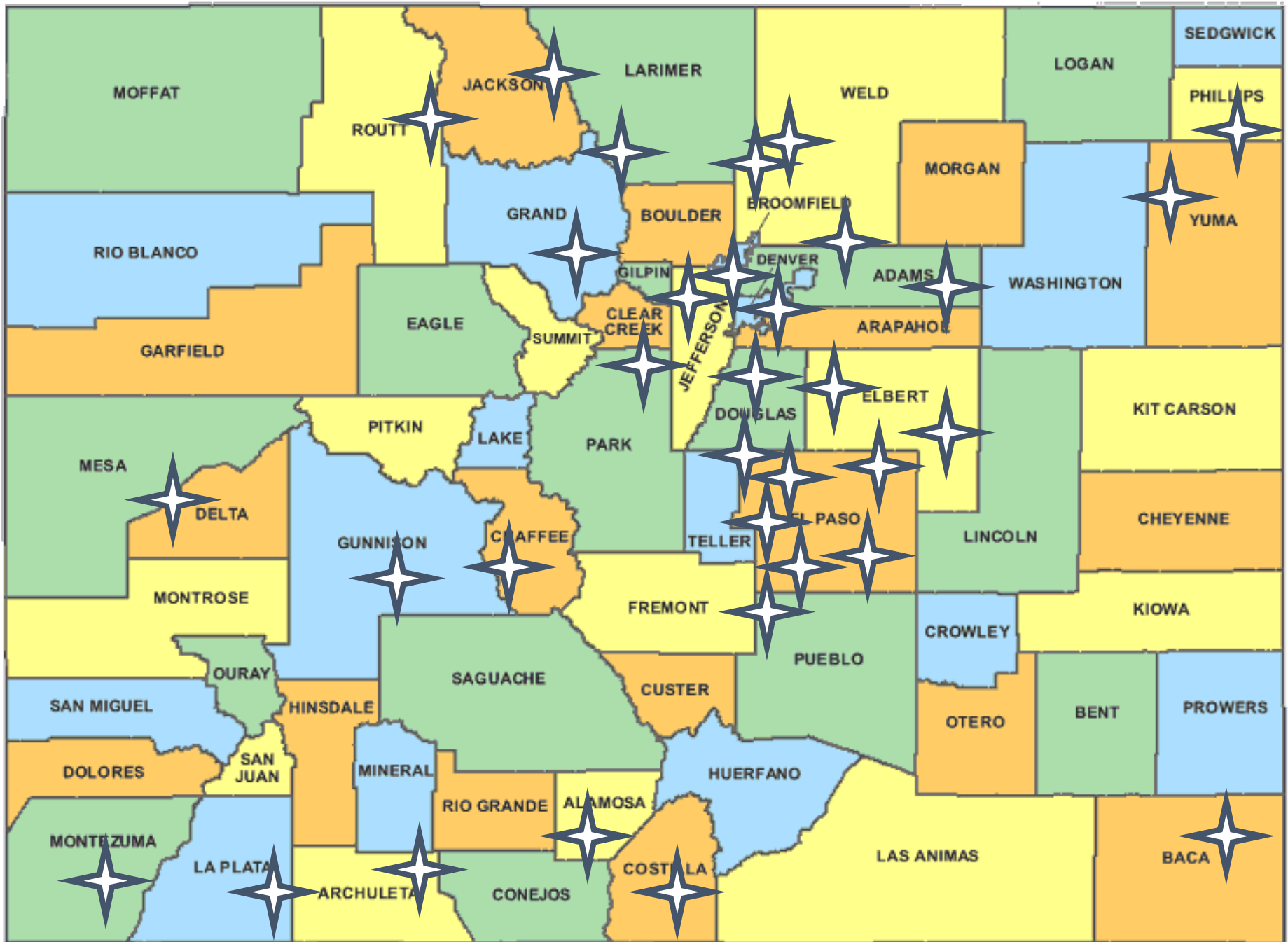
The [2022 Student October Count Audit Resource Guide](#) includes guidance for blended learning courses and supplemental online courses for funding purposes. Districts and schools can waive either or both of the following two course requirements:

