



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 must meet all requirements of licensure as stated in WVBE Policy 5202 and pursuant to §18A-3-2a(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 [West Virginia Licensure Testing Directory](#). To clarify, the directory identifies some endorsements for general education specializations (Section A) and special education specializations (Section B) as ineligible by mentioning, "This endorsement is not eligible for enrollment in WVDE Alternative Certification Programs". All teacher endorsements of the WV Licensure Testing Directory are eligible for use with the WVDE Alternative Certification Program, unless a message is provided in this or a similar manner to indicate that an endorsement is ineligible. Program participants may only pursue one eligible endorsement area at a time. Moreover, the WVDE can 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. *Notes: 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. Grade point averages cannot be rounded up to meet criteria.*
- » **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. *Notes: The WVDE Alternative Certification Program is focused on providing pedagogical coursework options and training to individuals who already display adequate levels of basic skills and content knowledge. If you are an individual with disabilities, please contact the test providers for guidance on available accommodations.*
- » **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.). Eligibility for program enrollment is determined by the WVDE.

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. Eligibility for coursework enrollment is determined by the IHE.

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, in-classroom experiences, etc.). While successful enrollment into the WVDE Alternative Certification Program provides participants with eligibility to pursue enrollment 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. If you are an individual with disabilities, please contact the coursework provider for guidance on available accommodations.

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 Preparation 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. Courses of approved options are provided exclusively by West Virginia IHEs and not the WVDE. Coursework of approved options that is successfully completed may be recognized by the WVDE as acceptable for program completion and making recommendations for initial teacher certification. 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 IHE, there are presently six WVDE-approved coursework options described below:

Option 1: West Virginia University (WVU) Coursework

WVU provides approved online coursework. Program participants must hold at enrollment and maintain a minimum overall cumulative GPA of 2.5. 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, contact Dr. Matthew Campbell at mpcampbell@mail.wvu.edu.

Option 2: Wheeling University (WU) Coursework

WU provides approved online coursework. 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 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, contact Dr. Dianna Vargo at dvargo@wheeling.edu.

Option 3: West Liberty University (WLU) Coursework

WLU provides approved online coursework. 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 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 in-classroom 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 in-classroom experiences for the course outside of West Virginia. For complete cost and coursework details, contact Dr. Sherri Theaker at sherri.theaker@westliberty.edu.



Option 4: Bluefield State University (BSU) Coursework

BSU provides approved online coursework. 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 must hold and maintain a valid Substitute Teaching Permit (unrestricted) and successfully complete both EDUC 496 and EDUC 497, which includes in-classroom experience requirements 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. Program participants may not complete their teacher performance assessment and in-classroom experiences outside of West Virginia. For complete cost and coursework details, contact Dr. Terene Stiltner at tstiltner@bluefieldstate.edu.

Option 5: Glenville State University (GSU) Coursework

GSU provides approved online coursework. Program participants must hold at enrollment and maintain a minimum overall cumulative GPA of 2.5. 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. For complete cost and coursework details, contact Connie Stout O’Dell at connie.stout@glenville.edu.

Option 6: Marshall University (MU) Coursework

MU provides approved online coursework. 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 must successfully complete both CI 549 and CI 623, providing qualifying documentation with eligible grades (“B” or higher in each course) to the WVDE. For complete cost and coursework details, contact Dr. Teresa Eagle at thardman@marshall.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://labsafety.flinnsci.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 at certification.wvde@k12.wv.us or the Office of Educator Preparation by e-mailing 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 Preparation or Office of Certification 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 Office of Certification website at <https://wvde.us/certification>.

Program Completion

Professional Education Testing Requirements:

Upon successful completion of an approved coursework option, all program participants must meet professional education testing requirements of WVBE Policy 5202 and the WV Licensure Testing Directory for successful completion of the program and to acquire a Professional Teaching Certificate. At the time of publishing this document, program participants of an approved coursework option not requiring the WVTPA must pass the appropriate Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) exam including most of the grade levels of the sought endorsement or meet a qualifying exemption of the directory to seek a nontransferable Professional Teaching Certificate. Program participants of an approved coursework option requiring the WVTPA must receive passing scores on the assessment to seek a transferable Professional Teaching Certificate. All program participants seeking a Professional Teaching Certificate (nontransferable or transferrable) with the Elementary Education K-6 endorsement who begin coursework on or after July 1, 2024, must also pass Praxis test 5205: Teaching Reading Elementary Education for successfully meeting program completion and initial teacher certification requirements.

