

**161.048 Legislative findings -- Alternative certification program -- Purpose -- Options -- Testing and eligibility requirements -- Salary schedule.**

- (1) The General Assembly hereby finds that:
  - (a)
    1. There are persons who have distinguished themselves through a variety of work and educational experiences that could enrich teaching in Kentucky schools;
    2. There are distinguished scholars who wish to become teachers in Kentucky's public schools, but who did not pursue a teacher preparation program;
    3. There are persons who should be recruited to teach in Kentucky's public schools as they have academic majors, strong verbal skills as shown by a verbal ability test, and deep knowledge of content, characteristics that empirical research identifies as important attributes of quality teachers;
    4. There are persons who need to be recruited to teach in Kentucky schools to meet the diverse cultural and educational needs of students; and
    5. There should be alternative procedures to the traditional teacher preparation programs that qualify persons as teachers;
  - (b) There are hereby established alternative certification program options as described in subsections (2) to (10) of this section;
  - (c) It is the intent of the General Assembly that the Education Professional Standards Board inform scholars, persons with exceptional work experience, and persons with diverse backgrounds who have potential as teachers of these options and assist local boards of education in implementing these options and recruitment of individuals who can enhance the education system in Kentucky;
  - (d) The Education Professional Standards Board may reject the application of any candidate who is judged as not meeting academic requirements comparable to those for students enrolled in Kentucky teacher preparation programs; and
  - (e) The Education Professional Standards Board shall promulgate administrative regulations establishing standards and procedures for the alternative certification options described in this section. If the certification option requires employment prior to certification, the procedures shall establish a process for candidates to obtain an eligible for hire letter from the Education Professional Standards Board.
- (2) Option 1: Certification of a person with exceptional work experience. An individual who has exceptional work experience and has been offered employment in a local school district shall receive a one (1) year provisional certificate with approval by the Education Professional Standards Board of a joint application by the individual and the employing school district under the following conditions:
  - (a) The application contains documentation of all education and work experience;
  - (b) The candidate has documented exceptional work experience in the area in which certification is being sought; and
  - (c) The candidate possesses:

1. A bachelor's degree or a graduate degree;
2. A minimum cumulative grade point average of two and seventy-five hundredths (2.75) on a four (4) point scale or a minimum grade point average of three (3.0) on a four (4) point scale on the last thirty (30) hours of credit completed, including undergraduate and graduate coursework from a nationally or regionally accredited postsecondary institution; and
3. An academic major or a passing score on the academic content assessment in the area in which certification is being sought by the applicant as designated by the Education Professional Standards Board.

The candidate shall participate in the teacher internship program under KRS 161.030. After successful completion of the internship program, the candidate shall receive a professional certificate and shall be subject to certificate renewal requirements the same as other teachers with a professional certificate.

- (3) Option 2: Certification through a local school district training program. A local school district or group of school districts may seek approval for a training program. The state-approved local school district training program is an alternative to the college teacher preparation program as a means of acquiring teacher certification for a teacher at any grade level. The training program may be offered for all teaching certificates approved by the Education Professional Standards Board, including interdisciplinary early childhood education, except for specific certificates for teachers of exceptional children. To participate in a state-approved local school district alternative training program, the candidate shall possess:
  - (a) A bachelor's degree or a graduate degree;
  - (b) A minimum cumulative grade point average of two and seventy-five hundredths (2.75) on a four (4) point scale or a minimum grade point average of three (3) on a four (4) point scale on the last thirty (30) hours of credit completed, including undergraduate and graduate coursework from a nationally or regionally accredited postsecondary institution;
  - (c) A passing score on the academic content assessment in the area in which certification is being sought by the applicant as designated by the Education Professional Standards Board. To be eligible to take an academic content assessment, the applicant shall have completed a thirty (30) hour major in the academic content area or five (5) years of experience in the academic content area as approved by the Education Professional Standards Board; and
  - (d) An offer of employment in a school district which has a training program approved by the Education Professional Standards Board.

Upon meeting the participation requirements as established in this subsection, the candidate shall be issued a one (1) year provisional certificate by the Education Professional Standards Board. The candidate shall participate in the teacher internship program under KRS 161.030. After successful completion of the internship program, the candidate shall receive a professional certificate and shall be subject to certificate renewal requirements the same as other teachers with a professional certificate.

- (4) Option 3: Certification of a professional from a postsecondary institution: A candidate who possesses the following qualifications may receive a one (1) year provisional certificate for teaching at any level:
- (a) A master's degree or doctoral degree in the academic content area for which certification is sought;
  - (b) A minimum of five (5) years of full-time teaching experience, or its equivalent, in the academic content area for which certification is sought in a regionally or nationally accredited institution of higher education; and
  - (c) An offer of employment in a school district which has been approved by the Education Professional Standards Board.