## Course Requirement #1

Limits on the **number of** allowable blended learning and/or supplemental online **courses** a traditional brick-and-mortar student may be enrolled in during a given semester

## Course Requirement #3

**Amount of** in-person and/or synchronous **instruction** of at least 20% per week (if the course is not offered through an existing CDE-approved or recognized online school or program)



## Data Form

- District/school information
- Requestor information
- Total amount of different instructional models (up to 6)
  - Unique student type(s) per Student October Audit
  - % of synchronous instruction
  - Type of courses
- Student Data
  - CDE School Code, SASID, Instructional Model

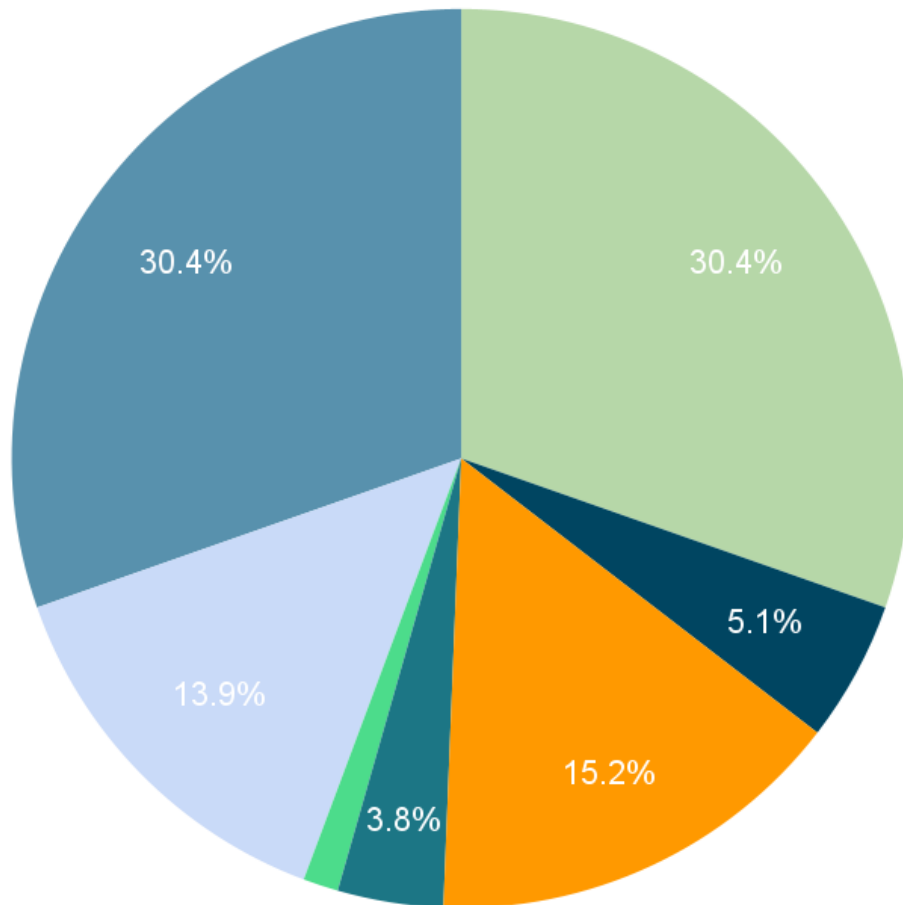
## Narrative Answer Form

1. Describe the instructional model (activities, courses, instruction)
2. Staffing
3. Target student population
4. Explain student needs being met
5. Problem the model solves for students
6. Data/evidence of model's effectiveness
7. Other options explored
8. Equitable access provided

