



COLORADO
Department of Education

2022-23 Teacher of Record Program Report

Submitted to:

**Colorado House Education Committee
Colorado Senate Education Committee**

By:

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Executive Summary

The Teacher of Record (TOR) License and Program were created in 2018 (C.R.S. 22-60.5- 201(1)(a.5) and C.R.S. 22-60.5-208.7).ⁱ Designed to decrease the teacher shortage in Colorado by creating a unique pathway to licensure that meets the needs of individual communities, this program provides districts, boards of cooperative services (BOCES) and charter schools with a means to partner with traditional educator preparation programs to fill critical teacher shortages. The 2019-2020 school year was the first year for which there were TOR License holders and TOR Program participants.

Background

During the summer and fall of 2017, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) conducted an in-depth study of teacher shortages throughout the state.ⁱⁱ In response to documented teacher shortages, the legislature passed multiple initiatives to alleviate these shortages. These included the TOR License and Program, which creates a recruitment pathway for districts, BOCES and charter schools to hire individuals as teachers of record while completing the last 36 or fewer credit hours of their traditional undergraduate teacher preparation program.ⁱⁱⁱ This initiative aims to address teacher shortages by developing a recruitment and placement pipeline that enhances experiential training and preparation of teachers, customizes that training to the needs of individual communities and increases the diversity of teachers in public schools across the state.

Teacher of Record License and Program

Two components comprise the Teacher of Record pathway: a TOR License and a TOR Program Plan. The TOR pathway is designed for individuals who do not hold a bachelor's degree and are in an undergraduate traditional teacher preparation program at an approved Colorado institution of higher education (IHE).^{iv} An individual can become the teacher of record in their classroom while completing up to the remaining 36 credit hours of their teacher preparation program.

Individuals must have an approved TOR Program Plan to qualify for a TOR License. For the TOR Program Plan, the hiring district/BOCES/charter school and the IHE must collaboratively create an individualized program for the candidate to complete their teacher preparation program while employed as the teacher of record. The district/BOCES/charter school and IHE are responsible for providing support services and training. The TOR pathway allows local education agencies (LEAs) to recruit new teachers for critical shortage areas when no qualified applicants are available.

Participant Information

During the 2022-23 school year, there were 18 TOR Program participants. The 18 participants taught in 14 different school districts across the state and attended Colorado-approved teacher preparation programs at 10 IHEs. Seventeen of the 18 TOR participants completed their programs in the 2022-23 school year. Fourteen of those who completed their program plan to return to teach in the same district for the 2023-2024 school year. One program participant did not finish the program in one year and will continue the program in a different school district in the 2023-2024 school year.

Demographically, this year's cohort is the most diverse since the program's inception. Only 56% of TOR participants identified as white, non-Hispanic. Additionally, almost 28% of participants identified as male or non-binary, whereas less than 10% of the previous cohort identified as such. However, these changes are within the expected year-over-year variation given the small size of the TOR cohorts.



Conclusion

The Teacher of Record Program pathway allowed districts to fill teaching positions in critical shortage areas that otherwise may have remained vacant while providing customized training and preparation to participants. During the 2022-23 school year, the program increased the racial, ethnic and gender diversity of Colorado's educator workforce.



Introduction

Created during the 2018 legislative session to address the teacher shortage, the Teacher of Record Program established a new pipeline for the recruitment and placement of teachers (C.R.S. 22-60.5- 201(1)(a.5) and 208.7.) When a school district, BOCES or charter school needs a licensed teacher in a designated shortage area, and qualified applicants have yet to apply for the position, this pathway may be used to fill the position.

Designated Shortage Areas

Colorado's shortage areas are determined annually through the mandatory Educator Shortage Survey.^v The shortage areas identified for the 2022-2023 school year for which one was eligible to have a TOR License were^{vi}: Rural (all subject areas), Business/Marketing, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education, Early Childhood Education (ECE), Elementary Education, English Language Arts, Industrial Arts, Instructional Technology, Mathematics, Music, Physical Education, Science, Social Studies, Visual Arts and World Languages.

