



**The West Virginia Department of Education  
Alternative Certification Program**

**TeachWV** 



West Virginia DEPARTMENT OF  
**EDUCATION**



**West Virginia Board of Education  
2021-2022**

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# The West Virginia Department of Education Alternative Certification Program

## Background

West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) Policy 5901, Section 12, and W.Va. Code §18A-3-1j provide the rules by which the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) became authorized on August 11, 2021, to begin administering an alternative certification program. This program recognizes the successful completion of coursework options offered by West Virginia institutions of higher education (IHE). To successfully acquire teacher certification, individuals meet all requirements of licensure as stated in WVBE Policy 5202 and pursuant to §18A-3-2a(a)(1)(B). The program is designed to provide an accelerated pathway for individuals who possess a bachelor's degree and meet minimal qualifications to complete WVDE-approved training and coursework options which are substantially aligned to the West Virginia Professional Teaching Standards to acquire a Provisional Professional Teaching Certificate.

## Approved Program Endorsements

The WVDE Alternative Certification Program may assist individuals in pursuing any eligible endorsement as described in the WV Licensure Testing Directory. To clarify, as you review the directory you will notice that some endorsements for general education specializations (Section A) and special education specializations (Section B) mention, "This endorsement is not eligible for enrollment in WVDE Alternative Certification Programs". All endorsements of the WV Licensure Testing Directory are eligible for use with the WVDE Alternative Certification Program, unless a message is provided in this manner to indicate that an endorsement is ineligible. Moreover, the WVDE may specify training requirements that are additional to approved coursework options for specific areas of endorsement.

## Eligibility Requirements for Program Enrollment

To become eligible for enrollment into the program, candidates must meet the following qualifications:

- » **A minimum of a bachelor's degree** from a regionally accredited institution of higher education
- » **A minimum 2.5 overall cumulative grade point average** (unless the coursework option requires a higher grade point average)
- » **Meet WVBE testing requirements for basic skills and content** or exemption criteria as described in WVBE Policies (5901 and 5202) and the [West Virginia Licensure Testing Directory](#) prior to enrollment. *Note: The WVDE Alternative Certification Program is focused on providing pedagogical coursework and training to individuals who already display adequate levels of basic skills and content knowledge.*
- » **Meet any additional eligibility requirements of the specific WVDE-approved coursework option as described on the WVDE's website** (e.g., a valid substitute teaching permit if the program requires a teacher performance assessment)
- » **Meet general requirements of WVBE Policy 5202, including successful outcomes on required criminal history checks.** *Note: Applicants must either be a United States citizen or provide a valid Permanent Resident Card, Employment Authorization Document (EAD), or work permit issued by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).*



## Program Enrollment

Individuals who seek to enroll in the program must first review the most current information on the Teach West Virginia website at <https://wvde.us/educator-development-and-support/preparation/state-approved-programs/> within the, “WVDE Alternative Programs” menu item. This website provides step-by-step guidance for preparing to enroll and selecting a WVDE approved coursework option. This includes directions for submitting required documentation to the WVDE (e.g., official transcripts, Praxis scores, evidence of any testing exemptions, etc.).

As each WVDE-approved coursework opportunity is unique and provided by a separate West Virginia IHE, it is essential that candidates review the summary information and contact representatives of the IHE for the specific option(s) as listed on the website for complete details. This includes that there may be additional requirements for eligibility to enroll into each specific WVDE-approved coursework option. Candidates must select one coursework option approved by the WVDE as part of the program’s enrollment application. Once individuals successfully enroll into the WVDE Alternative Certification Program, they will be provided with a notification of successful enrollment, which instructs program participants to next enroll with the IHE that is providing their coursework option for attending classes during the next available period.

**Important Notices:** *While the WVDE officially recognizes the successful completion of each approved coursework option as substantially aligned to the West Virginia Professional Teaching Standards and adequately pursuant to WVBE policies for the purposes of making an official recommendation for licensure, the WVDE is not responsible for any aspect of the participant’s experience with the coursework (e.g., course availability, enrollment, payment, clinical experiences, etc.). While successful enrollment into the WVDE Alternative Certification Program provides participants with enrollment eligibility for the WV IHE’s approved coursework option, it does not guarantee the participant will be successful in enrolling into the coursework. The entity providing coursework is responsible for all aspects of their coursework, including providing program participants with descriptions of each course’s expectations and requirements for successful completion of the class as stated in their application approved by the WVDE to provide a coursework option. Successful coursework completion is only one part of meeting the complete requirements of successfully completing the WVDE Alternative Certification Program and acquiring licensure as described in WVBE Policies.*

## Career Counseling and Informational Support:

Individuals who seek enrollment into the WVDE Alternative Certification Program and program participants may be provided career counseling and informational support from Educator Development and Support Services at the WVDE. Coordinators can assist individuals in understanding requirements of the WV Licensure Testing Directory which pertain to the endorsement area and programmatic levels they are seeking on licensure. The WVDE may also be able to provide participants with information about available test preparation resources and counseling on how to meet requirements of the Comprehensive Evaluation Report when applying for a teaching certification.



### **First-Class Full Time Permit Opportunities:**

Program participants may contact Coordinators in Educator Development and Support Services at the WVDE to receive information about first-class full time permit requirements. These permits may allow individuals to serve as the teacher of record in a classroom for a period of one-year when qualifying conditions exist (e.g., an area of critical need and shortage cannot be filled by a fully certified teacher, etc.), as described in WVBE Policy 5202. The application for a first-class full time permit identified for use with participants of this program is Form 1N and may be accessed on the Certification Services website.

