

Staff for Kentucky’s Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) have developed the following guidance to help districts navigate the recent changes to certification procedures to comply with federal and state law.

Substitute Teaching Certificates

[House Bill 387](#) from the 2024 legislative session amended [KRS 161.102](#) to create and set the education requirements for three certificates for substitute teaching: a one-year emergency certificate for substitute teaching, a five-year certificate for substitute teaching, and a 10-year certificate for substitute teaching.

- **One-year emergency certificate for substitute teaching**
 - Candidates shall have a minimum of a high school diploma or equivalent.
 - There is no minimum grade point average (GPA) requirement.
 - Application is initiated by the district and requires:
 - District verification of a high school diploma or equivalency; and
 - Applicants to complete the character and fitness review.
 - Automated issuance process.
 - This certificate is not valid for full-time employment or the replacement of the teacher of record for more than 20 consecutive days.
 - These certificates will be issued at a Rank V and are limited to employment with the district that initiated the application.
- **Five-year certificate for substitute teaching**
 - Candidates shall have a minimum of a bachelor’s degree from a regionally or nationally accredited postsecondary institution.
 - There is no minimum GPA requirement.
 - Application can be started by the applicant or the district, and requires:
 - Official transcripts evidencing completion of a bachelor’s degree;
 - Applicants to complete the character and fitness review; and
 - \$15 application fee.
 - These certificates will be issued at a Rank IV and are valid for employment statewide.
- **Ten-year certificate for substitute teaching**
 - Candidates shall hold, or previously held, a valid Kentucky or out-of-state teaching certificate.
 - Application can be started by the applicant or the district.
 - For candidates who currently hold, or previously held, a Kentucky teaching certificate or statement of eligibility, the application requires:
 - Completion of the character and fitness review; and
 - \$15 application fee.
 - For candidates who currently hold, or previously held, an out-of-state teaching certificate or statement of eligibility, the application requires:
 - A copy of the out-of-state teaching certificate;

- Official transcripts showing completion of a four-year teacher preparation program and a minimum of a bachelor's degree;
- Completion of the character and fitness review; and
- \$15 application fee.
- These certificates will be issued at the rank corresponding to the holder's regular teaching certificate and are valid for employment statewide.

In addition to the updates to the substitute teaching certificates, the Emergency Non-Certified Personnel Program is no longer active. Substitute teachers must hold a valid Kentucky teaching certificate or meet one of the three certification options above to serve as a substitute teacher.

Emergency Teaching Certification

[KRS 161.100](#) and [16 KAR 2:120](#) set the requirements for an emergency teaching certificate. Under Section 612(a)(14) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and [34 C.F.R. § 300.156](#), special education teachers must have obtained full state certification as a special education teacher or be participating in a qualifying alternative route to certification. Emergency certificates do not meet the requirements for special education teachers under the IDEA. **Kentucky will no longer issue emergency certificates for teaching exceptional children or interdisciplinary early childhood.** Emergency teaching certificates may be issued for all other areas of teacher certification.

- Emergency Certification may be used when there are no qualified applicants for a teaching vacancy.
- Requires a bachelor's degree with a 2.5 cumulative GPA or 2.75 on the last 30 hours.
- Regulation now allows for two issuances of an emergency certificate and an additional issuance in two circumstances:
 - Issued for less than 50% of teaching schedule; or
 - Request submitted after Feb. 15.
- Districts can also request a waiver of the regulation in extraordinary circumstances.

Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification

Section 6 of [Senate Bill 265](#) amended [KRS 161.048](#), which establishes the alternative routes to teacher certification. While no changes were made to the Option 4 or Option 9 alternative routes to teacher certification, changes were made to the following alternative routes:

- **Option 1: Exceptional Work Experience**
 - This route no longer requires an offer of employment.
 - The application is no longer restricted to districts; it can be initiated by an applicant or district.
 - Candidates must meet the following requirements:
 - Documentation of all education and exceptional work experience in the area in which certification is being sought;

- Bachelor's degree or a graduate degree with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale or a minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale on the last 30 hours of credit completed; and,
 - Academic major or a passing score on the academic content assessment in the area in which certification is being sought.
 - Qualifying candidates will receive a two-year provisional certificate.
 - The candidate must then complete one year of teaching experience and have a recommendation from the employing school district for issuance of the professional certificate.
 - District recommendation is just verifying one year of teaching experience and does not require the district to offer continued employment.
 - This route is not available for special education, elementary or preschool.
- **Option 3: College Faculty**
 - This route no longer requires an offer of employment.
 - The application is no longer restricted to districts; it can be initiated by an applicant or district.
 - Candidates must meet the following requirements:
 - Minimum of a master's or doctorate degree from a regionally accredited institution;
 - An academic major in the area which certification is sought; and
 - Five years of full-time postsecondary teaching experience or the equivalent 90 semester hours (can be a combination of part-time, adjunct or full-time teaching experience).
 - Qualifying candidates will receive a two-year provisional certificate.
 - The candidate must then complete one year of teaching experience and have a recommendation from the employing school district for issuance of the professional certificate.
 - District recommendation is just verifying one year of teaching experience and does not require the district to offer continued employment.
 - This route is not available for special education, elementary or preschool.
- **Option 5: Veterans of Armed Services**
 - Candidates must meet the following requirements:
 - Minimum of a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution;
 - Cumulative 2.75 GPA or a 3.0 on the last 30 hours completed;
 - An academic major or a passing score on the academic content assessment in the area which certification is sought; and
 - Honorably discharged from active duty – DD 214 or NG Bureau Form 22 required – or current member of Armed Services with six or more years of honorable service, including Reserves, National Guard or active duty.
 - Qualifying candidates will receive a two-year provisional certificate.

