

TOPIC: RECOMMENDATION TO REVERSE THE CCHE DECISION THAT PROHIBITS INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION FROM OFFERING BACHELOR'S DEGREES IN ALL EDUCATION FIELDS

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I. SUMMARY

This action item recommends that the Commission reverse its March 24, 1986 decision not to recognize education majors at the bachelor's level in any education field. After reversing this decision for Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education at its April 5, 2012 and June 7, 2012 meetings, respectively, it was pointed out that some institutions offer bachelor's degrees in other education fields, like Special Education. This action would formally clarify that institutions of higher education may offer bachelor's degrees in any education field.

II. BACKGROUND

As the Commission will recall from its April 5 and June 7, 2012 meetings, prior to March 24, 1986 institutions of higher education were allowed to offer bachelor's degrees with majors in education fields. At that time, the CCHE was presented with a study that argued that degrees in early childhood education and elementary education, specifically, lacked academic rigor. Consequently, according to the CCHE meeting minutes from March 24, 1986, the Commission voted to require that:

At the bachelors level, teacher candidates must major in a subject field. The Commission directs governing boards to discontinue all bachelor level degrees identified for discontinuance in Attachment A except Music Education when accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music and with the exception of Physical Education when it is offered as a dual major and on the condition that all other requirements (liberal arts and sciences core curriculum and the concentration requirements in the major field of study are satisfied.) *CCHE Minutes, March 24, 1986, pg. 3*

Based on the feedback from Early Childhood and Elementary Education communities, the Commission (on April 5 and June 7, 2012) recently reversed its March 24, 1986 decision to prohibit bachelor's degrees in Early Childhood and Elementary Education. That action raised questions about the permissibility of bachelor's degrees in other fields of education. Institutional representatives have requested clarity from the Commission concerning its recognition of bachelor's degrees in all education fields. Institutions want the certainty that all education majors

that meet all educator preparation performance standards found in C.R.S. §23-1-121 will be permitted.

III. DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION ANALYSIS

A review of current baccalaureate programs in the state with “education” in the degree name (besides bachelor’s degrees in Early Childhood and Elementary Education) revealed the following programs:

- Music Education,
- Agricultural Education,
- Human Performance and Physical Education, and
- Special Education.

Department staff believe it is important to give the institutions peace of mind that these degrees are permissible and to give final closure to the issue stemming from the March 24, 1986 decision. Colorado Council of Deans of Education were invited to comment on the possibility of adverse effects of reversing the Commission’s decision concerning education degrees. None were identified. Rather, all responses from the deans and directors of education were in favor of this action.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Commission reverses its March 24, 1986 decision and allow institutions of higher education to offer bachelor’s degrees in all education fields.

VI. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Copies of all relevant statute, policy, and the CCHE Minutes from March 24, 1986 are on file in the Department of Higher Education.

VII. STATUTORY AUTHORITY

§22-60.5 C.R.S.
§23-1-121 C.R.S.