

## Alternative Class A Programs For Teaching Fields

### Section 290-3-3-.42

**(1) Purposes of Alternative Class A Programs.** The purposes of an Alternative Class A program shall be identical to the purposes for preparing teachers at the Class B level in the same teaching field, except that person who complete the Alternative Class A program shall have acquired knowledge and skill above the level required for completion of a Class B program. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.04.

**(2) Unconditional Admission to Alternative Class A Programs.** Each institution shall establish and enforce a policy that specifies when the candidate must meet criteria for unconditional admission to the program. Admission to the graduate school is not equivalent to unconditional admission to an approved program. Requirements for unconditional admission shall include:

(a) A criminal history background check. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.03(6)(d).

(b) Testing requirement. Effective September 1, 2013, successful passage of the three basic skills assessments became a precondition for unconditional admission to a Class B program or an Alternative Class A program. Effective for basic skills tests taken September 1, 2017, and thereafter the Educational Testing Services (ETS) Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators Tests replaced the ACT WorkKeys. Effective April 17, 2019, Praxis Core was rescinded as a requirement for unconditional admission to an Alternative Class A program.

(c) Degree requirements. A person who is eligible for admission to an Alternative Class A program shall have earned a bachelor's or higher degree with a minimum grade point average (GPA) overall of 2.50. This GPA must be documented on the official transcript of the degree granting institution and must be the GPA that was used as the basis for granting the degree. Effective July 1, 2017, and thereafter, a person who is eligible for unconditional admission to an Alternative Class A program shall have earned a bachelor's degree with a minimum grade point average (GPA) overall of 2.75 or a master's or higher degree with a GPA of at least 3.0. This GPA must be documented on the official transcript of the degree granting institution and must be the GPA that was used as the basis for granting the degree, not a GPA that includes post-degree courses. An applicant with an undergraduate GPA of at least 2.0 may seek unconditional admission if the alternative score on the Alabama-prescribed Praxis subject-area test is obtained.

1. Courses that were taken as part of the degree used to meet the admission requirement in Rule 290-3-3-.44(2)(c) for a bachelor's or higher degree with a minimum grade point average of 2.5 (2.75 if admitted based on a bachelor's degree or 3.0 if admitted based on a master's degree July 1, 2017, and thereafter) cannot be used again to meet Alternative Class A program requirements.

2. The person must meet one of the following options:

(i) Earned a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university.

(ii) Earned a bachelor's degree from a non-regionally accredited institution and an earned master's or higher degree from a regionally accredited institution, and has attained a passing score on the prescribed Praxis subject assessment of the Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program (AECAP). [See Rule 290-3-3-.04.] This option is permitted only when both of the following conditions are met:

(I) At the discretion of the administrative head of the EPP and in accordance with institutional policy.

(II) If there is a prescribed Praxis subject assessment of the AECAP.

3. Earned a bachelor's degree from a non-regionally accredited institution, holds a valid professional educator certificate from the state where the institution is geographically located, and has attained a passing score on the prescribed Praxis subject assessment of the AECAP. This option is permitted only when both of the following conditions are met:

(i) At the discretion of the administrative head of the EPP and in accordance with institutional policy.

(ii) If there is a prescribed Praxis subject assessment of the AECAP.

(d)General studies. Individuals applying for admission to an Alternative Class A programs in early childhood education, elementary education, early childhood special education, or collaborative special education teacher (K-6 or 6-12) shall have earned at least 12 semester hours of acceptable credit, as verified on official transcripts, in each of the following areas: English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Alternatively, the current passing score on the prescribed Praxis subject assessment of the AECAP may be accepted to meet this requirement for the following areas:

(i) In lieu of 12 semester hours in mathematics, Praxis 5003 or 5903.

(ii) In lieu of 12 semester hours in science, Praxis 5005 or 5905.

(iii) In lieu of 12 semester hours in social studies, Praxis 5004 or 5904.

(e)Teaching field. Prior to unconditional admission, a person who wishes to earn certification in a teaching field listed below shall have completed one of the options in Rule 290-3-3-.42(2)(e)1. through 5.