Teacher of Record License

The TOR License is designed for individuals who do not hold a bachelor's degree and are in an approved undergraduate traditional teacher preparation program at an institution of higher education.^{vii} Under the TOR License, individuals can be employed in a shortage area as the teacher of record in their classroom while completing up to the remaining 36 hours of their teacher preparation program. Individuals must have a CDE-approved TOR Program to be eligible for a TOR License.

Licenses are valid for two years and can be renewed if the holder does not complete a bachelor's degree due to unforeseen circumstances.

Teacher of Record Program

The TOR Program is an individualized one- or two-year program for candidates to complete their teacher preparation while employed as the teacher of record. Each TOR Program is created collaboratively between the hiring school district, BOCES, or charter school and the approved Colorado IHE where the individual is enrolled. Program plans must include direct supervision by mentor teachers, performance evaluations and preparation programs or other supports to help the teacher of record meet licensure requirements. The district/BOCES/charter school and the Colorado IHE provide such support services and training. CDE approves all TOR Programs that allow individuals to be eligible to apply for a TOR License.

Teacher of Record Program

Program Information

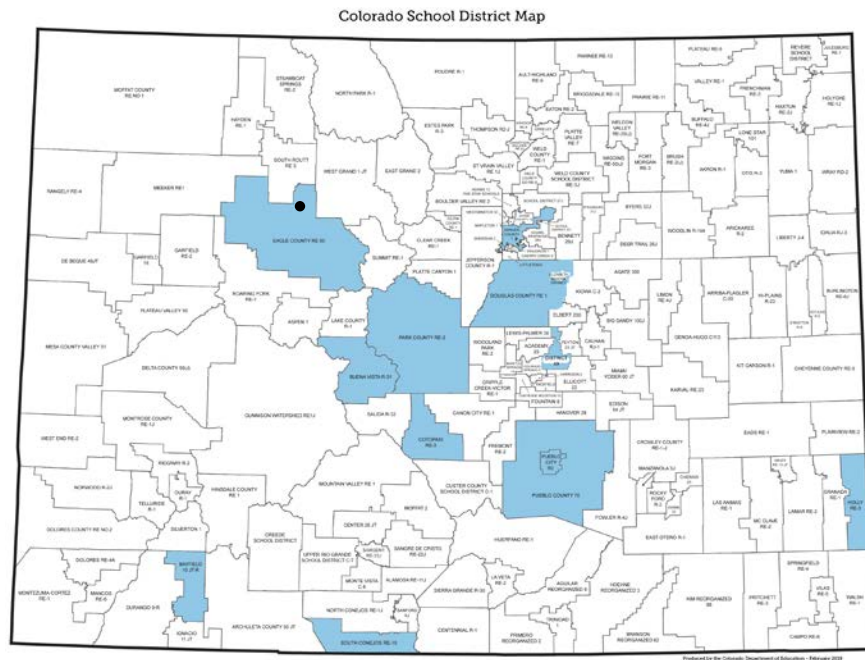
The 18 TOR Program participants attended ten different IHEs. They were employed by 14 LEAs, including 13 school districts and a charter school affiliated with the Colorado Charter School Institute. Of the 18 TOR

Teacher of Record Program

- The Teacher of Record Program and Teacher of Record License allows individuals to complete their teacher preparation program while employed as the teacher of record.
- To be eligible for a Teacher of Record License, an individual must:
 - Have no more than 36 credit hours remaining to complete their bachelor's degree requirements;
 - Have not completed the required fieldwork;
 - Participate in a Teacher of Record Program; and
 - Be employed in a position aligned to their licensure program and in which there is a critical teacher shortage.

participants, ten were in rural school districts.^{viii} Figure 1 below highlights the school districts with a TOR Program participant for the 2022-2023 school year.^{ix}

