



*Alternative Teacher Licensure Program
Handbook*

2019-2020

Revised
(August 2019)

Purpose of Alternative Licensure

The State Board of Education can allow Designated Agencies to create one-year and two-year alternative teacher programs to assist districts and BOCES that face a shortage of teachers and often struggle to find qualified persons to teach their students (State Statute 22-60.5-205 and the Educator Licensing Act Rules). Such programs shall:

- Decrease the use of emergency authorizations to hire persons who do not have teacher licenses and, in some cases, have not received any form of teacher preparation thus jeopardizing a school district's goal of providing a quality education for each student; and
- Identify persons with experience in areas other than education to help alleviate the teacher shortage faced by many school districts, so long as these persons receive adequate supervision and education in teaching methods and practices.

School District(s), BOCES, regionally accredited Institutes of Higher Education or nonprofit organizations can serve as a Designated Agency in Colorado (State Statute 22-60.5-102 [10] and 22-60.5-205 [2]). Any of these entities may partner or collaborate for the operation of an approved alternative teacher program. A district or BOCES may choose to contract with an Institute of Higher Education that already provides an approved teacher preparation program. An individual's successful completion of an alternative teacher preparation program leads to a recommendation for initial licensure by the Designated Agency providing the program.

State Statute 22-60.5 was intended to address teacher shortages in public schools. Designated Agencies must serve an identified need(s) of a Colorado school district(s) or BOCES. Designated Agencies can create alternative preparation programs in numerous teacher endorsements areas. State Statute does not allow alternative licensure pathways for Specialized Service Professionals.

Goals

The goal of the NW Colorado BOCES Alternative Teacher Licensure Program is to increase access to effective teachers for all students in the NW BOCES region, supporting the NW BOCES mission: "Through the cooperative efforts and services of NW BOCES, school districts will improve student achievement and maximize resources." The alternative teacher licensure program will accomplish this goal by:

1. providing a resource for schools to place alternatively-license teachers in hard-to-fill positions
2. supporting alternatively-licensed teachers in developing the knowledge and skills they need to become successful educators
3. providing the types of supports for teachers that have been proven to increase retention including:
 - a. content on the best practices that are most critical to success in the first 3 years of teaching
 - b. a professional network that includes both veteran colleagues and other new teachers, locally and regionally
4. designing and continually refining a program that meets the indicators from the state of Colorado for an alternative licensure program
5. facilitating activities that help new teachers to reflect, apply learning, and make continuous progress on a journey toward masterful teaching.

Alternative Teacher Licensure Program and Requirements

The Alternative Teacher Licensure Program is a state approved non-traditional licensure program offered by NW BOCES to eligible candidates only (see Eligibility Requirements below). This program is designed for the individual who would like to become a licensed teacher in Colorado but has not completed a traditional teacher licensure program through a college or university. The program is a one-year “on-the-job” teacher preparation training experience. Please visit CDE’s website for possible teaching/endorsement areas: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprof/Licensure_alt_endorsements.asp

Eligibility Requirements

A candidate must meet the following requirements in order to enroll in the ALP:

- Hold a minimum of a Bachelor’s degree
- Secure a full-time teaching contract in the appropriate teaching/endorsement area with one of the following public school districts: NW BOCES member and associate member districts (East Grand, Hayden, Moffat, North Park, South Routt, Steamboat, West Grand), and also Meeker and Rangely school districts or any school within the Northwest BOCES region.
- Complete an alternative license application with CDE online and receive an alternative license from CDE for the appropriate teaching/endorsement area by September 30th in order to complete the ALP requirements that school year
- As part of the alternative license application process, CDE will need to verify that the candidate has either:
- Documented evidence of 24 semester hours of college level coursework for the teaching/endorsement area they are employed in from a regionally accredited college or university; OR
- A passing score on the approved Colorado assessment PLACE for the teaching/endorsement area they are employed in. Colorado accepts the nationwide PRAXIS II test for the following five content areas only: Elementary Education, English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

CDE Application Process

Any individuals who are interested in pursuing alternative licensure are encouraged to visit the CDE website at any time to learn more about the CDE application process – starting the license application early (i.e. before applying for teaching positions) and being informed on eligibility requirements will improve your chances of being hired by a school district.

Please note that ALP candidates are fully responsible to apply for and be granted an alternative license from CDE. This is a detailed process with multiple steps and candidates should allow for CDE processing time of approx. 8 weeks for a complete application.

