# Alternative Teacher Certification Programs Leading to Temporary Initial Licensure

# Handbook for Initial Program Approval

**Iowa Department of Education**

**Grimes State Office Building**

**400 East 14th Street**

**Des Moines, IA 50319**

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## Alternative Teacher Certification

In 2024 legislation, [HF255](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/LGE/90/HF255.pdf), Iowa provided an option for approval of alternative teacher certification programs.

The alternative teacher certification program applies to the Iowa Department of Education (Department) for approval and provides to the Department sufficient evidence that the alternative teacher certification program meets all of the following requirements:

1. The alternative teacher certification program must operate in at least five states.
2. The alternative teacher certification program must have been in operation for at least ten years.
3. The alternative teacher certification program must incorporate pedagogy training, including an examination, that teaches effective instructional delivery, classroom management and organization, assessment, instructional design, and professional learning and leadership.
4. The alternative teacher certification program must include the administration of an assessment that is identical to the foundations of reading assessment administered in 2012 as part of the Massachusetts tests, or the most current version of such assessment, and must adhere to the same reporting requirements related to the assessment that this chapter imposes upon higher education institutions, if any.

## Introduction to Program Approval

Any alternative teacher certification program leading to temporary initial licensure must be approved by the Iowa State Board of Education (Board) before its candidates can be issued a temporary initial teaching license. Once initially approved, programs will be reviewed for reapproval at least once every seven years. The process of approval and re-approval requires the program to provide evidence that it is meeting the Board requirements. The Department provides an application with a template for organizing required responses and evidence to be submitted for review.

If the Board approves an alternative teacher certification program, the approval shall be for seven years, or less if the Board determines that a shorter term is warranted.

If the Board approves an alternative teacher certification program, the approved alternative teacher certification program shall submit an annual report to the Department, on or before March 15 each year.

## Reevaluation of practitioner preparation programs

Every seven years or at any time deemed necessary by the Board, an institution will conduct a self-evaluation and file a written institutional report with evidence of its practitioner preparation programs. Any action for continued approval or rescission of approval will be approved by the Board.

## The Program Approval Process:

1. Program representatives submit an application (template provided in this handbook) to the Department with appropriate responses and evidence demonstrating how the program meets the requirements to offer an alternative teacher certification program leading to temporary initial licensure. Once the application and sufficient evidence is received by the Department, the 60-day timeline for review and issuance of the recommendation will begin.
2. A Department consultant reviews the application and contacts the program with initial questions and requests for additional evidence if needed.
3. The program is required to provide responses and appropriate evidence to follow up questions within the required 60-day timeline. If the program fails to provide responses in the timeline communicated by the consultant, the consultant will recommend non-approval.
4. If the program provides appropriate evidence of compliance, the consultant will draft a summary of the findings. The recommendation may indicate approval, or non-approval.
5. The recommendation will be presented to the Board and will be considered at the next available state board meeting. A program representative(s) will be provided an opportunity to be present and to respond to Board members’ questions.
6. Programs can complete the application on this handbook, and submit that to Amy Mayer at [amy.mayer@iowa.gov](mailto:amy.mayer@iowa.gov).

## Application Template

| Program Information |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of Person Completing the Application: |  |
| Name of Program/Institution: |  |
| Address: |  |
| Phone: |  |
| Email: |  |
| Website URL: |  |
| Delivery Mode:  Face to Face  Online Only  Other (please explain)  Hybrid (please explain) |  |
| Certifying Official Contact Information (if different from above):  Name, email, phone, address |  |

## Additional Information

Write a brief history (1-2 paragraphs) of the alternative teacher certification program at your institution. Include how the program connects to the mission and vision of the institution. This will be included in the final board report.

Please provide a response and evidence for each requirement in the tables below.