The candidate shall participate in the teacher internship program under KRS 161.030. After successful completion of the internship program, the candidate shall receive a professional certificate and shall be subject to certificate renewal requirements the same as other teachers with professional certificates.

- (5) Option 4: Certification of an adjunct instructor. A person who has expertise in areas such as art, music, foreign language, drama, science, computer science, and other specialty areas may be employed as an adjunct instructor in a part-time position by a local board of education under KRS 161.046.
- (6) Option 5: Certification of a veteran of the Armed Forces. The Education Professional Standards Board shall issue a statement of eligibility, valid for five (5) years, for teaching at the elementary, secondary, and secondary career technical education levels to a veteran of the Armed Forces who was honorably discharged from active duty as evidenced by Defense Department Form 214 (DD 214) or National Guard Bureau Form 22 or to a member of the Armed Services currently serving with six (6) or more years of honorable service, including Reserves, National Guard, or active duty. The candidate shall possess:
- (a) A bachelor's degree or graduate degree;
  - (b) A minimum cumulative grade point average of two and seventy-five hundredths (2.75) on a four (4) point scale or a minimum grade point average of three (3) on a four (4) point scale on the last thirty (30) hours of credit completed, including undergraduate and graduate coursework from a nationally or regionally accredited postsecondary institution; and
  - (c) An academic major or a passing score on the academic content assessment in the area in which certification is being sought by the applicant as designated by the Education Professional Standards Board.

Upon an offer of employment by a school district, the eligible veteran shall receive a one (1) year provisional certificate with approval by the Education Professional Standards Board of a joint application by the veteran and the employing school district. During this year, the veteran shall participate in the teacher internship program under KRS 161.030. After successful completion of the internship program, the veteran shall receive a professional certificate.

- (7) Option 6: University alternative program. With approval of the Education Professional Standards Board, a university may provide an alternative program that enrolls students in a postbaccalaureate teacher preparation program concurrently

with employment as a teacher in a local school district. A student in the alternative program shall be granted a one (1) year provisional certificate and shall participate in the Kentucky teacher internship program, notwithstanding provisions of KRS 161.030. A student may not participate in the internship program until the student has successfully completed the assessments required by the board. The one (1) year provisional certificate may be renewed four (4) additional years, and shall be contingent upon the candidate's continued enrollment in the preparation program and compliance with all requirements established by the board. A professional certificate shall be issued upon the teacher candidate's successful completion of the program, the internship program requirements, and all academic content assessments in the specific teaching field of the applicant as designated by the Education Professional Standards Board.

(8) Option 7: Certification of a person in a field other than education to teach in elementary, middle, or secondary programs. This option shall not be limited to teaching in shortage areas. An individual certified under provisions of this subsection shall be issued a one (1) year provisional certificate, renewable for a maximum of four (4) additional years with approval of the Education Professional Standards Board.

(a) The candidate shall possess:

1. A bachelor's degree with a declared academic major in the area in which certification is sought or a graduate degree in a field related to the area in which certification is sought;
2. A minimum cumulative grade point average of two and seventy-five hundredths (2.75) on a four (4) point scale or a minimum grade point average of three (3) on a four (4) point scale on the last thirty (30) hours of credit completed, including undergraduate and graduate coursework from a nationally or regionally accredited postsecondary institution;
3. A passing score on the GRE or equivalent as designated by the Education Professional Standards Board. A candidate who has a terminal degree shall be exempt from the requirements of this subparagraph; and
4. A passing score on the academic content assessment in the area in which certification is being sought as designated by the Education Professional Standards Board.

(b) Prior to receiving the one (1) year provisional certificate or during the first year of the certificate, the teacher shall complete the following:

1. For elementary teaching, the individual shall successfully complete the equivalent of a two hundred forty (240) hour institute, based on six (6) hour days for eight (8) weeks. The providers and the content of the institute shall be approved by the Education Professional Standards Board. The content shall include research-based teaching strategies in reading and math, research on child and adolescent growth, knowledge of individual differences, including teaching exceptional children, and methods of classroom management.
2. For middle and secondary teaching, the individual shall successfully

complete the equivalent of a one hundred eighty (180) hour institute, based on six (6) hour days for six (6) weeks. The providers and the content of the institute shall be approved by the Education Professional Standards Board and shall include research-based teaching strategies, research on child and adolescent growth, knowledge of individual differences, including teaching exceptional children, and methods of classroom management.

