

The West Virginia Department of Education
Alternative Certification Program

TeachWV 



West Virginia DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

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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. 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 WVBE-approved testing, WVDE-approved training and coursework options which are substantially aligned to the West Virginia Professional Teaching Standards to acquire a 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 (IHE)
- » **A minimum 2.5 overall cumulative grade point average** unless the coursework option requires a higher grade point average or a qualifying exemption of the West Virginia Licensure Testing Directory is met with acceptance of the exemption by the approved course work option provider and per WVBE Policy 5901 requirements. *Note: At the time of publishing this document, WVBE Policy 5202 allows a Master's Degree with a 3.0 overall cumulative grade point average to supersede this requirement.*
- » **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 or within this document** (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 www.teachwv.com and this guidance document. These resources provide step-by-step instructions 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 WVDE approved coursework requirements and contact representatives of the IHE for the specific option(s) as listed on the website and in this document for complete details. 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 notified and instructed to enroll at the IHE providing their coursework option for 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 IHEs 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. No coursework other than the specific course(s) identified within the coursework provider's approved application, this document and on the WVDE website for this program may be accepted for successful completion of the approved coursework option. To further clarify, credits transferred from another institution of higher education cannot substitute for courses identified in this guidance document. Successful coursework option completion is only one part of meeting the 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 the Office of Educator Development and Support 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.



WVDE Approved Coursework Requirements:

All program participants are required to successfully complete WVDE-approved coursework. All approved coursework options have been evaluated by the WVDE to ensure substantial alignment to WVBE-approved pedagogical standards. While complete details of each option (cost, length/duration, availability, successful completion of requirements, etc.) may be acquired from the participating institution of higher education, there are presently five WVDE-approved coursework options described below:

Option 1: West Virginia University (WVU) Coursework

WVU provides approved online coursework aligned to a semester-based schedule. Program participants must hold at enrollment and maintain a minimum overall cumulative GPA of 2.5. Generally, candidates complete the program within 16 weeks, but the maximum amount of time allowed is one year. Program participants must successfully complete both C&I 602 and C&I 688, providing qualifying documentation with eligible grades (“B” or higher in each course) to the WVDE. For complete cost and coursework details, please contact Dr. Matthew Campbell at mpcampbell@mail.wvu.edu.

Option 2: Wheeling University (WU) Coursework

WU provides approved online coursework aligned to a semester-based schedule. Program participants must hold at enrollment and maintain a minimum overall cumulative GPA of 2.5 or a qualifying exemption as required by WVBE Policy 5202 and the WV Licensure Testing Directory. Generally, candidates complete the program within one semester, but the maximum amount of time allowed is one year. Program participants must successfully complete both EDUC-232 and either EDUC 309 or EDUC 310-311-312, providing qualifying documentation with eligible grades (“B” or higher in each course) to the WVDE. As WU provides plus and minus grades on official transcripts, please note that a “B-” grade is not considered adequate for successful completion of the approved coursework option. For complete cost and coursework details, please contact Dr. Dianna Vargo at dvargo@wheeling.edu.

Option 3: West Liberty University (WLU) Coursework

WLU provides approved online coursework aligned to a semester-based schedule. Program participants must at enrollment possess a minimum of a 2.5 overall cumulative GPA or a qualifying exemption as required by WVBE Policy 5202 and the WV Licensure Testing Directory and a valid Substitute Teaching Permit (unrestricted) issued by the WVDE. Participants must successfully complete EDUC 518 with a grade of “B” or higher to receive qualifying credit towards licensure and provide documentation to the WVDE. As part of successfully completing the course WLU requires that participants be fully responsible for meeting clinical experience requirements which include, but are not limited to, achieving a grade of 80% or higher on the West Virginia Teacher Performance Assessment (WVTPA). Program participants may not complete their teacher performance assessment and clinical placement(s) for the course outside of West Virginia. Participants must maintain a minimum 2.5 overall cumulative GPA through program completion. Generally, candidates complete the program within one semester, but the maximum amount of time allowed is one year. For complete cost and coursework details, please contact Dr. Nicole Ennis at nicole.ennis@westliberty.edu.