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., 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 PLT exam or passing the WVTPA as part of approved coursework or meeting a qualifying exemption as found in the WV Licensure Testing Directory. As previously mentioned, Elementary Education K-6 participants must pass Praxis test 5205: Teaching Reading Elementary Education. 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 Preparation for complete details. Evidence of successful completion may



be submitted to the Office of Certification at certification.wvde@k12.wv.us or the Office of Educator Preparation by e-mailing Robert Mellace at rmellace@k12.wv.us.

Upon meeting all requirements for successful program completion, participants request a [Comprehensive Evaluation Report](#). This report formally concludes 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 unenrolled from the WVDE Alternative Certification Program. The WVDE will notify program participants on or shortly after the date on which they have met unenrollment criteria, as program coordinators typically send notifications on a quarterly basis. Notification will allow a minimum of 15 calendar days for the participant to provide documented evidence of meeting requirements before insufficient ratings are issued on the report.

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. If programmatic changes are made to the program and a participant has not applied for initial teacher certification within one year, any changes in requirements of the program and approved coursework must be met prior to making application for a Professional Teaching Certificate.



Obtaining a Professional Teaching Certificate

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 the Office of Certification's 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 and 5202. *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.* Grade point averages cannot be rounded up to meet criteria.
- » **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). To become program participants, candidates were required to meet basic skills and content testing requirements or qualifying exemption criteria at enrollment. At the time of publishing this document, to meet professional education testing requirements, program participants of an approved coursework option not requiring the WVTPA must pass the appropriate Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) exam including most of the grade levels of the sought endorsement or meet a qualifying exemption of the directory to seek a nontransferable Professional Teaching Certificate. Program participants of an approved coursework option requiring the WVTPA must receive passing scores on the assessment to seek a transferable Professional Teaching Certificate. All program participants seeking a Professional Teaching Certificate (nontransferable or transferrable) with the Elementary Education K-6 endorsement who begin coursework on or after July 1, 2024, must also pass Praxis test 5205: Teaching Reading Elementary Education for successfully meeting program completion and initial teacher certification requirements.
- » **Successful completion of a WVDE-approved coursework option offered at a West Virginia Institution 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 certification recommendations)
- » **An official recommendation from the WVDE Alternative Certification Program's authorized official on application [Form 20WV](#)**

Applying for a transferable Professional Teaching Certificate:

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 based on successful program completion will be provided by the WVDE and not the entity providing coursework.

Important notes: As the WVDE Alternative Certification Program's purpose is to provide an accelerated pathway for qualifying individuals to acquire initial teacher certification for West Virginia schools, the WVDE does not provide recommendations for licensure in other states to program participants or completers.



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, 5202 and the WV Licensure Testing Directory).



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 or WVTPA) testing.



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 Robert Mellace in the Office of Educator Preparation at rmellace@k12.wv.us.

Individuals seeking information about applying for licensure and certificates may contact the Office of Certification by e-mailing certification.wvde@k12.wv.us.

West Virginia IHEs seeking to provide a WVDE-approved coursework option of the WVBE-approved, WVDE Alternative Certification Program may contact Dr. Traci Tuttle in the Office of Educator Preparation at traci.tuttle@k12.wv.us.