Here is a link to CDE’s Educator Licensing Department: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprof>. Look for the Alternative Licensure section under “Applying for Licenses and Authorizations”. Please review all of the relevant information on the website. You can also call the customer service line at (303) 866-6628 with any questions that you may have.

Notification to NW BOCES

After securing a teaching position, the candidate and/or the employing school district must notify NW BOCES upon hiring and no later than August 31st to be able to start the program in the fall. The candidate will need to sign the Alternative Licensure Contract Agreement and complete the Statement of

Assurance of Employment form required by the Colorado Dept. of Education and the Alternative Licensure application. Both of these forms will require the candidate to obtain a district signature and the signature of the NW BOCES Executive Director. The candidate must also contact the Executive Director of the NW BOCES to schedule a meeting to discuss the program, its requirements, fees and expectations. As soon as the candidate has received their alternative license from CDE, they will need to provide a copy to the NW BOCES Executive Director and their school district.

NW BOCES ALP Program Fees

Candidates in member/associate member districts: \$5,000
(East Grand, Hayden, Moffat County, North Park, South Routt, Steamboat, West Grand)

Candidates in Meeker and Rangely districts and other schools/districts: \$6,000

Alternative teachers are paid a salary by their hiring school district. Salary schedules vary by district and can be found on school district websites.

NW BOCES program fees are the responsibility of the candidate, and will be collected by district payroll deduction.

All charges payable for fingerprints, tests and applications to CDE are paid directly by the candidate.

Program Contact

Please contact the NW BOCES Executive Director for any questions relating to the NW BOCES alternative licensure program.

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Questions on CDE's alternative teacher license application should be directed to CDE.

Program Content/Completion

In order to be recommended for an initial teaching license, alternative licensure candidates must successfully complete the program requirements, which include:

- 225 clock hours of training including:
 - Online modules (60 hours)
 - Monthly in-person or virtual meetings (80 hours)
 - 30 hours - Virtual meetings: Classroom Instruction that Works, Modules
 - 30 hours - EL Pathway
 - 20 hours - Coaching meetings
 - Participation in Alternative Teacher Licensure Orientation and Learning Academy
 - (8 hours)
 - Four classroom observations (20 hours)
 - Professional reading (20 hours)
 - Mentor conversations (40 hours)

Once the candidate has completed all program requirements and full payment of fees has been made, NW BOCES will issue a Verification of Completion form for Initial Teacher Licensure that the candidate will need to submit to CDE online.

The program content required for completion includes the following:

Online Modules

The induction program content consists of nine modules which are completed over the course of one year, totaling 80 hours.

Module Topics and Due Dates

	Topic	Start Date	Due Date
Module 1	Classroom Culture and Climate	8/24/19	9/15/19
Module 2	Standards-Based Instruction	9/16/19	10/20/19
Module 3	Classroom Management	10/21/19	11/17/19
Module 4	Designing Instruction	1/13/20	2/16/20
Module 5	Assessment	2/17/20	3/15/20
Module 6	Student Diversity	3/16/20	4/5/20
Module 7	Understanding and Meeting Student Needs	4/6/20	5/3/20
Module 8	Literacy	5/4/20	5/31/20

Module Content

Each module has an associated learning target and several topics that will be covered. Both the topics and the learning targets represent practices detailed in the Colorado Model Evaluation System Teacher Quality Standards rubric. The modules are designed to help support the teachers in learning new content, applying it in their classrooms, and then reflecting on their learning. NW BOCES objective is that teachers will develop these habits of learning, application, and reflection in their classroom practice.

Module 1: Classroom Culture and Climate

Learning Target:

1. I will intentionally create a positive classroom climate for students.

Topics:

- Structures that support a positive climate
- Respect and rapport
- Equity and positive relationships
- Maintaining high expectations
- Proactive communication

Module 2: Planning Standards-Based Instruction

Learning Targets:

1. I will create learning objectives based on the Colorado Academic Standards and my district's organized plan of instruction.

Topics:

- Understanding the Colorado Academic Standards

- Writing learning targets
- Planning strategies
- Instructional strategies

Module 3: Classroom Management

Learning Targets:

1. I will develop a predictable learning environment by creating consistent structures and routines.
2. I will engage in proactive classroom management that supports students' success in meeting high expectations.
3. I will implement management strategies that maximize instructional time.

