



COLORADO

CERTIFICATION

Teacher licensing in Colorado is regulated by the Colorado Department of Education's Educator Licensing Unit. There are three levels of licensure in the state of Colorado. A Provisional License is the first license issued to an applicant after the completion of an approved certification program. This license is the standard license for entry into the profession and is valid for three years. It entitles the holder to perform services in any public school in Colorado that offers an approved induction program, and the license may be renewed if the holder has been unable to complete an approved program. Out-of-state teachers who are qualified to hold a standard certificate in their state may be eligible for a two-year temporary authorization if the required assessment has not been completed.

The second license issued to Colorado teachers is the Professional License. It is issued to a teacher who has successfully completed the induction program referred to under the Provisional License. A Professional License is valid for five years and is renewable upon completion of 6 hours of credit from an approved college or university or 90 clock hours of professional development. This license may be issued to an out-of-state applicant who is certified in another state and has completed at least three years of continuous, successful, evaluated experience in an elementary or secondary school.

The Master Certificate is a voluntary form of certification. It is held in conjunction with a Professional License and extends the validity of that license to seven years. In order to qualify for the Master Certificate an applicant must have a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certificate.

Alternative licensing in Colorado requires a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, appropriate subject matter knowledge for teaching in schools, and successful completion of content area assessment. It is valid for one year while the holder completes an alternative teacher program at an approved school, district, or institution of higher education.

No specific requirements are listed on Colorado's web site in regard to hours of course work. The Department of Education explains that additional requirements may exist depending on the candidate's area of specialization. Colorado's "Rules for the Administration of the Educator Licensing Act of 1991" states that in order to be endorsed in social studies education an applicant shall have completed a liberal arts program, the approved education program, and an approved program in social studies designed to develop knowledge and skills (performances) in specific areas. Candidates must have:

- ❖ completed an area of concentration in and demonstrated knowledge in at least one of the following areas: history, geography, political science, and economics;
- ❖ extensive preparation in and demonstrate knowledge in all of the following areas:
 1. history, including United States and world history, beyond a regional focus;
 2. geography, including cultural and physical geography; and
 3. political science, including United States government and comparative governments;
- ❖ economics, including economic institutions and macro and global economics;
- ❖ demonstrated knowledge in and understanding of the behavior/social sciences, including psychology, sociology, anthropology, and concepts integral to contemporary life; and
- ❖ the approved program may utilize interdisciplinary courses to fulfill these requirements.

STANDARDS

Standards for Teachers

Performance-based standards were created for teachers in Colorado to serve as a framework for initial teacher preparation programs in the state. The standards apply to candidates in programs offered by approved institutions of higher learning, candidates in alternative teacher programs, and candidates in teacher in residence programs. The following are the general performance-based standards.

- ❖ Standard One: Knowledge of Literacy
- ❖ Standard Two: Knowledge of Mathematics
- ❖ Standard Three: Knowledge of Standards and Assessment
- ❖ Standard Four: Knowledge of Content
- ❖ Standard Five: Knowledge of Classroom and Instructional Management
- ❖ Standard Six: Knowledge of Individualization of Instruction
- ❖ Standard Seven: Knowledge of Technology
- ❖ Standard Eight: Democracy, Educational Governance, and Careers in Teaching

Standard Four, referring to knowledge of content, states, “The elementary teacher is knowledgeable, in addition to literacy and mathematics, in the following content areas: civics, economics, foreign language, geography, history, science, music, visual arts, and physical education. Middle school and secondary content teachers shall be knowledgeable in literacy and mathematics and expert in their content endorsement area(s).”

Standards for Students

Colorado has published academic content standards in civics, economics, geography, and history. In the Colorado legislature, House Bill 93-1313 called for the creation of model content standards in the separate disciplines that comprise the social studies (history, geography, and civics were mentioned specifically, and there are also standards for economics). The Colorado Standards and Assessments Development and Implementation Council drew upon the work of the Bradley Commission on History in Schools to organize their standards. The council adopted the position that the disciplines in the social studies should be organized around the framework provided by history and geography. As integrative disciplines, history and geography serve as necessary links among the other social studies.

The Colorado Model Content Standards for History include both world and United States history and, according to the council, “may very well necessitate reorganization of the social studies.” The council made this statement because their standards include an investigation of the Americas as an important part of the study of history. While not diminishing the study of Western civilization and its influence in the culture of the United States, the council recognized the increasing interactions among all nations of the world. The council further explained that the six history standards can be divided into two categories. The first two standards address the study of history, the practice of chronological organization, and the methods of historical inquiry. The remaining four standards are content specific. Overlap exists, but this categorization is intended to assist the reader in better comprehending the standards. The council acknowledged its indebtedness to the work *Lessons from History: Essential Understandings and Historical Perspectives Students Should Acquire*. The Colorado Model Content Standards for History require that

- ❖ students understand the chronological organization of history and know how to organize events and people into major eras to identify and explain historical relationships (Chronology);
- ❖ students know how to use the processes and resources of historical inquiry (Historical Inquiry);
- ❖ students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time (Societies);
- ❖ students understand how science, technology, and economic activity have developed, changed, and affected societies throughout history (Science, Technology, Economics);
- ❖ students understand political institutions and theories that have developed and changed over time (Political Institutions); and

- ❖ students know that religious and philosophical ideas have been powerful forces throughout history (Religion and Philosophy).

Each standard contains a brief rationale. Specific expectations for students are listed under the main standard and then what students are expected to know and be able to do is further explained using examples for grade clusters. These clusters include K–4, 5–8, and 9–12. Suggested grade-level expectations for students grades K–8 are outlined in another document.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION/EXIT EXAM

No statewide requirements exist for high school graduation in Colorado. Requirements are decided upon by local agencies.

Exit Exam

There is no current required exit exam; however, for state accreditation, many districts are in the process of development/implementation of various history exams.

ASSESSMENT

Students in Colorado participate in the CSAP (Colorado Student Assessment Program). CSAP is based on Colorado’s Model Content Standards and is administered in reading and writing in grades 3–10, mathematics in grades 5–10, and science in grade 8. There is no evidence that assessment occurs in history or any other discipline in the field of social studies.