Figure 1. School Districts with TOR Participants in the 2022-23 School Year



The TOR Program may last up to two years. In the 2022-23 school year, 17 of the 18 participants completed their requirements in one year. This year the positions and shortage areas filled by program participants are:

- 5 Early childhood education (ECE) positions
- 4 elementary school positions (ES)
 - 3 in rural school districts
- 4 English Language Arts positions (7-12)
 - 1 in middle school (MS)
 - 3 in high school (HS) (1 in a rural school district)
- 1 Mathematics (MS) position
- 1 Music (K-12) position
- 1 World Languages (MS) position
- 2 Physical Education (PE) positions (MS & HS)
 - Both in rural school districts

Table 1 below details the TOR Program IHEs, school districts/charter entity, shortage and position areas, as well as school levels support by TOR participants in the 2022-23 school year.



Table 1. Program Information for Teacher of Record

Institute of Higher Education (IHE)	Number of TOR participants at the IHE	School District (SD) Name(s)	Shortage Area(s)	TOR License Endorsement	School Level(s)
Adams State University	2	Pueblo County District 70, South Conejos	ECE & Music	General Elementary Education, Music	Elementary, Middle & High School
Colorado Christian University	1	Elizabeth	ECE	General Elementary Education	Elementary School
Colorado Mountain College	4	Buena Vista, Charter School Institute, Eagle County, Park County RE-2	English Language Arts, Elementary School in a Rural SD, World Languages	General Elementary Education	Elementary School
Colorado State University	1	Falcon District 49	English Language Arts	Secondary English	High School
Colorado State University-Pueblo	5	Holly RE-3, Pueblo District 60	English Language Arts & PE in a Rural SD	General Elementary Education & Physical Education	Elementary, Middle & High School
Fort Lewis College	1	Bayfield	Secondary English in a Rural SD	English Language Arts	High School
Metro State University	1	Denver	ECE	General Elementary Education	Elementary School
Regis University	1	Douglas County	Math	Mathematics (7-12)	Middle School
University of Northern Colorado	1	Elizabeth	PE in a Rural SD	Physical Education	Elementary School
Western Colorado University	1	Cotopaxi	Elementary School in a Rural SD	General Elementary Education	Elementary School

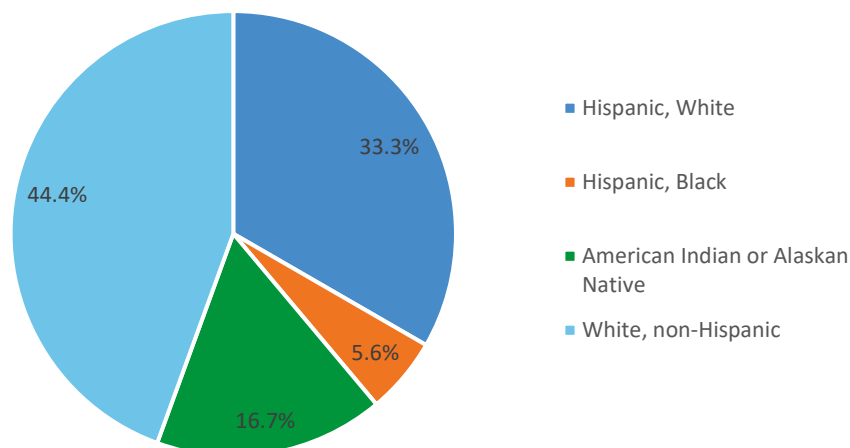
Participant Information

TOR Program participants' ages ranged from 21 to 34. Of the 18 program participants, 14 graduated from a Colorado high school, one is an international candidate from Mexico and three graduated from high school in a different state. Many of the 14 Colorado high school graduates teach near where they grew up. Six teach in the same district where they graduated, and one teaches about 40 minutes away from the district where they graduated. All but two participants in the TOR Program entered their program while in the final year of their undergraduate program.

