

Alternative Certification Routes

Our school district receives numerous questions and inquiries about the process for Alternative Certification Routes. The following is a summary of steps that candidates, colleges and our district take in order to hire someone under the Option 6 University-Based Alternative Certification Route (there are other routes, but this is the most commonly used route).

1. Candidates must have a Bachelor's Degree.
2. Candidates **must pass all three areas of the Praxis I (Reading, Writing & Math)**. At one point this requirement was temporarily waved. Check with your college or university for clarification.
3. Candidates must apply and be admitted into an appropriate MAT program (Master's in teaching) at a college or university that offers Option 6.
4. Once fully admitted into the Option 6 program, candidates will receive a letter of eligibility from the college verifying they can be recommended to EPSB for temporary Certification. A committee at the college generally meets 1 or 2 times per month to review and approve candidates before issuing the letter of eligibility which is valid for 1 year from the date of issuance.
5. Upon receipt of a letter of eligibility, candidates can be recommended for hire by principals and SBDM. (*If a candidate has passed all of the Praxis I tests and is waiting for their letter, they could be recommended, but cannot be hired with or without the letter of eligibility until after receiving certification).
6. Once candidates receive their letter of eligibility and recommendation for hire, the district will provide candidates with an application for Temporary Certification (CA-TP) that serves as an offer of employment. All offers are contingent upon receipt of certification.
7. Candidates complete and return the CA-TP to the college and coordinate with the certification office to set up a mentoring plan between the college and school.
8. After the college sets up the mentoring, they will complete their section of the CA-TP and forward the application to Educational Professional Standards Board (EPSB).
9. Candidates must send an official copy of undergraduate transcript to EPSB.
10. Once the CA-TP application and transcript are received and processed by EPSB then a 1 year Temporary Certificate is issued.
11. Upon receipt of certification, our district will complete the hiring process and provide a letter of hire and contract.
12. Candidates can renew the temporary provisional certificate 4 additional years for a total of 5 years in order to complete the MAT program. Please note that to comply with federal law, those candidates pursuing certification to teach exceptional children or interdisciplinary early childhood education through the Option 6 route are only eligible for 2 renewals of the one-year temporary provisional certificate.
13. Candidates must pass the Praxis II before completion of MAT program.

14. Upon completion of MAT program, candidates will complete an application for Kentucky Certification or Change in Salary Rank (CA-1) and submit it to EPSB for a 5 year certification and to change to Rank II.

It is not uncommon and is acceptable for candidates to complete all requirements for substitute teaching and be hired to work as substitutes while awaiting completion of all steps in the Alternative Certification process. In order to substitute, candidates must have criminal background checks, drug screens and all sub teacher training on file. Candidates are not hired full time by our district until they are fully certified by EPSB with the Temporary Provisional Certificate.

*Note -- a temporary certificate is just as valid as any other EPSB issued certificate and the holder has the same rights and permissions as traditionally certified teachers.

The timeline for this process can take anywhere from a few weeks to a few months and depends mainly on the candidate completing requirements in a timely manner along with how quickly the college approves letters of eligibility, mentoring plans and getting CA-TP applications to EPSB. Finally, it also takes some time once received by EPSB to review, approve and issue a certificate. Therefore, candidates need to be aware that acceptance into a program or even an offer of employment does not mean they will begin work immediately.

If you know anyone that is interested in the Option 6 route to Alternative Certification or that is interested in teaching in the Harlan County School system, have them contact the Harlan County Schools Director of Personnel for additional information.