Topics:

- Routines and processes
- Setting and reinforcing expectations
- Positive and proactive discipline
- Troubleshooting/adjusting
- Maximizing learning time

Module 4: Designing Instruction

Learning Targets:

1. I will design instruction that utilizes appropriate, evidence-based instructional practices.

Topics

- Creating plans for learning
- Strategies for engaging students in learning
- Questioning strategies
- Scaffolding learning

Module 5: Assessment

Learning Targets:

1. I will create assessments based on the Colorado Academic Standards and my district's organized plan of instruction.
2. I will use assessment to determine students' skill levels and adjust instruction.
3. I will align assessment with my instructional objectives.
4. I will provide effective feedback and opportunities for revision to improve learning.

Topics:

- Summative assessments
- Checking for understanding/formative assessments
- Providing feedback
- Using assessment to guide instruction

Module 6: Student Diversity

Learning Targets:

1. I will develop positive, welcoming, and productive relationships with families and/or significant adults.
2. I will demonstrate a commitment to respecting and embracing diversity in the classroom.

Topics:

- Partnering with families
- Understanding student interests
- Special considerations for diverse student groups

Module 7: Understanding and Meeting Student Needs

Learning Targets:

1. I will plan and adapt my teaching to meet the needs of all students.
2. I will understand the process for identifying and meeting students needs in my school/district.

3. I will collaborate with colleagues to meet student needs.

Topics:

- MTSS/RTI
- Required plans (504, ELL, GT, IEP, READ)
- Differentiation

Module 8: Literacy

Learning Targets:

1. I will implement developmentally appropriate literacy and language skill development across content areas.
2. I will provide accommodations for students whose literacy and language skills interfere with their ability to access content.

Topics:

- Developmental understanding of reading
- Reading and writing across the curriculum

Monthly in-person/virtual meetings

A representative from the NW BOCES will meet with each candidate (either in person, through a video chat, or a phone call) at least once per month for individualized coaching conversations. In addition to these meetings, candidates will be expected to attend bi-monthly virtual meetings that will feature the following topics: The components of Classroom Instruction that Works, special education, gifted education, state-mandated assessments, educator effectiveness and evaluation, professional responsibilities as teachers, mathematics instruction, technology integration, and other topics based on the needs of the candidates.

Classroom observations

Four classroom observations are required. Observations may be completed by representatives of the NW BOCES. Each observation will include a pre-conference and post-conference that includes feedback from the observer. Additional observations can be conducted by each candidate's building administration and mentors.

Professional reading

Outside of ongoing Module reading the following books will be read by each candidate:

- *Classroom Instruction that Works*
- *Tools for Classroom Instruction that Works*
- *Classroom Instruction that Works with English Language Learners*

In addition to the above books, the Alternative Teacher Licensure Program utilizes the following three books throughout the program. They are *The 12 Touchstones of Good Teaching*, *The New Teacher's Companion*, *Where Great Teaching Begins*. A copy of all of the books will be provided to each alternative teacher license candidate in early August.

Candidate Support Team

Each alternative licensure candidate will have a support team that is composed of, at minimum:

- an assigned school-based mentor
- NW BOCES Innovation Coaches
- NW BOCES Executive Director
- principal
- fellow alternative teacher licensure candidates in their cohort

In addition, alternative licensure candidates are encouraged to develop their own network of support which may include other teachers in their building and/or content area, BOCES staff, and other teachers in the region.

The first year of teaching can be overwhelming even when teachers complete a pre-service program prior to entering the classroom. As candidates in this program are teaching in addition to learning the skills, knowledge and content required to be an effective teacher, it is understandable that sometimes they may feel overwhelmed. Support is always available to program participants! If a candidate is in crisis, they should first turn to their mentor or building principal for immediate support. These individuals, or the candidate themselves, should also notify their assigned Innovation Coach. A personalized support plan will then be created that will address the needs of the candidate.

Mentoring

Mentors are selected based on evidence and/or confirmation of exemplary teaching and school leadership; the ability to model and counsel the alternative teacher; relevant coursework; and a valid license and endorsement in the alternatively-licensed teacher's content area, if available.

A mentor's job is to support and coach the alternative licensure candidates to become successful teachers. Having the support of a strong mentor is critical to helping create and retain high-quality teachers. Districts and NW BOCES work collaboratively to identify mentors who will be most supportive to the alternative teachers. Mentors will be provided a copy of all Module activities as they become available to the candidates, as well as the dates and topics of the virtual meetings.