At the beginning of the school year, half of TOR participants had only their student teaching requirements remaining. The other half had additional courses to complete in addition to student teaching. The number of credit hours participants needed to complete to finish their undergraduate program ranged from 7 to 32, with an average of 17 hours.

Whereas in previous years where most TOR participants identified as white, the 2022-23 TOR participants are the most racially/ethnically diverse since the program's inception. Fifty-six percent of participants identify as a race or ethnicity other than White, non-Hispanic. Figure 2 shows the racial and ethnic makeup of the participants. In addition to being more racially and ethnically diverse, the 2022-23 TOR participants also are more gender diverse, with almost 28% identifying as male or non-binary (compared to less than 10% of the previous cohort identifying as such). However, these changes are within the expected year-over-year variation given the small size of the TOR cohorts.

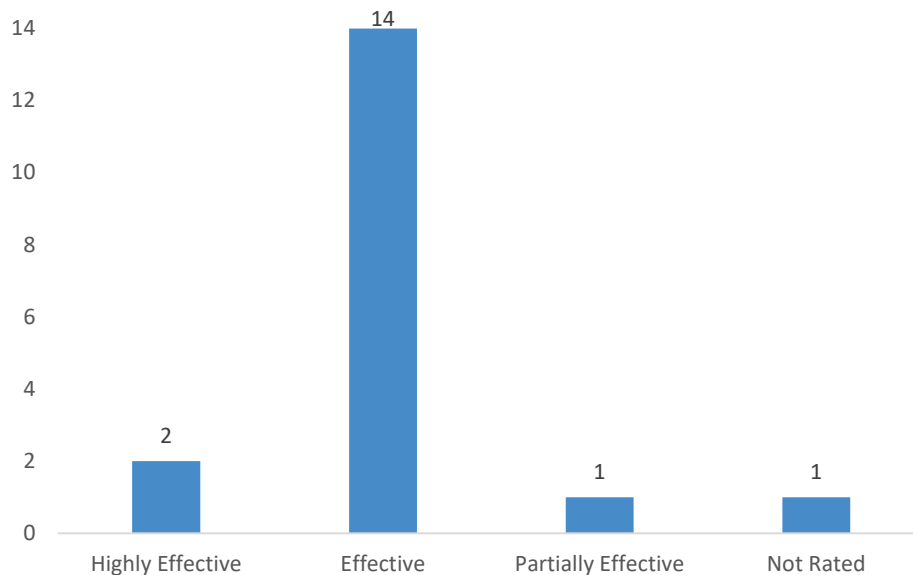
Figure 2. Race and Ethnicity of TOR Participants



Participant Outcomes

Of the 18 TOR Program participants in 2022-2023, 17 completed their TOR Program and their bachelor's degree within the defined period of their program. The one individual who did not complete their TOR Program in one year will be changing the school where they were employed and continuing as a TOR in the 2023-24 school year. As shown in Figure 3, the vast majority of 2022-2023 TOR Program participants were rated Effective or Highly Effective on their district performance evaluation.^x Fourteen of the 18 participants plan to return to teach in the same district for the 2023-2024 school year.

Figure 3. Effectiveness Ratings for TOR Participants



In the first three cohorts (2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22), 32 individuals received a TOR license. Of the 32, 18 have advanced their TOR license to an initial teacher license, 4 to a professional teacher license, and one to an interim license. Two remain on a TOR license. The other 7 TOR participants do not hold an active Colorado teaching credential. Twenty-two served as regular classroom teachers in Colorado during the 2022-23 academic year, one as a Title 1 teacher, one as instructional intern and one as a bilingual assistant. Of the 25 classroom teachers, 21 continued working in the same district where they completed their TOR Program, 3 moved school districts but are teaching in a rural school district and one moved to a large, front range school district.

TOR Program Participant and School Leader Feedback

To gather feedback from TOR participants and school leaders, CDE administered three surveys in 2022 and 2023, two to TOR current and former participants and one to school leaders who have most recently had a TOR educator in their building. The participant survey asked questions about how well prepared the participants' educator preparation programs made them to meet Colorado's Teacher Quality Standards and about their experience teaching. The school leaders' survey sought feedback on whether the Teacher of Record participant would continue teaching in their school, if the leader would have another TOR participant as a teacher and suggestions for how CDE could improve the program.