Option 4: Bluefield State University Coursework

BSU provides approved online coursework aligned to a semester-based schedule. Program participants must hold a valid Substitute Teaching Permit and successfully complete both EDUC 496 and EDUC 497, which includes a clinical experience with the West Virginia Teacher Performance Assessment, the Teaching Portfolio, and the Lesson Planning Portfolio with a grade of “C” or better. Participants are also rated on 4 observer evaluations (a weekly evaluation, professional dispositions, K-6 CAEP evaluation, and a WVPTS evaluation) and must receive ratings of “Emerging” or better in all categories. Qualifying documentation with eligible grades must be submitted to the WVDE. Program participants must hold at enrollment and maintain a minimum overall cumulative GPA of 2.5 or a qualifying exemption as required by WVBE Policy 5202 and the WV Licensure Testing Directory. Program participants may not complete their teacher performance assessment and clinical placement(s) outside of West Virginia. For complete cost and coursework details, please contact Dr. Terene Stiltner at tstiltner@bluefieldstate.edu.

Option 5: Glenville State University (GSU) Coursework

GSU provides approved online coursework. Program participants must successfully complete both EDUC 310 and EDSP 334, providing qualifying documentation with eligible grades (“C” or higher in each course) to the WVDE. Program participants must hold at enrollment and maintain a minimum overall cumulative GPA of 2.5. For complete cost and coursework details, please contact Mrs. Connie Stout O’Dell at connie.stout@glenville.edu.

The WVDE does not guarantee enrollment at the university and is not responsible in any way for participant experiences (e.g., financial or otherwise), related to their enrollment in an approved coursework option. The application process requires that all potential candidates verify they understand and agree to this aspect of the program from the beginning. The WVDE recognizes successful completion of a WVDE-approved coursework option as adequate for the purpose of making recommendations for the Professional Teaching Certificate.

Additional Content-Specific Training Requirements:

Presently, the program requires that all participants seeking science-based endorsements (for general science, physics, biology, chemistry, earth and space science, etc.) must successfully complete grade level appropriate Flinn lab safety training, provided at <https://labsafetyflinnsci.com/>. Program participants seeking science endorsements for 5-9 complete middle school training and those seeking 5-Adult and 9-Adult science endorsements complete high school training. Completion certificates may be submitted to the Office of Certification by e-mailing Mrs. Maddie Gibson at maddeline.gibson@k12.wv.us or the Office of Educator Development and Support by e-mailing Mr. Robert Mellace at rmellace@k12.wv.us. Additional training requirements, content specific or otherwise, may be added at any time and will be described either in updates to this document or the WVDE website.



First-Class Full Time Permit Opportunities:

Program participants may contact Coordinators in the Office of Educator Development and Support 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 at <https://wvde.us/certification>.

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 Professional Teaching Certificate as described in WVBE Policy 5202. Program participants may refer to the directory to identify an appropriate test or exemption. At the time of publishing this document, the effective WV Licensure Testing Directory identifies successful completion of a state-approved teacher performance assessment as an exemption from passing the required Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) exam and those assessments include the WVTPA.

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 assessment, other assessments, participation, activities, grades, portfolio, etc.). Submit official transcripts from the coursework provider to cert.transcripts.wvde@k12.wv.us.
- » **Meet WVBE testing requirements for professional education.** Passing the appropriate Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) exam or meeting a qualifying exemption as found in the WV Licensure Testing Directory. An official score report may be submitted to cert.transcripts.wvde@k12.wv.us.
- » **Successful completion of any additional content specific trainings required by the WVDE Alternative Certification Program.** At this time only science-based endorsements require additional content specific trainings, which presently are the Flinn lab safety courses aligned with the programmatic levels of the endorsement the participant is seeking. Prior to taking additional content specific trainings, please contact the Office of Educator Development and Support for complete details. Evidence of successful completion may be submitted to Mrs. Maddie Gibson at maddeline.gibson@k12.wv.us or the Office of Educator Development and Support by e-mailing Mr. Robert Mellace at rmellace@k12.wv.us.

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 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 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 Professional Teaching Certificate not be 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 Services.