# Why Used - Student Types

Data Forms & Narrative Form Question 3

## Unique Student Types per Instructional Model



- Expelled
- Homebound
- Home-school
- High School Equivalency Diploma
- Transition or SPED (1.3%)
- No
- Other
  - COVID Concerns
  - Postsecondary or CTE
  - Internship or Work-based Experience
  - Other Special Population
  - Elite Extracurriculars
  - Enrollment Retention
  - General Intervention/MTSS
  - Health Issues
  - Family Preference
  - GED Program
  - At-Risk



# Why Used - Instructional Model Needs

## Narrative Form Questions 4 & 5

### Purposes

- Instructional flexibilities
- Self-paced environment
- Online education benefits
- Live feed limitations
- Unreliable internet and services
- COVID concerns per family
- District program capacity met
- Limited FTE/staff capacity
- Student needs and interests
- Limited family transportation
- Reductions in budget
- Student financial supports family
- Personal/religious reasons
- Unsuccessful in traditional model

### Solutions

- Flexible login times
- Online accessibility to coursework
- Access outside of school hours
- Avoid student drop-out
- Laptop/device provided
- Internet or hotspot provided
- Selection of third-party courses
- Access to technology
- Placement meetings with families
- Access to volunteer opportunities
- Weekly-pacing schedules
- Technology platform options
- Goal setting
- Progress monitoring
- Safety at home

# Why Used - Instructional Model Tools

## Narrative Form Question 1

### Delivery Method

- Learning Management System
- Zoom
- Google Classroom
- Google Meet
- Microsoft Teams
- Schoology
- Edustar
- Learning Board
- PowerSchool
- MashMe
- email
- phone

### Content Used

- Fuel Education
- Apex
- Remote Learning Academy
- Kaplan GED Prep
- iReady
- Edgenuity
- IXL
- Colorado Digital Learning Solutions
- SEL's Base curriculum
- Aztec
- Waldorf Main Lesson courses
- Accelerate Education
- PLP Online curriculum
- Pearson Connexus
- GradPoint

# Why Used - Instructional Model Staff

## Narrative Form Question 2

- Instructional Staff
- Content/Core/Licensed Teacher
- Administrator
- School Nurse
- Tutor
- CDLS Staff
- School Counselor
- Staff Member
- Next GED Instructional Staff
- Paraprofessional
- Special Education Teacher
- Social Worker
- Native American Liaison
- Success Coach
- Concept Coach On Demand Tutoring
- SSSD Online Mentor
- Distance Learning Coordinator
- Enrichment Teacher
- Live Tutors
- Program Coordinator
- Registrar
- Parent/Guardian



# Why Used - Instructional Model Data/Evidence

## Narrative Form Questions 6

- Course success in previous year
- Credits earned in previous year
- Student self-report of support
- Grade data from third-party
- Completion rate from third-party
- Time spent evidence
- Established program
- Parent/guardian surveys
- On-track rate for graduation
- Past participation for reenrollment
- Participation and performance rates
- Attendance rates
- On-pace completion in courses
- Passing grades in courses
- Benchmark assessments
- Graduation rates
- Increased GED completion
- High school credits recovered
- Scholarly articles and journals
- Research institutions and centers
- Third-party program success
- Local reporting data

# BLI Next Steps



## As we conclude the two-year BLI:

- Continue synthesizing and summarizing the findings
  - Second year, 2022-2023 for the formal variance waiver process
  - Fall 2022 stakeholder engagement activities (survey and focus groups)
- Reconvene BLI stakeholders to share recent findings
  - Gather those from the 2021-2022 BLI Convening meetings for an update on the stakeholder engagement
  - Share about CDE's drafted policy recommendations and considerations
- Present to the State Board of Education
  - Prepare a holistic review of the two-year BLI, stakeholder engagement, and research findings
  - Propose the policy recommendations and considerations for state policy form
  - Update the field in preparation for the 2023-2024 school year

# More Information



## BLI Email

- [BLI@cde.state.co.us](mailto:BLI@cde.state.co.us)

## BLI Website

- <https://www.cde.state.co.us/onlinelearning/blendedlearninginitiative>

## OBL Website

- <https://www.cde.state.co.us/onlinelearning>

Thank you!

