

**APPLICATION FOR WAIVERS**  
**Douglas County Teacher Endorsement and Alternative Licensure Program**  
**For March 7, 2012**  
**Presented to Commissioner Hammond and State Board of Education (SBE)**

**Goal:** Douglas County School District (DCSD) is seeking waivers from the State Board of Education (SBE) rules found in the *Rules for the Administration of the Educator Licensing Act of 1991* (1 CCR 301-37 Sections 7.00-9.00, 11.00 and 18.00) that will allow the District's Office of Development and Innovation the opportunity to:

- a) Through an internal teacher preparation program and developed partnerships with accredited Colleges and Universities, provide intensive training to fulfill content and pedagogical knowledge for areas deemed "hard-to-fill" in order to meet the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> Century learners that the current SBE licensure process does not provide. (Sections 7.00 – 9.00 and 11.00).
- b) License or approve a professional teacher in residency plan for professional candidates who meet the rigorous requirements of the district teacher preparation program, as outlined in the supporting action planning document, outside of current SBE licensure procedures. (Section 18.00)

Currently, "hard-to-fill" endorsement areas include Foreign Language, Technology Education, Mathematics Education, Science Education, Trade and Industry Education, Linguistically Diverse Education, Linguistically Diverse Education Specialist – Bilingual Education, Special Education, Special Services, and those areas that currently do not exist, e.g. Mandarin Chinese as a Foreign Language.

**List of All Statutes and/or Rules Requested Waiver:** Specifically, the "hard-to-fill" endorsements require the following waivers for program participants:

1. CRS 22-9-106 (4)(a) Board of Education Duties –

Waives the requirement that evaluators of licensed personnel must hold an Administrator License or a Principals License

*The Office of Development and Innovation will be responsible for the hiring and performance approval of the candidate.*

2. CRS 22-60.5-106 Endorsement of license – effect

Waives the requirement that the department of education causes the license to be endorsed

*The Office of Development and Innovation will be responsible for preparation and granting of endorsements in "hard-to-fill" and non-existent subject areas.*

3. 1 CCR 301-37 2260.5-R-2.00 General Licensing Regulations and Sections 7.00 Endorsement of Licenses or Authorizations; 8.00 Teaching Endorsements, 9.00 Special Education Endorsements and 11.00 Special Services Endorsements

Waives the requirement that the Colorado Department of Education has the sole authority to issue educator licenses and authorizations issue endorsements

*The Office of Development and Innovation will be responsible for preparation and granting of endorsements in "hard-to-fill" and non-existent subject areas.*

Specifically, the Professional Teacher in Residence, “hard-to-fill” and Alternative Teacher licenses require the following waivers for program participants:

1. CRS 22-60.5-201 Teachers and Special Services Providers

Waives the requirement that the department of education is designated as the sole agency authorized to issue alternative teacher licenses and the various components of the state program

*The Office of Development and Innovation will be responsible for preparation and granting of Professional in Residence licenses for professionals who work in industry to teach on a part-time basis and of an Alternative Licensure/Endorsement program in areas where the State Board of Education has not identified such licensure/endorsements.*

2. 1 CCR 301-37 2260.5-R-2.00 General Licensing Regulations and Section 18.00 Alternative Teacher Preparation Programs

Waives the requirement that the Colorado Department of Education has the sole authority to issue educator licenses and authorizations, and prepare persons for alternative teacher licensure programs

*Same as answer to the above question.*

3. CRS 22-63-201 Teacher Employment

Waives the law that prohibits a Board from hiring non-licensed individuals

*The Office of Development and Innovation will be granted authority to oversee the hiring of non-licensed individuals after successful completion of the rigorous training modules.*

4. CRS 22-63-403 Teacher Employment

Waives the law governing payment of salaries upon termination of a teacher

*Any staff member who has completed the program, but does not meet the expectations of the Office of Development and Innovation and Douglas County Federation of Teachers criteria shall forego payment of salary upon termination.*

5. CRS 22-63-203 Teacher Employment

Waives the law governing contracting with probationary teachers and renewal of probationary teacher

*All teachers licensed under the Office of Development and Innovation will not be subjected to probationary guidelines as set forth by CDE certified employees.*

6. CRS 22-63-403 Teacher Employment –

Waives the law requiring teachers to be licensed or approved to receive remuneration from public monies

*All teachers licensed within the Office of Development and Innovation are not approved under current licensure procedures, but should receive remuneration from public monies.*

7. CRS 22-63-301 Teacher Employment –

Waives the provision that establishes grounds for dismissal of a teacher in Colorado

*All teachers licensed under the Office of Development and Innovation will not be subjected to dismissal requirements as set forth by CDE certified employees.*

8. CRS 22-63-302 Teacher Employment

Waives the uniform procedures for teacher dismissal and procedures for judicial review

*All teachers licensed under the Office of Development and Innovation will not be subjected to probationary guidelines as set forth by CDE certified employees.*

**Statement Explaining How Waivers Enhance Opportunity and Quality:** These waivers have allowed DCSD flexibility to move, as a learning organization, into higher levels of performance and accountability. Douglas County School District is the employer of almost 6,000 faculty and staff. In order to utilize our most talented teacher candidate pool of 5,000 applicants, recruit and retain specialists with unique expertise and train existing staff to meet our performance expectations in the public education system, we are moving forward with a proposal for renewal of waivers for the Douglas County School District

Too often, talented candidates with a current license or specialized experts without State teaching endorsements/credentials are engaged in expensive time intensive processes under current SBE license or endorsement requirements for district hard-to-fill positions. Current procedures to transition these aspiring professionals into the ranks of public educators or other areas of endorsement are cumbersome and complicated.

