

**Chapter 181-80 WAC**  
**ALTERNATIVE ROUTES TO CERTIFICATION**

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**WAC**

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**WAC 181-80-002 Authority.** As provided for in RCW 28A.410.210, 28A.660.020, and 28A.660.035, the Washington professional educator standards board establishes policies and requirements for the preparation and certification of educators, including establishing policies for the approval of nontraditional preparation program providers, providing oversight and accountability related to the quality and effectiveness of these programs, and constructing rules that address the competitive grant process and program design. The professional educator standards board will accept proposals for educator preparation programs from community college and nonhigher education providers as described in RCW 28A.410.290. The professional educator standards board has the authority to implement the articulated pathway for teacher preparation and certification as described in RCW 28A.410.292.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.410.220. WSR 19-05-010, § 181-80-002, filed 2/7/19, effective 3/10/19.]

**WAC 181-80-005 Definitions.** The following definitions shall apply to terms used in this chapter:

(1) **Clinical practice:** "Clinical practice" means a specific, prolonged field experience where the candidate practices or serves in the role for which they are being prepared. Clinical practice must take place in an education setting and under the general supervision of a certificated practitioner, with three years' experience in the role for which the candidate is seeking certification, as defined in WAC 181-78A-010.

(2) **District staff member:** For the purposes of chapter 181-80 WAC, these candidates may be classified district staff members; or district staff members who hold initial, continuing, or limited career technical education certificates; or district early learning education staff.

(3) **Field experience:** "Field experience" means learning experiences in school, clinical, or laboratory settings. These learning experiences must be related to specific program outcomes and designed to integrate educational theory, knowledge, and skills in actual practice under the direction of a qualified supervisor as defined in WAC 181-78A-010.

(4) **Internship:** "Internship" means the period of clinical practice for candidates enrolled in approved administrator, school counselor, and school psychologist preparation programs as defined in WAC 181-78A-010.

(5) **Preresidency intensive academy:** The preresidency intensive academy shall require candidates to, prior to beginning residency, gain foundational knowledge in professional educator standards board-approved program domain standards as described in chapter 181-78A WAC; an introduction to the culture of schools, lesson planning, and basic classroom management; and training in cultural competency.

(6) **Residency:** A residency is a year-long field experience with a minimum of five hundred forty hours of student teaching. Residency is facilitated through partnership of preparation program and school district. Mentoring is required for the duration of the residency.

(7) **Student teaching:** "Student teaching" means the period of clinical practice for individuals enrolled in teacher preparation programs as defined in WAC 181-78A-010.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 28A.410 RCW. WSR 20-22-006, § 181-80-005, filed 10/21/20, effective 11/21/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.410.220. WSR 19-05-010, § 181-80-005, filed 2/7/19, effective 3/10/19.]

**WAC 181-80-010 Basic requirements.** (1) Alternative routes to teacher certification programs are partnerships between professional educator standards board-approved preparation program providers, Washington school districts, and other partners as appropriate. These partnerships are focused on district-specific teacher shortage areas. Approved alternative routes partnerships are eligible to apply for the alternative routes block grant and to facilitate alternative route conditional scholarship program as described in RCW 28A.660.050.

(2) Each prospective teacher preparation program provider, in cooperation with a Washington school district or consortia of school districts operating an approved alternative route to teacher certification program must meet the following requirements:

(a) **Partnership requirements.** Alternative routes providers shall establish an alternative routes partnership memorandum of agreement (MOA) between the approved teacher preparation program provider and each partnering district or consortia of districts. Each MOA shall require:

(i) An identification, indication of commitment, and description of the role of approved teacher preparation program provider and partnering district or consortia of districts, including specific duties of each partner;

(ii) The role of each partner in candidate recruitment, screening, selection, and oversight;

(iii) The role of each partner in field placement and student teaching and a description of when each begins within the program;

(iv) The role of each partner in mentor selection, training, and support;

(v) A description of how the district intends for the alternative route program to support its workforce development plan and how the presence of alternative route candidates will advance its school improvement plans.

(b) **Programmatic requirements.** Programs shall uphold the following requirements in addition to requirements and standards listed in chapter 181-78A WAC.

(i) Ensure candidates meet requirements for basic skills and content knowledge assessments under RCW 28A.410.220 and chapter 181-78A WAC.