Applying for a non-transferable Professional Teaching Certificate:

To receive a 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** (or qualifying GPA exemption of the WV Licensure Testing Directory in accordance with WVBE Policy 5901). *Note: At the time of publishing this document, WVBE Policy 5202 allows a master’s degree with a 3.0 overall cumulative grade point average to supersede this requirement.*
- » **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). As program participants were not required to pass the professional education test at enrollment, after completing all required coursework they must refer to requirements found in the West Virginia Licensure Testing Directory to know which of the Principals of Learning and Teaching tests they must pass as required for their endorsement’s programmatic level(s). *Note: At the time of publishing this document, the West Virginia Licensure Testing Directory identifies successful completion of a state-approved teacher performance assessment as an exemption from passing the required PLT exam and those assessments include the WVTPA.*



- » **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-transferable Professional Teaching Certificate, individuals may need to successfully **complete a qualifying teacher performance assessment** as part of the requirements to apply for conversion into a transferable Professional Teaching Certificate as described in WVBE Policy 5202. Qualifying teacher performance assessments are state-approved and identified in the WV Licensure Testing Directory. All official licensure recommendations will be provided by the WVDE and not the entity providing coursework.



Program Summary



1

Candidates possess a bachelor's degree and a 2.5 overall cumulative grade point average (unless a qualifying exemption of GPA exists in accordance with WVBE Policy 5901).



2

Candidates must verify preprofessional skills and 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 (e.g. Praxis PLT) testing or a qualifying exemption (e.g. WVTPEA)



4

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

Contact Information

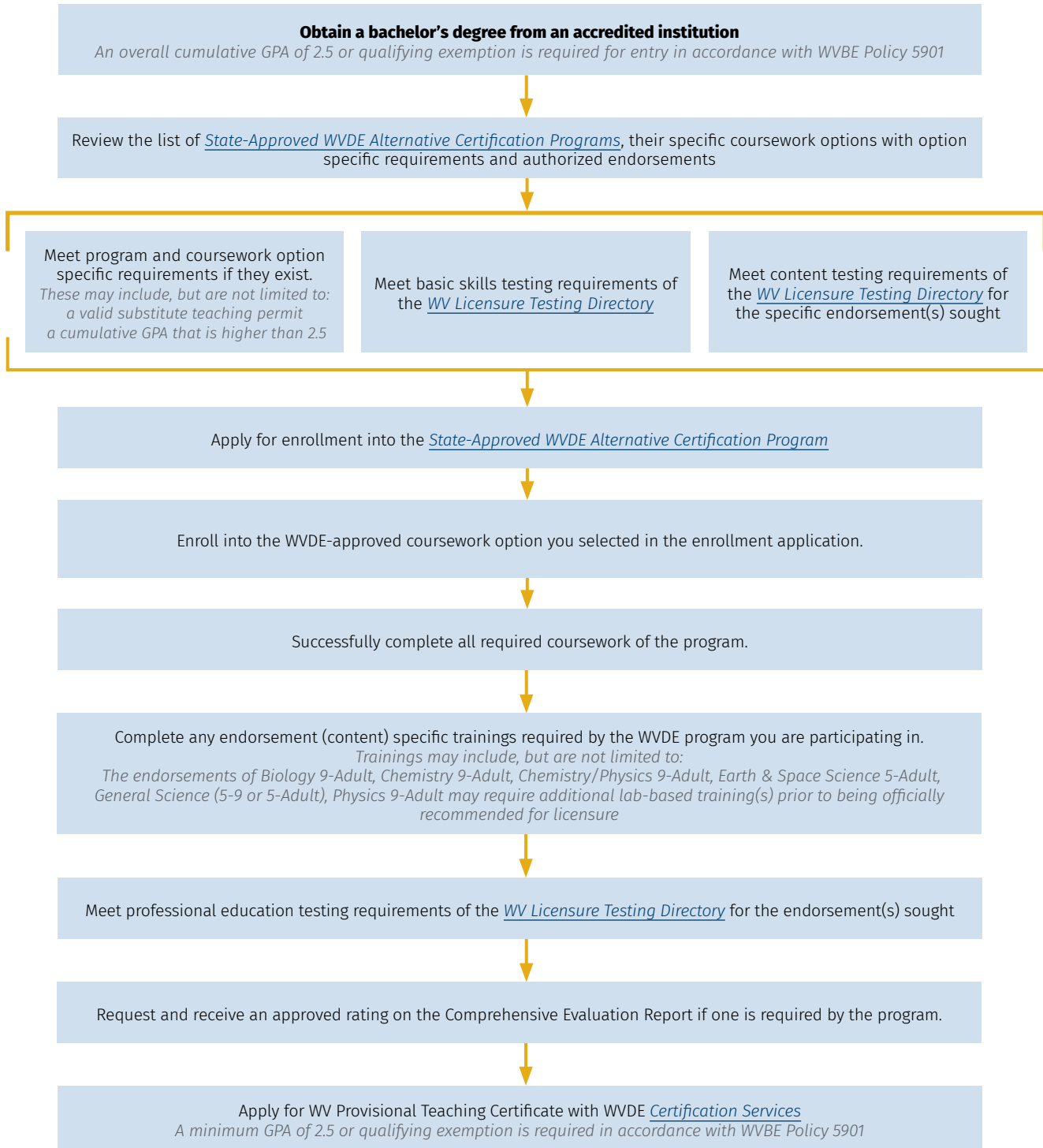
Individuals who are seeking career counseling and informational support may contact WVDE Coordinator, Mr. Robert Mellace, in the Office of Educator Development and Support at rmellace@k12.wv.us.