1.For teaching fields other than Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Early Childhood Special Education, Collaborative Special Education (K-6 or 6-12), in lieu of Rule 290-2-3-3-.42(2)(e)2. through 5., verification of a current passing score on the prescribed Praxis subject assessment of the Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program.

2.Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Early Childhood Special Education, Collaborative Special Education Teacher K-6 or 6-12. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.42(2)(d).

3.Single Teaching Field for Middle Level or Secondary: An academic major in the teaching field, or if an academic major is not on the official transcript, 30 semester hours appropriate to the teaching field including at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit.

#### **4.Comprehensive Middle Level or Secondary Teaching Fields:**

(i) English Language Arts: An academic major in an area included in English language arts-e.g., English, speech, drama/theatre, and print or broadcast journalism-and at least one course in each of the other listed areas of English language arts. If an academic major is not on the official transcript, then the admission requirement shall be 30 semester hours of credit appropriate to English language arts, including at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit. At a minimum, coursework must include courses in literature, grammar, reading skills, writing, speech, theatre, and print or broadcast journalism.

(ii) General Science: An academic major in an area included in the sciences-e.g., biology, chemistry, Earth or space science, and physics-and at least one course in each of the other listed areas of general science. If an academic major is not on the official transcript, then the admission requirement shall be 30 semester hours of credit appropriate to general science including at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit and at least one course in each of following areas: biology, chemistry, Earth or space science, and physics.

(iii) General Social Studies: An academic major in an area included in the social studies-e.g., economics, geography, history, and political science-and at least one course in each of the other areas listed in the social studies. If an academic major is not on the official transcript, then the admission requirement shall be 30 semester hours of credit appropriate to the social studies with at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit and at least one course in each of the following areas: economics, geography, history, and political science.

(iv) Career and Technical Education: At least 30 semester hours appropriate to the teaching field including at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit.

5.P-12 Programs: An academic major in the teaching field or, if an academic major is not on the official transcript, 30 semester hours of credit appropriate to the teaching field including at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit.

**(3) Curriculum of Alternative Class A Programs.** A program in a given teaching field shall be designed to develop teaching competencies above the level required for Class B program completion. In addition, a program shall:

(a) Include a teaching field of at least one-third of the total number of graduate hours in the program.

1. For candidates unconditionally admitted to a program December 15, 2020, or thereafter, the teaching field for programs in early childhood education, elementary education, and collaborative special education (K-6) shall require no less than nine semester hours of reading or literacy coursework, or both, based on the science of learning to read, including multisensory strategies in foundational reading skills. Prior to program completion, candidates shall demonstrate the ability to use a variety of strategies (to include explicit and systematic instruction, guided practice, error correction and corrective feedback, and multisensory language instruction) to teach foundational reading skills based on the science of learning to read, to include oral language development, phonological awareness, phonics instruction, writing, vocabulary, and comprehension, in accordance with the Alabama Course of Study: English Language Arts.

2. English language arts, general science, and general social studies programs shall require at least one course in two areas within the broader field.

(b) Meet the Alabama Core Teaching Standards in Rule 290-3-3-.04.

(c) Include a methods course specific to the teaching field or to the general area of the teaching field (e.g., science methods or social studies methods). Methods courses for specific teaching fields or for the general area of the teaching field shall not be combined with methods courses of other teaching fields or general areas (e.g., mathematics and biology).

(d) Extensive field experiences. The field experiences must comply with Rule 290-3-3-.03(6)(e)1.

(e) An internship.

1. The internship shall equal at least a full semester, full-time in the teaching field for which certification is sought and may include more than one classroom or grade level, with experiences of the intern progressing to the full responsibilities of the teacher.

2. The internship must comply with Rule 290-3-3-.03(6)(e)2. regarding dividing the internship.

3. Entry and exit criteria shall be clearly identified for the internship.

**(f) A survey of special education course is required unless that course was previously completed.** [See Rule 290-3-3-.01(51) ]. An individual who completed a survey of special education course prior to the semester when the individual met requirements for unconditional admission to an Alternative Class A program July 1, 2017, and thereafter, must take a course focused primarily on one of the following categories: methods of accommodating instruction to meet the needs of students with exceptionalities in inclusive settings, multicultural education, teaching English language learners, rural education, or urban education. A diversity course used to meet this requirement for one level of certification may not be used to meet the requirement for a higher level of certification.