- (c) The candidate shall participate in the teacher internship program under KRS 161.030. After successful completion of the internship program, the candidate shall receive a professional certificate and shall be subject to certificate renewal requirements the same as other teachers with a professional certificate.
- (9) Option 8: Certification of a Teach for America participant to teach in elementary, middle, or high schools. Nothing in this subsection shall conflict with the participation criteria of the Teach for America program. An individual certified under this subsection shall be issued a one (1) year provisional certificate.
- (a) The candidate shall possess:
    - 1. An offer of employment from a local school district;
    - 2. A bachelor's degree;
    - 3. A successful completion of the summer training institute and ongoing professional development required by Teach for America, including instruction in goal-oriented, standards-based instruction, diagnosing and assessing students, lesson planning and instructional delivery, classroom management, maximizing learning for diverse students, and teaching methodologies; and
    - 4. A passing score on the academic content assessment in the area in which certification is being sought as designated by the Education Professional Standards Board.
  - (b) The provisional certificate granted under paragraph (a) of this subsection may be renewed two (2) times with a recommendation of the superintendent and approval of the Education Professional Standards Board.
  - (c) A Teach for America participant who is approved for a second renewal of his or her provisional certificate under paragraph (b) of this subsection may participate in the teacher internship program under KRS 161.030.
  - (d) A Teach for America participant shall be issued a professional certificate upon the participant's successful completion of the internship program and assessments relating to teaching of subject matter required by the Education Professional Standards Board under KRS 161.030.
  - (e) Notwithstanding any statute or administrative regulation to the contrary, a teacher certified under this subsection shall have ten (10) years from the date that the teacher successfully completed the internship program to complete a master's degree or fifth year program, or the equivalent as specified by the Education Professional Standards Board in administrative regulation.
- (10) Option 9: Expedited certification of a person to teach at any grade level through a

cooperative program. With approval of the Education Professional Standards Board, a college or university may partner with a school district to develop an expedited certification program that results in a bachelor's degree and initial certification within three (3) school years.

- (a) The program shall:
    1. Include a residency or paraprofessional component which employs the person within the participating district for the duration of the program to gain work experience to supplement the expedited program and reduced coursework;
    2. Utilize experienced teachers employed by the district to provide coaching and to mentor the candidates; and
    3. Be designed to meet the needs of the participating district and may include an emphasis in developing a teacher pipeline for the district's students, improving the numbers of underrepresented populations among the district's workforce, or focusing on increasing the number of teachers with certification areas that are in high demand.
  - (b) A school district entering into a cooperative partnership shall ensure the availability of funding for each candidate employed within the district in the residency or paraprofessional program for the duration of the candidate's participation in the program. However, nothing in this subsection shall be interpreted as requiring the district to continue employing the candidate during the program or after the candidate has received initial certification.
  - (c) A person who has begun a traditional path or another option for certification shall be eligible to transfer into this option if the person meets the program's requirements.
  - (d) If a school district participating in a cooperative partnership determines to end the partnership, the district shall no longer accept new candidates to the program but shall continue the partnership until the district's employed candidates for Option 9 certification complete the program or are no longer employed by the district.
- (11) A public school teacher certified under subsections (2) to (10) of this section shall be placed on the local district salary schedule for the rank corresponding to the degree held by the teacher.
- (12) Subsections (1) to (3) of this section notwithstanding, a candidate who possesses the following qualifications may receive certification for teaching programs for exceptional students:
- (a) An out-of-state license to teach exceptional students;
  - (b) A bachelor's or master's degree in the certification area or closely related area for which certification is sought; and
  - (c) Successful completion of the teacher internship program requirement required under KRS 161.030.

**Effective:** June 29, 2023

**History:** Amended 2023 Ky Acts ch. 54, sec. 1, effective March 22, 2023; and ch. 164, sec. 5, effective June 29, 2023. -- Amended 2022 Ky. Acts ch. 161, sec. 1, effective

July 14, 2022. -- Amended 2017 Ky. Acts ch. 14, sec. 2, effective June 29, 2017. -- Amended 2010 Ky. Acts ch. 79, sec. 1, effective July 15, 2010. -- Amended 2008 Ky. Acts ch. 177, sec. 1, effective July 15, 2008. -- Amended 2005 Ky. Acts ch. 111, sec. 2, effective June 20, 2005. -- Amended 2004 Ky. Acts ch. 117, sec. 3, effective July 13, 2004. -- Amended 2000 Ky. Acts ch. 161, sec. 1, effective July 14, 2000. -- Amended 1998 Ky. Acts ch. 514, sec. 8, effective July 15, 1998; and ch. 589, sec. 1, effective July 15, 1998. -- Amended 1996 Ky. Acts ch. 137, sec. 1, effective July 15, 1996; and ch. 343, sec. 6, effective July 15, 1996. -- Created 1990 Ky. Acts ch. 476, Pt. II, sec. 58, effective July 13, 1990.

**Legislative Research Commission Note (6/29/2023).** This statute was amended by 2023 Ky. Acts chs. 54 and 164, which do not appear to be in conflict and have been codified together.

**Legislative Research Commission Note (7/14/2022).** 2022 Ky. Acts ch. 161, sec. 2, provides, "Any person granted an emergency teaching certificate pursuant to KRS 161.100 by the Education Professional Standards Board during the 2021-2022 school year shall be eligible to renew that emergency certificate for the 2022-2023 school year, notwithstanding any administrative regulation to the contrary."