Support for Mentors

CDE requires that all mentors for alternative licensure participate in an "articulated, mandatory, and intensive supervision training program." NW BOCES mentor training program includes:

- 1) Each quarter, BOCES staff will host a regional webinar, or in person meeting on an important topic in coaching and mentoring. These webinars are not required by the BOCES induction/alternative licensure program, but districts may choose to require them for their mentors.
- 2) A representative of the NW BOCES will check-in with each mentor individual on a quarterly basis and tailor support for the mentor based on these conversations.

Mentoring Requirements

Mentors and alternative licensure candidates are required to meet weekly throughout the alternative licensure program. During weekly meetings, mentors should provide support for their mentees by identifying which items in the mentor conversation checklist will be most helpful to the candidate at that time, and discussing any other topics that the mentor or mentee has identified as questions, concerns, or important issues. These topics may be related to school policies, procedures, culture, or events, problem-solving, lesson planning, classroom management, parent relationships, or anything else that will ensure the teacher is prepared to receive an initial teaching license by the end of the year. The mentor conversation checklist contains the minimum requirements for these conversations, and mentors and mentees are expected to go beyond this list. Mentors should also be proactive and thoughtful about the instructional topics that the teacher needs to consider and learn in order to be successful. These conversations will represent 40 hours of each candidate's 225 hour program requirement.



Alternative Licensure Teacher _____

Mentor _____

Date Completed _____

Mentor/Mentee Conversation Checklist

The following topics are to be covered in weekly meetings with mentors, and both the mentor and mentee should sign off when this has been completed. These are the minimum mandatory topics to be covered, and any other topics that are of importance, interest, or concern to the school or the mentee should be addressed as well. Mentors should review the complete list and determine when the most helpful time to provide the information might be.

Please initial and your mentor initial each topic of discussion, and then return to NW BOCES Executive Director no later than June 30th at the end of the program.

Topic	Date	Mentee Initials	Mentor Initials
School/District Basics			
Building orientation			
Introductions to building personnel - administration, office staff, nurse, counselor, grade level teachers and specialists, custodial staff, kitchen staff			
Duty assignments (hall duty, bus supervision, etc.)			
Policies for student injuries including any necessary forms			
Student code of conduct			
Technology information (passwords, login information, data warehouses, internal assessments, tech support)			
How to fill out forms used in the district and building (material			

requests, supplies, other local forms new teachers may not be familiar with)			
Where to get answers about salary and benefit questions			
Any other local policies necessary for new staff (culture and climate of the school)			
Professional Responsibilities			
Special Education, READ Act, ELL, GT responsibilities (assessment, paperwork, and meetings required)			
Professional responsibilities (including confidentiality, ethics, and appropriate conduct)			
Mandatory reporting processes within the building and district			
Staff dress code			
Record-keeping (attendance and grades) procedures and policies			
Procedures and policies for field trips and out of school activities			
Teacher absences and substitutes, including sick leave and personal days			
Building committees - orient new staff of what committees are within the building and what the purpose of each is			
The use of RANDA for evaluation and how to develop goals and self-assessment at the beginning of the year			
Local processes and timelines for evaluation			
End of year checkout procedures			
Instructional Responsibilities/Skills			
RTI, MTSS, and/or other data team requirements and processes			
Classroom management/building level expectations			
Processes and best practices for parent-teacher conferences			
Grade level standards (horizontal and vertical articulation)			
Assessment (local, district, state) processes and timelines			
Lesson Planning			
Grading, Report Cards			



Alternative Licensure Program Completion Verification

The alternative licensure candidate listed has met the following requirements (the party indicated should initial and date next to each x to indicate completion):

	Principal	Mentor	BOCES
Completion of mentor/mentee conversation checklist items	x	x	
Weekly meetings with mentor	x	x	
Submission of artifacts demonstrating classroom implementation			x
Submission of reflection documents for each module			x
Attendance of at least 80% for all monthly in person trainings/virtual online meetings			x
Monthly classroom observations	x	x	x
Completion of professional reading assignments			x
Completion and submission of all required CDE/BOCES documentation (Statement of Assurance of Employment, Alternative Licensure Program Completion Verification, Initial License application)			x



Signatures

_____ (name) is recommended for an alternative license and is eligible for an initial license. Proof of completion of an alternative licensure program by NW BOCES is required for the initial license application to CDE.

Alternative Licensure Candidate

Mentor

Principal/School District Designee

NW BOCES Executive Director

Date: _____

For NW BOCES Office use only

Date alternative licensure program was completed: _____