- The candidate must then complete one year of teaching experience and have a recommendation from the employing school district for issuance of the professional certificate.
 - District recommendation is just verifying one year of teaching experience and does not require the district to offer continued employment.

- **Option 6: University-Based Route**
 - No changes to district procedures for the temporary provisional certificate.
 - Candidates must meet the following requirements:
 - Minimum of a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution;
 - Cumulative 2.75 GPA or a 3.0 on the last 30 hours completed;
 - Enrollment in an approved Option 6 program at a college/university; and
 - An offer of employment in the area for which certification is sought.
 - Qualifying candidates will receive a one-year temporary provisional certificate that may be renewed up to four times.
 - Temporary provisional certificates for teaching exceptional children or interdisciplinary early childhood education are limited to two renewals to comply with federal IDEA requirements.
 - The candidate must complete the preparation program, pass the certification assessments and have a recommendation from the employing school district for issuance of the professional certificate.
 - District recommendation is just verifying one year of teaching experience and does not require the district to offer continued employment.

- **Option 7: Institute Route**
 - This route no longer requires an offer of employment.
 - The application is no longer restricted to districts; it can be initiated by an applicant or district Candidates must meet the following requirements:
 - Minimum of a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution;
 - Cumulative 2.75 GPA or a 3.0 on the last 30 hours completed; and,
 - Enrollment in an approved Option 7 institute.
 - Qualifying candidates will receive a one-year temporary provisional certificate that may be renewed up to four times.
 - Temporary provisional certificates for teaching exceptional children or interdisciplinary early childhood education are limited to two renewals to comply with federal IDEA requirements.
 - The candidate must complete the institute, pass the certification assessments, complete one year of teaching experience and have a recommendation from the employing school district for issuance of the professional certificate.
 - District recommendation is just verifying one year of teaching experience and does not require the district to offer continued employment.

- **Option 8: Teach for America Appalachia**
 - This route no longer requires an offer of employment.
 - The application is no longer restricted to districts; it can be initiated by an applicant or district Candidates must meet the following requirements:
 - Bachelor's degree;
 - Successful completion of the summer training institute and ongoing professional development required by Teach for America, and,
 - Passing score on the academic content assessment in the area in which certification is being sought.
 - Qualifying candidates will receive a one-year temporary provisional certificate that may be renewed up to two times.
 - The candidate must complete the program, pass the certification assessments, complete one year of teaching experience and have a recommendation from the employing school district for issuance of the professional certificate.
 - District recommendation is just verifying one year of teaching experience and does not require the district to offer continued employment.

Probationary Endorsements and Teaching Certificates

The EPSB issues probationary certificates for teaching exceptional children, interdisciplinary early childhood education and middle school. Probationary endorsements are issued for gifted and talented and English as a second language. Candidates must hold a Kentucky teaching certificate to be eligible for a probationary certificate or endorsement.

The EPSB has approved amendments to the regulations for probationary endorsements and teaching certificates to remove the requirement that an applicant complete coursework prior to issuance and allow issuance of the probationary certificate or endorsement upon enrollment in an approved educator preparation program for the appropriate certification. This will help already certified teachers obtain a probationary certificate or endorsement sooner.

The amendment also removes the reference to an offer of employment to comply with the requirement in [Senate Bill 265](#) that issuance of a certificate not be dependent upon a job offer. Removing the offer of employment means that districts will no longer be required to show that a “qualified teacher” is not available for the position.

- **Probationary Endorsement for Teachers for Gifted Education**
 - This no longer requires an offer of employment.
 - The application is no longer restricted to districts; it can be initiated by an applicant or district Candidates must meet the following requirements:
 - Holds a Kentucky teaching certificate; and
 - Enrolled in an approved educator preparation program for the endorsement for teachers of gifted education.

- Qualifying candidates will receive a two-year probationary endorsement. The endorsement is not eligible for renewal.
- The candidate must complete the program and pass the content assessment for issuance of the full endorsement.

- **Probationary Endorsement for Teachers for English as a Second Language**
 - This no longer requires an offer of employment.
 - The application is no longer restricted to districts; it can be initiated by an applicant or district Candidates must meet the following requirements:
 - Holds a Kentucky teaching certificate; and
 - Enrolled in an approved educator preparation program for the endorsement for teachers of English as a second language.
 - Qualifying candidates will receive a two-year probationary endorsement. The endorsement is not eligible for renewal.
 - The candidate must complete the program and pass the content assessment for issuance of the full endorsement.

- **Probationary Certificate for Teachers of Exceptional Children and Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education**
 - This no longer requires an offer of employment.
 - The application is no longer restricted to districts; it can be initiated by an applicant or district Candidates must meet the following requirements:
 - Holds a Kentucky teaching certificate; and
 - Enrolled in an approved educator preparation program for teaching exceptional children or interdisciplinary early childhood education.
 - Qualifying candidates will receive a one-year probationary certificate that may be renewed up to two times upon recommendation of the educator preparation provider.
 - The candidate must complete the program and pass the content assessment for issuance of the professional certificate.

- **Probationary Certificate for Middle School Teachers**
 - This no longer requires an offer of employment.
 - The application is no longer restricted to districts; it can be initiated by an applicant or district Candidates must meet the following requirements:
 - Holds a Kentucky teaching certificate; and
 - Enrolled in an approved educator preparation program for teaching middle school.
 - Qualifying candidates will receive a one-year probationary certificate that may be renewed up to two times upon recommendation of the educator preparation provider.

Certification Procedure Updates

July 2024



- The candidate must complete the program and pass the content assessment for issuance of the professional certificate.

Questions regarding these changes or any of the certification procedures should be directed to the Certification Branch in the Office of Educator Licensure and Effectiveness at kdelicensure@education.ky.gov.