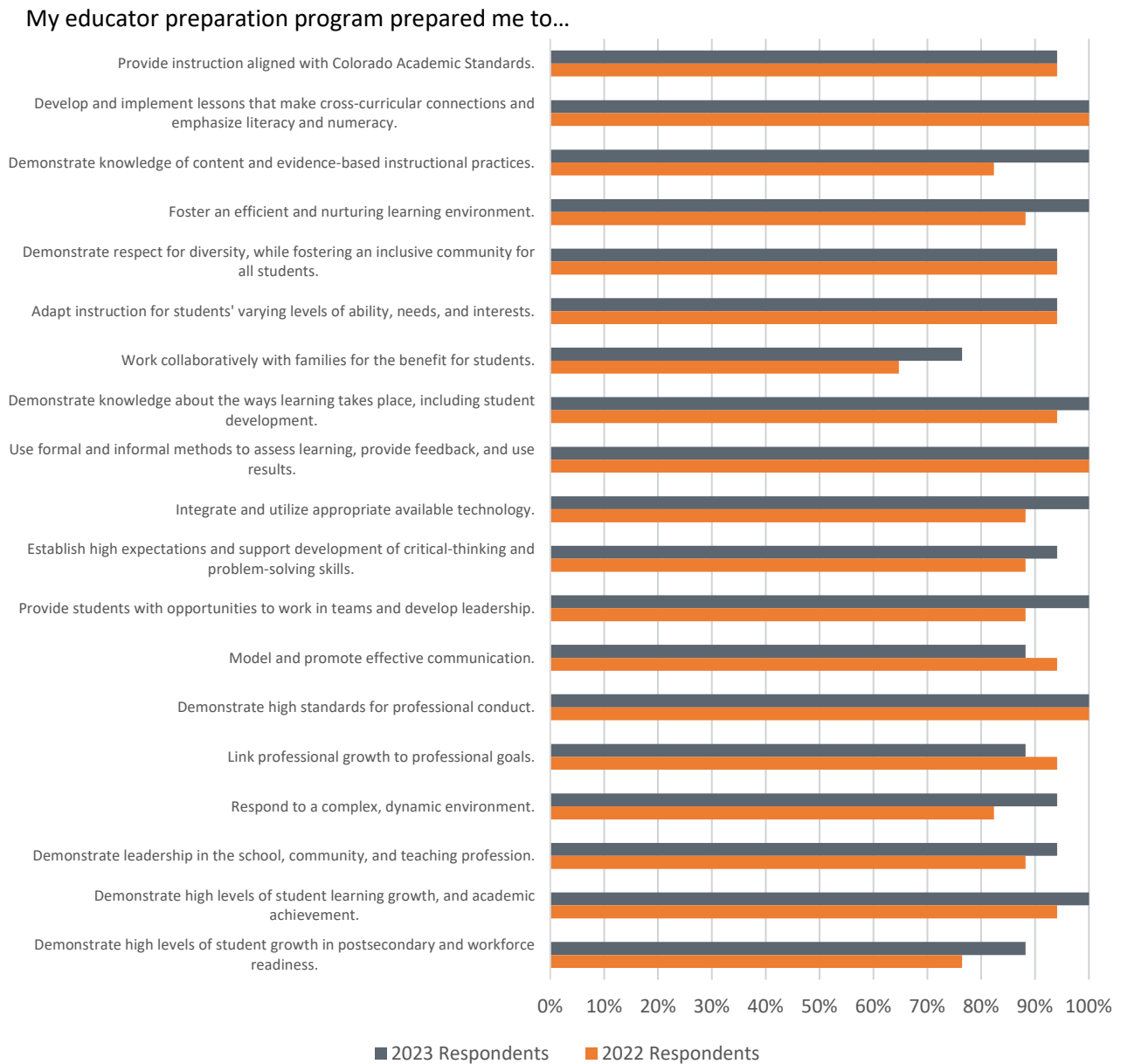
The 55 past and current TOR program participants, 2020-2023, have received a Survey Monkey link from CDE to a satisfaction survey. The first link was sent in June 2022 to 2020-2022 participants and resulted in 19 responses. The same survey link was sent to all TOR participants who had not yet responded for the years 2020-2022 and the entire 2022-2023 cohort. In total from among the 55 TOR educators, 36 responses to the survey were received, resulting in a response rate of 65%. The results from both surveys are reported below in Table 2 and Figure 4.

