



*Alternative Principal Licensure Program
Handbook*

2019-2020

Revised
(July 2019)

Alternative Principal Licensure Program

The Alternative Licensure Program (ALP) is a state approved non-traditional licensure program offered by NW BOCES to eligible candidates only (see Eligibility Requirements below). The ALP is designed for the individual who would like to become a licensed principal in Colorado but has not completed a traditional administrator licensure program through a university. The program is a one-year or two year “on-the-job” principal preparation training experience.

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 principal program. A district or BOCES may choose to contract with an Institute of Higher Education that already provides an approved principal preparation program. An individual’s successful completion of an alternative principal preparation program leads to a recommendation for initial licensure by the Designated Agency providing the program.

Alternative Principal Licensure Defined/Qualifications

The state authorizes school districts to design and implement individualized alternative principal plans to enable persons from outside the educational community to develop the skills and experiences necessary to successfully lead a public school and to qualify ultimately for licensure as principals (State Statute 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. The individualized alternative principal plan shall be subject to approval by the Colorado State Board of Education. *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.*

An alternative 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 and who is completing an individual, district-based alternative principal plan that has been approved by the Department of Education (State Statute 22-60.5 [4.17]).

A school district may employ a person who holds an alternative principal authorization to perform the duties of a principal, assistant principal or principal-like duties in a school only when the person who holds the authorization is under the supervision of a Colorado professional principal license-holder. Roles other than principal or assistant principal (i.e., principal-like roles), such as Dean of Students, may qualify for the alternative principal authorization upon demonstration or documenting of the role’s alignment to the Principal Quality Standards.

An alternative principal authorization shall be valid for three years and may not be renewed.

Goals

The goal of the NW Colorado BOCES alternative principal licensure program is to increase access to effective school leaders for all staff and 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 principal licensure program will accomplish this goal by:

1. Providing a resource for schools and districts to place alternatively-licensed principals in hard to fill settings.
2. Supporting alternatively-licensed principals in developing the knowledge and skills they need to become successful school leaders.
3. Providing the types of supports for principals 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 being a principal
 - b. a professional network that includes both veteran colleagues and other new principals, locally and regionally
4. Designing and continually refining a program that meets the indicators from the state of Colorado for an alternative principal licensure program.
5. Facilitating activities that help new principals to reflect, apply learning, and make continuous progress on a journey toward masterful leadership.

CDE Application Process

Any individual who is interested in pursuing the alternative principal license 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 principal positions) and being informed on eligibility requirements will improve your chances of being hired by a school district.

Please note that Alternative Principal License 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. 4 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 principal position, the candidate and/or the employing school district must notify NW BOCES and if possible no later than August 1st for a fall start. A required meeting with the NW BOCES Executive Director and the superintendent/supervisor must be scheduled. During this meeting program requirements will be discussed and the candidate will complete and sign the Statement of Assurance (CDE document) and the NW BOCES Alternative Licensure Contract of Terms Agreement. The Executive Director will require a copy of your Statement of Eligibility from CDE. 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.

NW BOCES ALP Program Fees

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

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

NW BOCES program fees are the responsibility of the candidate, and will be collected by district payroll deduction unless other arrangements are made with the school district.

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

Requirements of an Alternative Principal Licensure Program:

To receive an alternative principal license, an applicant collaborates with a school district and the NW BOCES and must complete the following:

- A letter from the collaborating school district stating the school district's intention to employ the applicant as a principal, assistant principal, or to serve in a principal-like position upon issuance of the alternative principal license authorization.
- Completion of the required program requirements to include:
 - Design and implement a Alternative Principal Licensure Plan (submitted to CDE and NWBOCES)
 - Attend and participate in the NW BOCES Principal Learning Communities
 - Research, design and implement a school leadership project
 - Participate in the mentor/coach program offered by the NW BOCES
 - Complete professional reading throughout the program as required by participation in the Principal Learning Communities, School Leadership Project and to meet the needs of the alternative principal licensure candidate. A written summary of the professional reading is due at the end of the program and submitted to the NW BOCES Executive Director.

Alternative Principal Authorization Plan Rubric

(Quality Indicators)

An Alternative Principal Licensure candidate is required to develop and complete an Alternative Principal Licensure Plan Rubric. To have their alternative principal plan approved, entities must meet or exceed standard for all of the three quality indicators below. The

<u>Quality Indicators</u>	<u>Explanation/Examples</u>
1) Plan Curriculum	Alignment to Principal Quality Standards
2) Candidate Support	Supervision and mentoring by a professionally licensed principal and administrator; depth, breadth and frequency of support; struggling candidate protocol
3) Plan Evaluation	Data reporting to state agencies, growth and continual improvement processes, documentation of candidate progress, etc.

Principal Learning Communities

The Northwest BOCES facilitates a Principal Learning Community six times per year. Alternative Principal Licensure candidates are required to attend and participate in each of the principal learning community sessions. The Principal Learning Community sessions are facilitated by the NW BOCES Executive Director and two educational leadership consultants and former principals in Colorado. The topics/themes of the PLC sessions are based on the needs of the principals in the northwest region and current best practices and research in school leadership.

School Leadership Project

Each alternative principal licensure candidate must research, develop and implement a specific project or program which meets an identified need within their school and/or district. This project or program must meet the following criteria and receive prior approval from their superintendent/supervisor and the NW BOCES Executive Director:

Criteria:

- *Based upon at least one of the Colorado Quality Standards for Principals (indicated below)
- *Includes best practices in school leadership
- *Includes research and data to support the purpose, value and outcomes of the project
- *Is applicable and supports their current position and work in their school and/or district
- *completion of a description/reflection essay in June
- *participation in an end of project/program conversation with your supervisor/superintendent and the NW BOCES Executive Director.

Professional reading

Profession reading may include professional books, journals, TED Talks, and SEED PAK with a required written summary of your professional reading due by June 30, 2020. Professional reading requirements will include readings for each Principal Learning Community session.

Candidate Support Team

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

- The district superintendent and/or designee
- An assigned mentor
- NW BOCES executive director
- A network of principals in the northwest region

In addition, alternative licensure candidates are encouraged to develop their own network of support which may include other principals in their district, region and across Colorado.

Mentoring

Mentors are selected based on evidence and/or confirmation of exemplary school leadership and the ability to model and counsel the alternative principal in all areas of school leadership

A mentor's job is to support and coach the alternative principal licensure candidates to become successful principals. Having the support of a strong mentor is critical to helping create and retain high-quality principals. Districts and NW BOCES work collaboratively to identify mentors who will be most supportive to the alternative licensure principal.

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.

Program Contact

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

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



Appendix 4: Alternative Principal Licensure Program Completion Verification

The alternative principal 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	Candidate
Frequent meetings with mentor		x		x
Completion of the Alternative Principal Licensure Plan/Rubric	x		x	x
Completion of a School Leadership Project	x		x	x
Attendance at Principal Learning Communities	x		x	x
Completion of professional reading assignments			x	x
Completion and submission of all required CDE/BOCES documentation (Statement of Assurance, Statement of Eligibility, Alternative Licensure Program Completion Verification, Initial License application)	x	x	x	x



Signatures

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

Alternative Principal Licensure Candidate

Mentor

Superintendent or District Designee

NW BOCES Executive Director

Date: _____

For NW BOCES Office use only

Date alternative principal licensure program was completed: _____