### **Professional Education Testing Requirements:**

All program participants must meet requirements of the [WV Licensure Testing Directory](#) for successful completion of the program and as part of meeting complete qualifications for acquiring a Provisional Professional Teaching Certificate as described in WVBE Policy 5202. Program participants must refer to the directory to identify an appropriate test or exemption.

### **Comprehensive Evaluation Report:**

Successful program completion requirements include submitting qualifying evidence of the following:

- » **Successful completion of a WVDE-approved coursework option.** This includes meeting all requirements specific to the institution's course offerings (e.g., teacher performance other assessments, participation, activities, grades, portfolio, etc.).
- » **Meet WVBE testing requirements for professional education** (e.g., passing the appropriate Principles of Learning and Teaching exam or a qualifying exemption).
- » **Successful completion of any additional content specific trainings required by the WVDE Alternative Certification Program** (e.g., lab safety courses are required for science-based endorsements). *Note: Review the WVDE's website or contact the Office of Educator Development and Support for complete details.*

Upon meeting all requirements for successful program completion, participants must request a Comprehensive Evaluation Report to formally conclude their participation in the program.

**Participants who successfully complete the program may be issued a Comprehensive Evaluation Report with a rating of, "approved"**, which recommends issuance of a Provisional Professional Teaching Certificate.

**Participants who: 1. Fail to enroll and participate in required coursework of an approved option and/or content-specific required trainings within one year or 2. Meet coursework option and content-specific training requirements within their first year, but fail to meet professional education WVBE testing requirements within two years of enrollment will receive a rating of, "insufficient"** on the Comprehensive Evaluation Report recommending that a Provisional (Professional) Teaching Certificate not be issued, but that the candidate be allowed to seek reentry on one or more occasions in the future to an approved alternative program. **This rating represents unsuccessful WVDE program completion** and the participant will be officially disenrolled from the WVDE Alternative Certification Program.



**Participants who do not successfully complete the program for any other reason may receive a disapproved rating** on the Comprehensive Evaluation Report recommending that a Provisional (Professional) Teaching Certificate is not issued and that the candidate not be allowed to enter into the WVDE Alternative Certification Program, but not be prohibited from pursuing teacher certification through other approved programs for the education of teachers in this state. **This rating also represents unsuccessful WVDE program completion** and the participant will be officially disenrolled from the WVDE Alternative Certification Program.

Comprehensive evaluation reports will be provided to the program participant via e-mail and kept on file with the Office of Certification.

Applying for a non-transferrable Provisional Professional Teaching Certificate:

To receive a Provisional Professional Teaching Certificate, individuals who successfully complete the WVDE Alternative Certification Program with an approved rating on the Comprehensive Evaluation Report must complete Certification Services' application process, which includes submitting qualifying documented evidence of the following:

- » **Successful outcomes on required criminal history checks of WVBE Policy 5202**
- » **A minimum of a bachelor's degree** from a regionally accredited IHE
- » **A minimum 2.5 overall cumulative grade point average**
- » **Meet WVBE testing requirements for basic skills, content, and professional education** as described in WVBE Policies (5901 and 5202) and the West Virginia Licensure Testing Directory for eligible endorsement(s). *Note: Individuals who successfully complete the WVTPA as part of an approved coursework option must also pass the required Principles of Learning and Teaching exam.*
- » **Successful completion of WVDE-approved coursework options offered at West Virginia Institutions of Higher Education**
- » **Successful completion of any additional content specific trainings required by the WVDE Alternative Certification Program**
- » **An approved rating on the Comprehensive Evaluation Report** (form developed by the State Superintendent of Schools for recommendations)
- » **An official recommendation from the WVDE Alternative Certification Program's authorized official on application Form 20WV**

Upon meeting requirements for a non-transferrable Provisional Professional Teaching Certificate, individuals will need to successfully **complete a qualifying teacher performance assessment** as part of the requirements to apply for conversion into a transferrable Provisional Professional Teaching Certificate as described in WVBE Policy 5202. All official licensure recommendations will be provided by the WVDE and not the entity providing coursework.



## Program Summary



**1**

Candidates must verify basic skills proficiency by submitting qualifying test scores or meeting an exemption.



**2**

Candidates must verify content proficiencies by submitting qualifying test scores or meeting an exemption.



**3**

Candidates participate in the WVDE Alternative Certification Program to understand pedagogy and verify professional education knowledge through the successful completion of coursework/trainings and proficiency testing or a qualifying exemption.



**4**

Successful program participants become provisionally certified for classroom instruction in West Virginia and receive induction support through a beginning educator internship.

## Contact Information

Individuals who are seeking career counseling and informational support may contact WVDE Coordinator, Mr. Robert Mellace, in Educator Development and Support Services at [rmellace@k12.wv.us](mailto:rmellace@k12.wv.us).

Individuals seeking information about applying for licensure and certificates may contact Program Assistant, Mrs. Naomi Taylor, in Certification Services at [naomi.taylor@k12.wv.us](mailto:naomi.taylor@k12.wv.us).

West Virginia IHEs seeking to provide a WVDE-approved coursework option of the WVBE-approved, WVDE Alternative Certification Program may contact WVDE Director, Dr. Carla Warren, in Educator Development and Support Services at [carla.warren@k12.wv.us](mailto:carla.warren@k12.wv.us).





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West Virginia Superintendent of Schools

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