Table 2. TOR Participants Survey Results

	June 2023 Participant Survey Results (n=19)	July 2022 Participant Survey Results (n=17)
Said that they would choose the same preparation program again.	88%	82%
Said that they would choose to be a Teacher of Record again.	94%	81%
Overall support from school and school district	9 out of 10	8.3 out of 10
Overall support from preparation program	8 out of 10	7.4 out of 10
Formal mentor offered by school district	82.4%	75%
Formal mentor offered by preparation program	76.5%	73.3%

Overall, a majority of TOR participant respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their educator preparation programs prepared them to meet the Colorado Teacher's Quality Standards.^{xi} The one area where respondents felt least prepared is in working collaboratively with families. Only 76% and 65% strongly agreed or agreed that the educator preparation program prepared them to do so.

Figure 4. TOR Participants' perceptions of their educator preparation program
 (% Strongly Agree and Agree)



A survey link was also sent to the 18 school leaders with a TOR candidate in 2022-23 to get their feedback on the program. Fifteen of the 18 (83%) school leaders responded to the survey. Here are some important insights from the school leaders:

- One hundred percent of school leaders who responded were satisfied or very satisfied with the TOR candidate in their building.
- Almost three-quarters (73%) of school leader respondents said the TOR candidate is returning to teach in their school building next year. One leader stated that the TOR candidate was moving to another school district. The remaining three respondents did not know why their TOR candidates were not returning.
- Ninety-three percent of school leaders, all but one, said they would be willing to have another TOR teacher in their building in the future.



Open-ended feedback from school leaders included praise for the IHEs and CDE. One leader wrote, “I was pleased with the expanded license areas offered in the Teacher of Record program. It was a fairly easy process to follow. I hope to utilize this opportunity again in the future!” The one suggestion for improvement concerned more accountability for the teachers in the program to have their work reviewed.

Conclusion

The TOR Program allowed school districts to fill vacancies in critical shortage areas that may have otherwise remained vacant. By working in collaboration with ten higher education institutions, 14 different LEAs representing school districts across the state had one or more Teacher of Record participants in the classroom. This year, 18 participants filled various teaching shortage area positions and added racial, ethnic, and gender diversity to their schools.

Feedback from TOR participants and school leaders that had a TOR teacher in their building is positive. Most TOR participants would choose the pathway again, and 93% of school leaders would agree to have another TOR in their school building. The TOR License and Program continue to be an effective mechanism to help Colorado fill identified teacher shortage areas.



