

290-3-3-.60 Alternative Teacher Preparation Organizations. In accordance with Act 2022-239, the State Board of Education modifies its policies relative to the certification of teachers to permit the issuance of a professional educator certificate to those qualified individuals who successfully complete an approved alternative teacher preparation pathway through a Board approved alternative teacher preparation organization. In addition to any provisional certificates and professional certificates issued to individuals graduating from approved teacher preparation programs at regionally accredited senior institutions of higher learning, the Board authorizes the issuance of a Professional Educator Certificate by the State Superintendent of Education to a qualified individual who completes an approved alternative teacher preparation pathway through a Board approved alternative teacher preparation organization. Alabama colleges and universities may also participate in this alternative preparation pathway.

(1) Database of Approved Organizations. The State Superintendent of Education shall maintain a database of Board approved alternative teacher preparation organizations as a means for screening, recruiting, and recommending for certification qualified individuals to teach in the public K-12 schools.

(2) Proposals. A proposal justifying the request for review and approval of any alternative teacher preparation pathway shall be required.

(a) The proposal shall define the need for the pathway, purposes it is to serve, and assumptions upon which it is based.

(b) Each proposal shall be built upon a statement of the objectives of the specific pathway or area of certification for which the organization seeks approval, the proposed curriculum, and a description of any internship to be required. The objectives shall be based on current research-based practices and trends and comply with all Alabama State Department of Education requirements.

(3) Organization Minimum Requirements. To request approval, the alternative teacher preparation organization, at a minimum, shall provide all the following for review:

(a) Documentation of successful program operation.

(b) Documentation of successful operation in a minimum of five other states. This requirement does not apply to Alabama colleges and universities with State-Approved Programs.

(c) Meet both of the following:

1. The organization is accredited through the Council of Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).

2. The organization must successfully complete the ALSDE's continuous improvement process.

(d) Submit a timetable which establishes the starting and ending dates of the pathway, as well as the sequence of activities as they are to occur.

(e) Submit documentation of comprehensive program outlining all required courses and modules.

(f) Provide documentation outlining how compliance with teacher preparation requirements of the Alabama Literacy Act and Alabama Numeracy Act will be attained, measured, and continuously updated.

1. Alabama Literacy Act: This requirement is applicable only for programs preparing teachers for early childhood P-3, elementary education K-6, or collaborative special education teacher K-6 programs. Chapter 6G of Title 16 Code of Ala. 1975.

(i) Arrange for candidate to complete 9 semester hours of coursework in the Science of Reading.

(ii) Coursework must be completed at a regionally accredited senior institution.

(iii) The regionally accredited senior institution must be CAEP accredited.

(iv) A grade of B or better in each course is required.

2. Alabama Numeracy Act: As provided in Act 2022-249.

(g) Provide details outlining a comprehensive mentoring program for participants.

(h) Provide details outlining supports provided to struggling candidates for up to two years after pathway completion for struggling candidates, at the request of the employing superintendent.

(i) Provide a statement agreeing to submit to evaluation checkpoints, pathway reports, or any other additional information as requested by the ALSDE.

(4) Applicant Requirements. It is the Alternative Teacher Preparation Organization's responsibility to ensure all candidates meet the Applicant Requirements. Applicants for educator certification through an alternative teacher preparation pathway shall:

(a) Successfully complete a criminal history background check through the ALSDE.

(b) Verify US citizenship or lawful presence in the United States.

(c) Hold a bachelor's or higher degree from a senior institution that was regionally accredited at the time the degree was earned.

(i) If a bachelor's degree is used, the individual must have at least a 2.50 overall GPA.

(ii) If a master's degree is used, the individual must have at least a 3.0 overall GPA.

(d) Attain the current required passing score on a subject area assessment(s), Foundations of Reading assessment, and pedagogy examination, as provided in the Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program (AECAP) as a precondition of certification.

(e) Successfully complete modules/coursework developed by the organization.

(f) Successfully teach in an Alabama public K-12 school for a minimum of one full scholastic year while completing the pathway and holding the alternative certificate for this approach.

(g) Receive a successful recommendation from a Board approved alternative teacher preparation organization and Alabama local education agency to be issued the Class B Professional Educator Certificate.

(5) Approval. Alternative Teacher Preparation Organization proposals shall be approved by the Board prior to implementation and only for the duration of approval of existing pathways. However, continuation of the pathway for more than two years is contingent upon the organization's submission of a progress report at the end of the second year and the approval of the report by the State Department.

(6) Requirements for Program Continuing Evaluation. The pathway shall include provisions for continuing evaluation based on performance criteria to be met by candidates completing the pathway. The evaluation plan shall include the definition and specification of kinds of evidence that will be gathered and reported. The evaluation shall provide information to identify areas of the pathway that need strengthening and the support needed for further development. An annual report shall be provided to the ALSDE, Educator Preparation Section.

(7) Progress Report. The approved organization shall submit a progress report at the end of two years. Receipt of the report will be acknowledged by the ALSDE. If a review of the report indicates areas of concern, the ALSDE reserves the right to enforce measures of improvement.

(8) Summative Report. The approved organization shall continue until the performance of its first pathway completers have been evaluated during their first three years of employment in Alabama public schools in the roles for which they were prepared.

(9) Requirements for Review of Proposed Pathways or Significant Change. The chief administrative officer of the approved organization shall submit a written request to the State Superintendent of Education for a review, indicating any new specific pathway(s) to be developed for review and/or the pathway(s) affected by significant changes in program approval rules.

(10) Termination and Reviews.

(a) If pathway enrollment is low and a minimum number of teachers have been prepared within a three (3) year period, State Department of Education staff will prepare a resolution to terminate pathway approval and submit the resolution to the Board.

(b) The State Superintendent of Education reserves the right to require special reviews in response to the adoption of new standards, significant changes to existing standards, or evidence of contributing factors.

(c) The Board reserves the right to rescind its approval of an approved organization at any time for a stated purpose.

(11) Certificate Renewal. An individual who holds a Professional Educator Certificate pursuant to this section may apply for certificate renewal and shall in all other respects be treated in the same manner as an individual who holds a Professional Educator Certificate granted upon successful completion of traditional, in-state teaching certification programs.

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Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§ 16-3-16, 16-23-14, Act 2022-239.

History: New 4-13-23; effective 6-15-23;