

**APPLICATION FOR WAIVERS**  
**Douglas County Teacher Endorsement and Alternative Licensure Program**  
**For November 9, 2006**  
**Presented to Commissioner Moloney 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 Learning Center Board 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 Learning Center Board 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 Learning Center Board 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 Learning Center Board 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 Learning Center Board 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 Learning Center Board 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 Learning Center Board 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 Learning Center 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 Learning Center 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 Learning Center 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 Learning Center will not be subjected to probationary guidelines as set forth by CDE certified employees.*

**Statement Explaining How Waivers Enhance Opportunity and Quality:** These waivers will allow 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 have a three-tier proposal for the State Board of Education:

1. Ensure higher levels of accountability as measured by the State Assessments in Colorado. Reading and writing is the first priority for a foundation of learning in our elementary schools. Currently, Douglas County School District scores in reading in our elementary school grades have averaged 83 to 86 percent proficient or above for all students over the past four years. Our District goal is to increase performance on the 3rd grade CSAP as measured by a movement from 83% proficient and advanced to 90% and then 100% and we hope to accomplish this over the next 5-year period.

The CSAP scores in writing have averaged 65 to 78 percent proficient or above over the past four years in our elementary schools for all students in grades 3-6. Our district plans to increase these percentages at each grade level by a minimum of 5 percentage points again in the same five-year period.

Our math scores have averaged scores of proficient and above in 4<sup>th</sup> grade at 85 percent, 66 in 7<sup>th</sup> grade and 54 percent in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Our goal is to see increases in math performance at grades 4, 7, 9 on CSAP as measured by proficient and advanced with a minimum of 5 percent increases expected over the same 5 year period.

2. Monitoring and measuring skill requirements from the research on 21<sup>st</sup> century learners in DCSD.
3. Waivers from the SBE to ensure organizational capability to meet the rigorous expectations.
- 4. Annual review by SBE of this DCSD 2-year pilot program.**

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 hires 500 new teachers on an annual basis and only seven were hired through the current Alternative Licensure process.

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), as outlined in the supporting documents, ensures that all students’ learning needs are fulfilled with quality applicants. In partnership with the Douglas County Federation, our district is poised to execute a plan that will allow our Learning Center Governing Board, approved by the Douglas County Board of Education, to deploy an intensive training program 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 empower our processes, to help meet our growing needs and raise the bar in accountability.

We can increase recruitment and retention of the most talented professionals, including existing licensed teachers. There will be increased accountability of training to meet our needs in hard-to-fill positions. Additionally, we will be 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 23 unfilled Special Education positions in our district. At the same time, we have a surplus of qualified candidates for our regular teaching positions. We would like our Special Services Department to work with certified teachers within the Learning Center blueprint to get endorsements for special education. The current system requires attendance at a higher educational facility to receive a Generalist degree. The option we propose would allow DCSD to recruit qualified candidates and offer local, customized training to meet the specific needs of our students.

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 would like to utilize professionals from local firms such as Lockheed Martin to teach specialized pre-engineering classes for one period in the day. Currently the one-year Alternative Licensure program requires an extensive prequalification process, 225 clock hours of pedagogy, as well as paying fees for instruction within the system. Candidates for these part-time positions are discouraged by the excessive paperwork and bureaucracy involved in offering this relevant material tailored to the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> Century learners.

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 is not recognized by the CDE. Therefore, the applicant cannot receive a license to teach in Colorado and must use processes such as becoming an adjunct professor. Currently, there is not a license or endorsement in the Foreign Language area of Mandarin Chinese. We are asking for agility to match resources with need as designated by our Board of Education End Statement.

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, as well as testing in general science. If a teacher is not a generalist, he/she is not granted a statement of eligibility allowed to teach in their specialty area.

**Costs of Compliance with Current Law/Rules:** The cost of compliance with current statutes and rules has had a significant impact on educational opportunity in DCSD. Under current rules and statutes, we cannot provide educational opportunity to our children in “hard-to-fill” and non-existent content areas. This cost is too high for us to tolerate. The District continues to explore alternative options for recruiting and retaining staff for “hard-to-fill” positions, but still starts each school year with numerous unfilled teaching positions. The costs to the district include but are not limited to exhaustive recruitment costs, human resources costs, replacement costs, temporary placement costs, as well as the significant limitations on our global opportunity for student learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

**Statement of Compliance with Intent and Accountability:** The district has created a draft Action Plan, flow chart and side-by-side comparison for the SBE to review in understanding the purpose of the waivers and the methodology for implementing the requested waivers. The district request is to grant the four-prong waiver system on a two-year renewable pilot. The district agrees to have the approved agreements in the accreditation contract that will emphasize:

1. Higher CSAP performance beginning with reading and reaching 100% proficiency for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading students over a four year period of time by year 2010.
2. Creation of measurements aligned to the BOE end statements and 21<sup>st</sup> century learners and showing annual progress beginning 2007-2008.
3. Report progress to the SBE twice annually versus the current annual review beginning 2007-2008.

**Documentation of Public Hearing Process:** A public hearing is currently scheduled for October 3, 2006 at 7:00pm on the regular Board agenda before the Board of Education. Public notice has been published in the local newspaper 5 times prior to the Board meeting and weekly in the District’s Newslines. The Board of Education will be discussing a resolution on the waivers as part of the public hearing.

**Signatures Demonstrating Consent:** Douglas County School District has obtained signatures in support of the waivers from a majority of the appropriate accountability members, a majority of the affected licensed administrators and, a majority of affected school district teachers. The appropriate accountability members included the District Accountability Committee (DAC), whereby members of the DAC Steering Committee attended a Work Session with the Board of Education on August 1, 2006 where the waivers were discussed publicly; email correspondence was sent to all DAC members for input and feedback on the waivers in August; and, a meeting was scheduled for all DAC members on September 18 to further discuss the waivers.

Signatures in support of the waivers were obtained from a majority of licensed administrators in Learning Services and all building Principals as those affected by the waivers due to their role in supervising and evaluating teachers and by applicants eligible for the DCSD Teacher Endorsement and Licensure Program.

Signatures in support of the waivers were obtained from a majority of the American Federation of Teachers Executive Board as those affected by the waivers due to their role as exclusive representatives for all teachers and potential applicants in DCSD's Teacher Endorsement and Licensure Program.

The timeline for the SBE Request for Waivers includes:

1. Notice of public meeting-September 4 through October 3, at least 5 publications
2. Public meeting with District Accountability Committee (DAC)-August 1, September 18
3. Approval from District Administrators-September 14
4. Approval from Douglas County Federation-September 8
5. BOE approval of Learning Center Governing Board-September 22
6. BOE discussion/adoption of resolution-October 3
7. Present to the SBE-October 4

Attachments: Teacher Licensure/Endorsement and Professional in Residence Action Plan 2006-08