**(4) Requirements for Class A Certification.** Readiness to serve as a teacher shall include:

(a) An official transcript from a regionally accredited institution documenting an earned master's degree.

(b) Satisfactory completion of a State-approved program with a minimum GPA of 3.0 on all courses in the Alabama State Board of Education approved educator preparation program. For candidates who meet requirements for unconditional admission to an Alternative Class A program July 1, 2017, and thereafter, a minimum GPA of 3.25 on all courses used to meet the requirements on the approved program checklist for Alabama State Board of Education educator preparation program.

(c) Competence to teach students as demonstrated in an internship as described in Rule 290-3-3-.03(6)(e)2.

**(5) Testing for Class A Certification.** Applicants unconditionally admitted to an Alternative Class A program prior to September 1, 2013, must meet the basic skills assessments requirements of the Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program (AECAP) as a prerequisite for certification. Applicants for initial certification through the completion of an Alternative Class A program must meet the Praxis II requirements of the AECAP as a precondition for certification. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.41(6).

**(6) Interim Employment Certificate.**

(a) An Interim Employment Certificate (IEC) allows a superintendent or administrator to employ an applicant who is completing requirements for Class A certification in a teaching field through a State-approved Alternative Class A program at an Alabama institution.

Additional information, Master's in Elementary Education (K-12 Online Leadership). Master's in Elementary Education (K-12 Online Leadership). including requirements and restrictions, is provided in Rule 290-3-2-.06.

(b) Special provisions for holders of Interim Employment Certificates.

1. A teacher who is employed based on holding a valid Interim Employment Certificate for early childhood education (or early childhood special education) and is teaching above the kindergarten level may, at the discretion of the unit, complete a three-semester hour practicum at the preschool and/or kindergarten level to meet the divided internship requirements applicable to the early childhood education program (or early childhood special education program). Similarly, a teacher who is employed based on holding a valid Interim Employment Certificate for early childhood education (or early childhood special education) and is teaching at the kindergarten level or below may, at the discretion of the unit, complete a three-semester hour practicum in Grades 1, 2, and/or 3 to meet the divided internship requirements applicable to early childhood education (or early childhood special education) programs.

2. A teacher who is employed based on holding a valid Interim Employment Certificate for elementary education (or collaborative special education K-6) and is teaching at the lower elementary level (grades K, 1, 2, and/or 3) may, at the discretion of the unit, complete a three-semester hour practicum at the upper elementary level (grades 4, 5, and/or 6) to meet the divided internship requirements applicable to the elementary education (or collaborative special education K-6) program. Similarly, a teacher who is employed based on holding a valid Interim Employment Certificate for elementary education (or collaborative special education K-6) and is teaching at the upper elementary level may, at the discretion of the unit, complete a three-semester hour practicum at the lower elementary level to meet the divided internship requirements applicable to the elementary education (or collaborative special education K-6) program.

3. A teacher who is employed based on holding a valid Interim Employment Certificate for a teaching field that spans Grades P-12 and is teaching at the elementary level (K-6) may, at the discretion of the unit, complete a three-semester hour practicum at the secondary level (6-12) to meet the divided internship requirements applicable to the P-12 program. Similarly, a teacher who is employed based on holding a valid Special Alternative Certificate for a teaching field that spans Grades P-12 and is teaching at the secondary level (6-12) may, at the discretion of the unit, complete a three-semester hour practicum at the elementary level to meet the divided internship requirements applicable to the P-12 program.

4. A teacher who is employed based on holding a valid Interim Employment Certificate for collaborative special education teacher (K-6) or (6-12) and who is enrolled in a collaborative special education program for both K-6 and 6-12 but whose employment is limited to the grade span for which certification is held may, at the discretion of the unit,

complete a three semester hour practicum at the level for which certification is not held to meet the divided internship requirements applicable to both programs.

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