Appendix A: Participant Information Teacher of Record

	School District (SD)	Institute of Higher Education	Shortage Area(s)	TOR License/Endorsement	School Level(s)	Program Length
Participant A	Bayfield SD	Fort Lewis College	Rural	English Language Arts	Secondary	1 year
Participant B	Buena Vista SD	Colorado Mountain College	World Languages	General Elementary Education*	Middle	1 year
Participant C	Charter School Institute	Colorado Mountain College	Rural	General Elementary Education*	Elementary	1 year
Participant D	Cotopaxi CD	Western University	Rural	General Elementary Education	Elementary	1 year
Participant E	Holly RE-3	Colorado State University-Pueblo	Rural	Physical Education (K-12)	Middle	1 year
Participant F	Douglas County SD	Regis University	Mathematics (7-12)	Mathematics (7-12)	Middle	1 year
Participant G	Denver Public Schools	Metro State University	Early Childhood Education (PreK-12)	General Elementary Education	Elementary	1 year
Participant H	Eagle County	Colorado Mountain College	English Language Arts	General Elementary Education*	Middle	1 year
Participant I	Elizabeth	University of Northern Colorado	Rural	Physical Education (K-12)	Middle	1 year
Participant J	Elizabeth	Colorado Christian University	Early Childhood Education (PreK-3)	General Elementary Education	Elementary	2 years
Participant K	Falcon District 49	Colorado State University	English Language Arts	English Language Arts	Secondary	1 year
Participant L	Park County RE2	Colorado Mountain College	Rural	General Elementary Education *	Elementary	1 year



	School District (SD)	Institute of Higher Education	Shortage Area(s)	TOR License/ Endorsement	School Level(s)	Program Length
Participant M	Pueblo County SD 70	Adams State University	Early Childhood Education (PreK-12)	General Elementary Education *	Elementary	1 year
Participant N	Pueblo District 60	Colorado State University-Pueblo	English Language Arts	English Language Arts	Secondary	1 year
Participant O	Pueblo District 60	Colorado State University-Pueblo	Early Childhood Education (PreK-3)	General Elementary Education	Elementary	1 year
Participant P	Pueblo District 60	Colorado State University-Pueblo	Early Childhood Education (PreK-3)	General Elementary Education	Elementary	1 year
Participant Q	Pueblo District 60	Colorado State University-Pueblo	Early Childhood Education (PreK-3)	General Elementary Education	Elementary	1 year
Participant R	South Conejos RE-10 SD	Adams State University	Music	Music	K-12	1 year

*Participant also received a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education endorsement



Endnotes

ⁱ The Grow Your Own Educator Program was created with the Teacher of Record License as an alternative to the Teacher of Record Program. The Grow Your Own Educator Program, comprised of all the same requirements as the Teacher of Record Program, also provided grant funding for the individual's tuition in exchange for three years of service in the district/BOCES/charter school after program completion. However, no qualified candidates applied for the program, and the program was repealed during the 2020 legislative session.

ⁱⁱ [Report on Teacher Shortages Across the Nations and in Colorado](#) by Colorado Department of Higher Education and the Colorado Department of Education.

ⁱⁱⁱ See endnote i.

^{iv} The process of educator preparation program approval and re-authorization for institutions of higher education is carried out collaboratively by the Colorado Department of Higher Education and Colorado Department of Education and includes initial approval and re-authorization not more than once every five years. Initial approval and re-authorization are required for any institution offering educator preparation programs leading to endorsement in Colorado, including public and private entities. However, [Senate Bill 23-258](#) consolidated the process, and the authorization will be the responsibility of the Colorado Department of Education beginning in the 2023-24 school year. For more information, see <http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatortalent/preparation>.

^v Starting with the 2018-2019 school year, the Educator Shortage Survey is required by statute per Senate Bill 19-003 and to meet Federal requirements per 34 CFR 682.201(q), 34 CFR 674. 53(c) and 34 CFR 686.12.

^{vi} The Teacher of Record license cannot be issued with an endorsement in special education regardless of its identification as a shortage area due to requirements outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

^{vii} See endnote iv.

^{viii} For additional information on Colorado's Rural School designations, visit the [Commissioner's Rural Education Council](#).

^{ix} Stone Creek Charter School authorized by the Colorado Charter School Institute's denoted by a black dot and is placed in the Eagle County School District where the charter school is physically located, but not its precise location within the school district.

^x One TOR participant was hired mid-year and did not complete the evaluation cycle, so only 17 of 18 participants received an evaluation rating. To learn more about educator effectiveness ratings, see <https://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness>.

^{xi} Find more information about Colorado's Teacher Quality Standards, see <https://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/ee-tqs-ref-guide>.