Individuals seeking information about applying for licensure and certificates may contact Program Assistant, Mrs. Maddie Gibson, in Certification Services at madeline.gibson@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 Officer, Dr. Carla Warren, in the Division of Educator Development and Support at carla.warren@k12.wv.us.



Under §18A-3-1j, the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) is authorized by the State Board of Education to provide alternative certification programs in cooperation with multiple West Virginia institutions of higher education to complete coursework approved by the WVDE. Approved programs including requirements for coursework and content-specific training(s) are available at [State-Approved WVDE Alternative Certification Programs](#).



Under §18A-3-1j, the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) is authorized by the West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) to provide alternative certification programs in cooperation with multiple West Virginia institutions of higher education to complete coursework approved by the WVDE. Approved programs including requirements for coursework and content-specific training(s) are available at [Approved WVDE Alternative Certification Programs](#).

- Hold a bachelor's degree with an overall cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or higher (unless a qualifying grade point average exemption exists per WVBE Policy 5901).
- Meet basic skills requirements of the [WV Licensure Testing Directory](#).
- Meet content requirements of the [WV Licensure Testing Directory](#) for the specific endorsement(s) sought.
- Review the list of approved programs, their specific coursework options and authorized endorsements identified in the [WV Licensure Testing Directory](#).
- Meet coursework option specific requirements if they exist (e.g. some coursework options may require a valid substitute teaching permit and/or a minimum GPA higher than 2.5).
- Apply for enrollment into a program.
- Complete any endorsement (content) specific trainings required by the WVDE program you are participating in (e.g., the endorsements of Biology 9-Adult, Chemistry 9-Adult, Chemistry/Physics 9-Adult, Earth & Space Science 5-Adult, General Science 5-9 or 5-Adult, Physics 9-Adult may require additional lab-based training(s) prior to being officially recommended for licensure).
- Successfully complete a [state-approved WVDE Alternative Certification program](#) including meeting all requirements of the specific coursework option and endorsement specific training(s).
- Meet professional education requirements of the [WV Licensure Testing Directory](#) for the endorsement(s) sought (e.g., Praxis PLT) or a qualifying exemption (e.g., WVTPA).
- [Request](#) and receive an approved rating on the Comprehensive Evaluation Report if one is required by the program, as described on the WVDE website.
- Apply for WV Professional Teaching Certificate with [WVDE Certification Services](#).

This is a summary of requirements and does not supersede West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) policy. Please review to WVBE policy for complete details.

Questions may be directed to 1-304-558-3119 or visit our website for more information.

Notes



Michele L. Blatt
West Virginia Superintendent of Schools

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