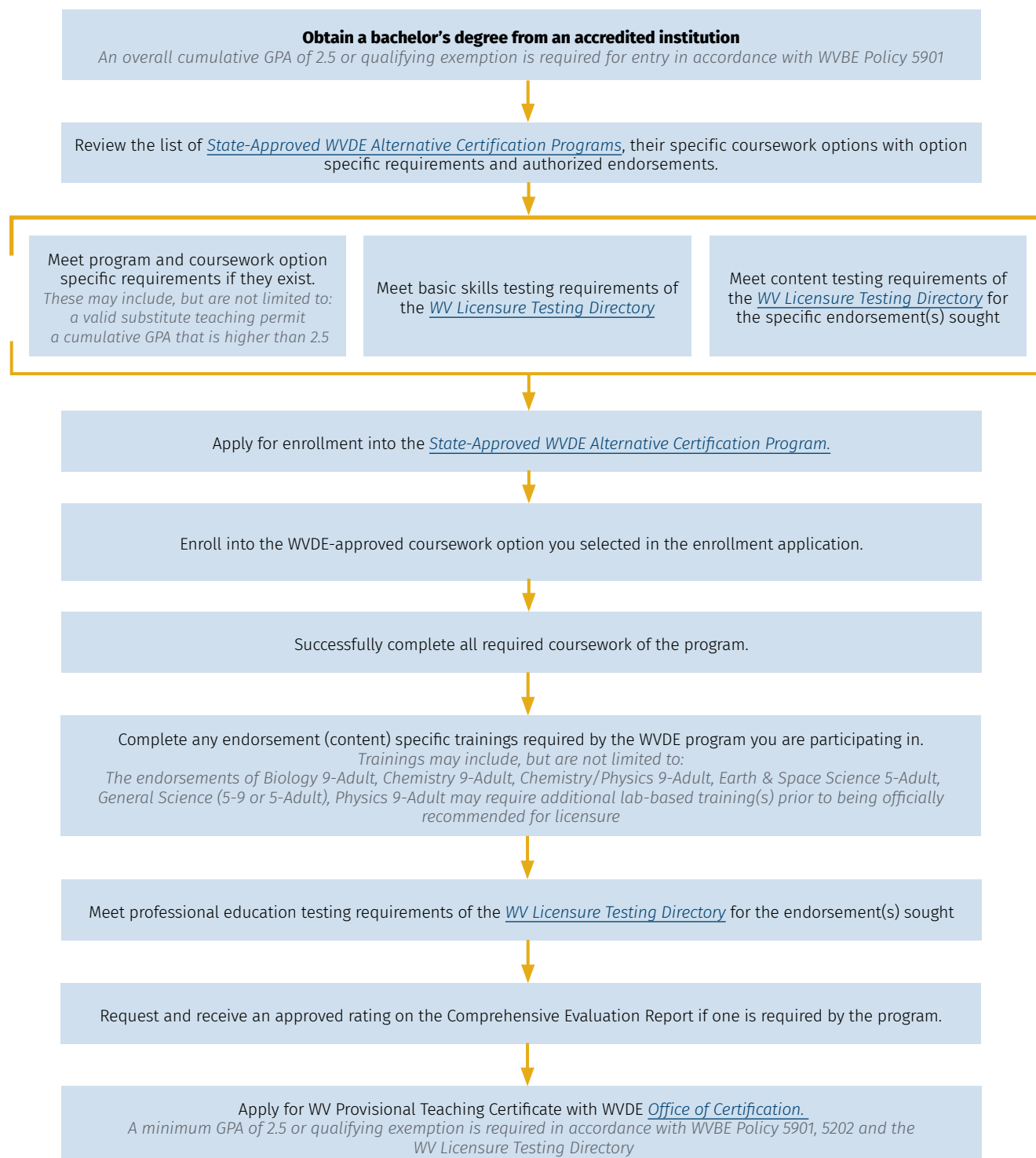


Appendix



OPTION 4 WVDE Alternative Certification Programs

Under §18A-3-1j, the WVDE is authorized by the 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 [State-Approved WVDE Alternative Certification Programs](#).



Under §18A-3-1j, the WVDE is authorized by the 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, 5202 and the WV Licensure Testing Directory).
- ☐ 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 WVTPA).
- ☐ [Request](#) and receive an approved rating on the Comprehensive Evaluation Report.
- ☐ Apply for WV Professional Teaching Certificate with [WVDE Office of Certification](#).

This is a summary of requirements and does not supersede WVBE policy. Please review WVBE policy for complete details.

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

Notes



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wvde.us