(ii) Fingerprint and character clearance under RCW 28A.410.010 must be current at all times during the field experience for candidates who do not hold a valid Washington certificate.

(iii) Clinical practice for teacher candidates should consist of no less than five hundred forty hours in classroom settings.

(iv) Mentorship requirements must be met in accordance with chapter 181-78A WAC and each candidate must be assigned a mentor. The candidate must receive mentoring for the duration of the residency.

(v) **Teacher development plan:** Ensure the design and use of a teacher development plan for each candidate. The plan shall specify the alternative route coursework and training required of each candidate and shall be developed by comparing the candidate's prior experience and coursework with the state's standards for residency certification. The plan must also include:

(A) Identification of one or more tools to be used to assess a candidate's performance once the candidate is about halfway through their residency;

(B) Recognition for relevant prior learning that demonstrates meeting residency certification competencies; and

(C) A description of the criteria that would result in early exit from the program with residency certification.

(vi) **Shortage areas.** Alternative route programs shall enroll candidates in a subject or geographic endorsement shortage area, as defined by the professional educator standards board.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 28A.410 RCW. WSR 21-15-084, § 181-80-010, filed 7/16/21, effective 8/16/21; WSR 21-08-023, § 181-80-010, filed 3/29/21, effective 4/29/21; WSR 20-22-006, § 181-80-010, filed 10/21/20, effective 11/21/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.410.220. WSR 19-05-010, § 181-80-010, filed 2/7/19, effective 3/10/19; WSR 17-18-006, § 181-80-010, filed 8/24/17, effective 9/24/17.]

**WAC 181-80-020 Program types.** Alternative route programs under this chapter shall operate one to four specific route programs. Successful completion of an alternative route program shall meet the program completion requirements for residency teacher certification. The mentor of the teacher candidate at the school and the supervisor of the teacher candidate from the teacher preparation program provider must both agree that the teacher candidate has successfully completed the program.

(1) **Route 1:** Providers approved to offer route one programs shall enroll currently employed district staff members seeking residency teacher certification. Candidates enrolled in route one programs may complete both their baccalaureate degree and requirements for residency certification in two years or less. Program providers and partners shall uphold entry requirements for route one candidates that include:

(a) A transferable associate degree, or associate degree, or associate of applied science, or ninety quarter credits or the equivalent in semester credits from an accredited institution of higher education;

(b) District or building validation of qualifications, including one year of student interaction and leadership.

(2) **Route 2:** Providers approved to offer route two programs shall enroll currently employed district staff members with baccalaureate degrees seeking residency teacher certification. Candidates enrolled in this route must complete a preresidency intensive academy. Program providers and partners shall uphold entry requirements for candidates that include:

(a) A baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution of higher education;

(b) District or building validation of qualifications, including one year of student interaction and leadership.

(3) **Route 3:** Providers approved to offer route three programs shall enroll individuals with baccalaureate degrees who are not employed in the district at the time of application. Candidates enrolled in this route must complete a preresidency intensive academy. Program providers and partners shall uphold entry requirements for candidates that include:

(a) A baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution of higher education; and

(b) External validation of qualifications, including demonstrated experience with students or children, such as reference letters and letters of support from previous employers.

(4) **Route 4:** Providers approved to offer route four programs shall enroll individuals with baccalaureate degrees, who are employed in the district at the time of application, or who hold limited certificates as described in WAC 181-79A-231, or hold initial, continuing, or limited career technical education certificates as described in chapter 181-77 WAC. Candidates enrolled in this route must complete a preresidency intensive academy. The candidate will be delegated primary responsibility for planning, conducting, and evaluating instructional activities in a designated classroom. Program providers and partners shall uphold entry requirements for candidates that include:

(a) A baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution of higher education; and

(b) External validation of qualifications, including demonstrated experience with students or children, such as reference letters and letters of support from previous employers.

(5) Applicants for alternative route programs who are eligible veterans or National Guard members and who meet the entry requirements for the alternative route program for which application is made shall be given preference in admission.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 28A.410 RCW. WSR 20-22-006, § 181-80-020, filed 10/21/20, effective 11/21/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.410.220. WSR 19-05-010, § 181-80-020, filed 2/7/19, effective 3/10/19; WSR 17-18-006, § 181-80-020, filed 8/24/17, effective 9/24/17.]