Within this rapidly changing world, states are unable to predict, let alone keep up with the significant changes in 21<sup>st</sup> Century learner needs. Maintaining relevancy with increasing accountability has created a plethora of cumbersome processes districts and aspiring candidates must overcome. The district continues to hire over 100 new teachers annually. Our waiver/alternative program has allowed us to fill all gaps that exist.

Our 21<sup>st</sup> Century learners will require educators to have skills the current licensure process does not address. The current system leaves many candidates out, and many of our high demand areas are unfilled. These existing obstacles result in fewer qualified candidates in “hard-to-fill” and growing content areas such as world languages, vocational/technical, math and special education.

Douglas County School District’s creation of a Teacher Licensure/Endorsement and Professional in Residence program (PIR) ensures that all students’ learning needs are fulfilled with quality applicants. In partnership with the Douglas County Federation, and the Office of Development and Innovation with approval by the Douglas County Board of Education our district has implemented an intensive training program (approved in 2010 by Colorado Department of Education) that will promote teacher training and placement in both hard-to-fill and innovative 21<sup>st</sup> Century areas that do not currently exist. Our plan is comprehensive and complex, but simple enough to continually improve our processes to help meet our diverse needs and raise the bar in professional accountability.

We have increased recruitment and retention of the most talented professionals, including existing out of district licensed teachers. There has been increased accountability of training to meet our needs in hard-to-fill positions. Additionally, we have been more effective in promoting innovative and cutting edge development for teaching and learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The waivers consist of four requests that include:

1. Endorse licensed teachers who are not currently endorsed in hard-to-fill positions.

**Example:** We currently have unfilled Special Education positions in our district. At the same time, we have a surplus of qualified candidates for our regular teaching positions. The Special Education Department works along side the Office of Development and Innovation to acquire endorsements for special education licensure candidates. The current state licensure system requires attendance at a higher educational facility to receive a Generalist degree. The option we have put in place allows DCSD to recruit qualified candidates and offer local, customized training to meet the specific needs of our students. The program being used by the district was approved by CDE in 2010 and in 2011 won the Colorado Legacy Foundation award for Teacher Preparation.

2. Creating a Professional-In-Residence (PIR) program for professionals who work in industry the opportunity to teach on a part-time basis in our schools for future professional alignment, motivation and understanding of work force demands.

**Example:** Castle View High School utilizes professionals from local firms such as Lockheed Martin to teach specialized pre-engineering classes for one to two periods in the day. This PIR Waiver exempts local professionals from the financial burden and 225 instructional hours required for the alternative licensure program. This waiver continues to allow DCSD to secure qualified professionals to offer relevant curriculum content tailored to the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century learner.

3. Endorse and license teachers where the State Board of Education has not identified endorsements and licenses that we need in DCSD.

**Example:** An applicant may have coursework from a foreign university that is identified, but not recognized by CDE. Therefore, the applicant cannot receive a license to teach in Colorado and must use processes to become an adjunct professor. Currently, there is not a license or endorsement in the Foreign Language area of Mandarin Chinese. We are asking for flexibility to match resources with need as outlined in our DCSD Strategic Plan.

4. Use the CDE alternative licensure process as stated by the SBE with the exception of DCSD defining the pre-qualifications for candidates entering the program.

**Example:** An applicant may be a Nobel Prize winner in chemistry, but is not currently allowed to utilize the Alternative or Teacher in Residence Program. To become eligible, this teacher is required to have 6 hours in Biology, Earth or Space Science, and 3 hours in Physics, or pass the PLACE or PRAXIS II test in general science. Without this waiver, if a teacher is not a generalist, he/she is not granted a statement of eligibility and allowed to teach in their specialty area.

**Costs of Compliance with Current Law/Rules:** With the renewal of these waivers the cost of compliance with current state statutes and rules has less of a financial impact on educational opportunity to our children in “hard-to-fill” and non-existent content areas in DCSD. Our district continues to explore innovative alternative options for recruitment and retention of highly qualified staff for these “hard-to-fill” positions. Incurred costs of these alternative options include but are not limited to, exhaustive recruitment costs, human resources costs, replacement costs and temporary placement costs. We believe that the requested renewal of these waivers will significantly improve our global opportunity for student learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.