
FISCAL TOPICS

Fiscal Services Division

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Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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Teacher Licensure and Alternative Pathways

Overview

The Iowa Board of Educational Examiners (BOEE) establishes standards for educational practitioners pursuant to its authority under Iowa Code chapter [272](#). The BOEE is charged with the overall responsibility of regulating the licensure standards for teachers, administrators, paraeducators, and coaches. The BOEE sets standards for the issuance of licenses, endorsements, and authorizations to educational practitioners and sets standards for license renewal. The BOEE also investigates ethics complaints and monitors compliance of licensees with orders issued by the BOEE.

Licenses and Endorsements

Teacher candidates in the State of Iowa can receive an initial teaching license after completion of a bachelor's degree and an approved teacher preparation program at an accredited institution. For completion of a teacher preparation program, all Iowa teacher candidates must earn passing scores on both a pedagogy test, relating to the method and practice of teaching, and a content area test before they can be eligible for licensure. A one-year temporary initial teaching license is available for teacher candidates who have completed all program requirements except for passing the required assessments.

Teacher applicants from out-of-state programs are evaluated against Iowa practitioner preparation requirements, and if 75.0% of the program requirements are met, a conditional license may be issued. The conditional license allows applicants to begin work immediately and gives the applicant two to three years to complete any deficiencies in required coursework. Depending on the situation, some deficiencies can be waived.

Recent rule changes accommodate additional reciprocity with the following:

- No testing is required for applicants with three or more years of experience.
- No coursework deficiencies will be assigned to applicants with 10 or more years of experience or 5 or more years plus a master's degree.
- A one-year temporary initial license may be issued to applicants who need time to complete the required testing.
- An expired teaching license from another state is now allowable.
- A portfolio application option is available for applicants in secondary areas who completed a nontraditional teacher preparation program who also have three years of experience.

When a teacher has received an Iowa teaching license, the teacher may add additional endorsements to that license to teach in a specific content area. Teachers can apply for conditional licensure, which allows them to immediately teach in the endorsement area and gives them two to three years to complete the required coursework needed to receive the endorsement.

More Information

Iowa Board of Educational Examiners: boee.iowa.gov
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Alternative Teacher Pathways

Fast-Track Teacher Intern Program. This Program allows a teacher applicant who has an existing bachelor's degree to complete the required coursework primarily online during the applicant's first year and then be hired as a full-time teacher in the second year of the program in place of student teaching. The University of Northern Iowa, the University of Iowa, and Iowa State University have collaborated to provide the Regents Alternative Pathway to Iowa Licensure (RAPIL) [program](#). Morningside College also offers a teacher intern [program](#).

Military Exchange License. A military exchange license is a full Iowa teaching license for veterans or military traveling spouses who have already completed a teacher preparation program in another state. No additional assessments are required, and any course deficiencies are waived. The Troops to Teachers program is a federal Department of Defense program designed to assist military personnel in their pursuit of teaching as a second career. The Iowa Troops to Teachers [program office](#) is located at the University of Iowa.

Limited Teaching Authorization. An authorization allows an individual to provide teaching in limited subject areas without the requirement of completion of a teacher preparation program. Teaching authorizations are available in both the career and technical education (CTE) area and world languages. To receive a CTE authorization, 6,000 experience hours or 4,000 experience hours and a bachelor's degree are required. CTE authorization applicants can begin teaching immediately while completing pedagogy courses online, and no additional testing is required. Applicants whose native language is one other than English can receive a native language speaker authorization with a completed bachelor's degree and passage of a content test in their native language. World language authorization applicants can begin teaching immediately while completing pedagogy courses online. Both authorizations require a position offer, and the native language speaker authorization requires the school district to show that no properly endorsed candidates were available for the position.

Preservice Substitute Authorization. The preservice substitute authorization allows a student in a teacher preparation program who is a junior or senior to serve as a substitute teacher when the student does not have scheduled classes or student teaching responsibilities. Applicants for the authorization must be at least 21 years of age and be recommended by their Iowa teacher preparation program. Applicants cannot miss any scheduled college classes to serve as a substitute teacher, serve as a substitute teacher for their cooperating teacher during student teaching, or count substitute teaching toward required field experiences.

Other. Teacher licensure is not required for instructors teaching community college courses. A school district may hire a nonlicensed instructor for community college courses offered by a school district at a high school through a concurrent enrollment agreement.