### Program Admission

| Requirement | Alignment | Program Response  (Provide a complete explanation and evidence  documents for how each requirement is met) | Reviewer  Score  (Department Use ONLY) | Reviewer  Comments  (Department Use ONLY) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Verification of a conferred Bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university. | HF255  Section 1 a. |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| 2. Verification of alignment of the Bachelor’s degree with the endorsement that the candidate intends to complete. | HF255  Section 1 c. |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |

### Classroom Contact Hours

| Requirement | Alignment | Program Response  (Provide a complete explanation and evidence  documents for how each requirement is met) | Reviewer  Score  (Department Use ONLY) | Reviewer  Comments  (Department Use ONLY) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 3. Sixty contact hours in the classroom. | HF255  Section 1 b. |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| a. A minimum of 30 hours shall be teaching in a classroom under a licensed teacher. | HF255  Section 1 b. |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| b. If applicable, remaining contact hours working as a para-educator or in another relevant role. |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| c. Certification of contact hour completion by the principal of the school where the hours were completed. |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| 4. Provide a written contract with the district where classroom contract hours are completed. | IA 256.16 1l. |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| 5. Documentation of supervising teacher credentials. | IA 256.16 1l. | (appropriately licensed for grade level and content area) |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| 6. Documentation of evaluation and classroom contact hours completed by the supervising teacher for each candidate. | IA 256.16 1k. |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |

### Educator Preparation Curriculum

| Requirement | Alignment | Program Response  (Provide a complete explanation and evidence  documents for how each requirement is met) | Reviewer  Score  (Department Use ONLY) | Reviewer  Comments  (Department Use ONLY) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 7. Program pedagogy coursework | HF255  Section 2 a. (3) | (scope and sequence of courses)  (submission of syllabi for evidence is required for 7a-i) |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| a. Effective instructional delivery |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| b. Classroom management and organization |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| c. Assessment |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| d. Instructional design |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| e. Professional learning and leadership |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| f. Reading theory, knowledge, strategies, and approaches to include: | IA 256.16 1a. |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| Students with disabilities |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| Students who are at risk of academic failure |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| Students who are gifted and talented |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| English language learners |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| Students with dyslexia |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| g. Instruction related to students with disabilities and students who are gifted and talented |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| Developing and implementing individualized education plans |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| Educating individuals in the least restrictive environment |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| Strategies that address difficult and violent student behavior |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| Strategies that improve student engagement |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| Classroom management that addresses high-risk behaviors including but not limited to behaviors related to substance use disorder |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| h. Instruction in the use of electronic technology for classroom and instructional purposes | IA 256.16 1h. |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| i. Coursework related to instruction for students eligible for services under chapter 256B | HF255  Section 4 |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| Documentation of completed practicum for this coursework that includes short-term field experiences in educational settings |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| 8. Pedagogy training and examination related to the content and grade level the candidate is being prepared for. | HF255  Section 2 a. (3) | (include name of assessment and required passing score) |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| 9. Program report of Foundations of Reading Assessment and work with the vendor to report the percentage of candidates whose scores were at, above or below the benchmark. | HF255  Section 2 a. (4) | (include name of assessment and required passing score) |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| 10. Required content training as it aligns with the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners requirements in one of the endorsements identified on the department’s website at educate.iowa.gov/pk-12/educatore-quality/practitioner-preparation. | HF255  Section 1 c. | (add a line for each proposed endorsement the program intends to prepare candidates for licensure)  (Submit the syllabi, with specific content and assessment) |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| Name of Content Area |  | (How will the program ensure preparation to meet the BoEE minimum standards in this endorsement area) |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| Name of Content Area |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| Name of Content Area |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| Add additional lines as needed |  |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |

### Evidence of Operation

| Requirement | Alignment | Program Response  (Provide a complete explanation and evidence  documents for how each requirement is met) | Reviewer  Score  (Department Use ONLY) | Reviewer  Comments  (Department Use ONLY) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 11. Program operates in at least five states | HF255  Section 2 a. (1) |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |
| 12. Program has been in operation for at least 10 years | HF255  Section 2 a. (2) |  |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |

### Annual Report

| Requirement | Alignment | Program Response  (Provide a complete explanation and evidence  documents for how each requirement is met) | Reviewer  Score  (Department Use ONLY) | Reviewer  Comments  (Department Use ONLY) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 13. Annual Report | HF255  Section 2 b. (2) (a-e) | What process and procedures does the program have established to provide an annual report to the Iowa Department of Education?  To include:   1. Total number of candidates participating in the program 2. Total number of candidates who completed the program 3. Retention rates 4. Data that allow for matching of records associated with licensing and employment with Iowa. 5. Faculty qualifications 6. Advisory board feedback 7. Analysis of candidate evaluation 8. i. Continuous improvement goals |  Met   Not Met   Need Additional   Information |  |