# **Becoming a Teacher for Grades K-12 in Washington**

1. If you do not already hold a regular teaching certification from another state, to become certified in Washington you will need to complete an approved teacher education program in order to obtain the Residency (beginning) Teacher certificate for this state. To view requirements for the Residency Teaching Certificate see the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) website at: [www.k12.wa.us/certification/Teacher/Residency.aspx](http://www.k12.wa.us/certification/Teacher/Residency.aspx).

You can also check out the Pathways to Teaching information on the Professional Educator Standards Board website (PESB) which includes a checklist on how to become a teacher in WA, a list of all teacher preparation programs and a FAQ at http://pathway.pesb.wa.gov/home

Another source for general information about becoming a teacher is: www.teachwashington.org

There are four pathways to completing an approved certification program to obtain a Residency Teaching Certificate (beginning) in WA:

**1. as part of a Bachelor’s degree**

**2. in a post-BA certificate program** (often known as “5th year”)

1. **in a Master’s program, usually a Master in Teaching (MIT)**, but also found in some Master of Arts in Education (MAT) and some Master in Education (MEd) programs. Most Master in Ed programs in this state are for people who are already teachers, seeking to specialize.
2. **in an alternative certification program** (generally for people with bachelor degrees and experience in the workforce in a shortage area such as math , or for paraeducators – see http://pathway.pesb.wa.gov/alternative\_routes

**30 Washington colleges/universities and regional consortia offer teacher certification programs.** To view colleges/universities/regional consortia offering programs, and their locations, endorsements and contact information see: [**http://pathway.pesb.wa.gov/home**](http://pathway.pesb.wa.gov/home)

7 out of state certification program providers (generally on-line) have PESB authority for field placements in Washington, and program completers would earn certification in the state of the program provider, and then apply for Washington certification, see: http://program.pesb.wa.gov/field-placement/field-placements

1. **If you are interested in teaching in another state, or completing a teacher education**

**program in another state**, **see:** [**www.uky.edu/Education/TEP/usacert.html**](http://www.uky.edu/Education/TEP/usacert.html) for links to each state’s Dept. of Ed. for certification. There is an interstate agreement, arranged by NASDTEC ([www.nasdtec.org/agreement.php](http://www.nasdtec.org/agreement.php) which is a collection of over 50 individual agreements by states and Canadian provinces. Each individual "agreement" is a statement by that state or jurisdiction outlining which other states' educator certificates will be accepted by that state. Specifically the agreement outlines which particular types of educator certificates (teachers, administrators, service personnel, or career/technical), and which particular styles of certifications (titles, fields, etc.) will be accepted. Such an "acceptance" agreement means that the "receiving" state will issue some form of authorization allowing the inbound certificate holder to legally teach or provide service in the receiving state, provided the license issued by the "sending" state is acceptable under the agreement. This authorization may be limited in time by the receiving state, and the receiving state may impose additional requirements which need to be accomplished before the educator can teach or practice after the end of the time limit.

1. **Select a teacher education program that offers the endorsements you want.**

What you are able to teach will depend on what endorsements you have earned. Certification is given in over 34 specific “Endorsement Areas” – such as English/Language Arts, Elementary Education, Biology, Middle Level Humanities, and Spanish. **Endorsement areas specify subjects and grade levels one is qualified to teach** and are listed on your certificate. In general, you should have identified one to two endorsement areas to teach in for which you have adequate background preparation and would enjoy.

**To find out which teacher education programs offer which endorsements see:**

[**http:///pathway.pesb.wa.gov/programs**](http:///pathway.pesb.wa.gov/programs)

**1. Select the appropriate endorsement(s)**

•If you want to teach at the elementary level, you should earn an **Elementary Education endorsement** (K-8) which allows you to teach any subject, any grade level, **Kindergarten- 6th grade except special education which also requires the special education endorsement.** You may also teach in self-contained classrooms grades 7-8. While the endorsement allows you to teach up to grade 8, you may also need a specific endorsement and/or at least have passed the WEST-E for core academic subjects in grades 7-8 to be highly qualified.

• There are three **middle level endorsements** good for **grades 4-9**. One specializes in either **math or science or humanities (English and social studies**). These endorsements prepare you for teaching in block sections, with an understanding of the dynamics involved with this age group.

•**If you are more interested in teaching high school**, you should earn a **secondary endorsement** to teach the **specific subject**(s) you are interested in, for **grades 5-12**.

•**All level endorsements** are good for **prekindergarten to grade 12** and are generally in performance based areas such as bilingual education, visual arts, special education, etc.

1. **Understand teacher education programs have different rules on the number and combination of endorsements you can earn,** so please contact each school you are interested in for specifics. At Evergreen, you can pursue one or two endorsements. There is a process to add endorsements after you finish your certification program, see: http://www.pesb.wa.gov/educators/pathways
2. **Research what the endorsement prerequisites/coursework expectations are that must be completed prior to entering the teacher education program**.

Some endorsements, like Elementary Education, require courses prior to, and within a certification program. More specific subject endorsements, e.g. History or Biology, will generally require courses be done prior to the teacher education program. **Generally this information is found in a teacher education program catalog** (or in the undergraduate or graduate catalog for the institution), **and at an institution’s school/college/department of** **education website**. **There may be an outline or endorsement worksheet to use** as a planning tool to take the right classes. For Evergreen’s MIT program: http://www.evergreen.edu/mit/applying.htm

**D. Research the entrance requirements and plan ahead:**

**1.** **Entrance tests**. In WA:

Take the **WEST-B**, a multiple choice, basic skills test of reading, writing and math offered six times a year. See: [www.west.nesinc.com](http://www.west.nesinc.com) for study guide, fees, test dates. Applicants residing out of state may submit the PPST (see www.ets.org/Praxis),the CBEST or Oregon State’s Essential Academic Skills Test.

Take the **WEST-E** if your program requires it: a multiple choice subject assessment for each endorsement area offered seven times a year. Evergreen’s MIT program does require a WEST-E for each endorsement as part of the admissions process see [www.west.nesinc.com](http://www.west.nesinc.com). If applying to Evergreen’s MIT program in bilingual education or one of the World Languages of French, German, Japanese or Spanish, you will take not only the WEST-E, but an ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI or OPIc) and Written Proficiency Test (WPT), see: [www.languagetesting.com](http://www.languagetesting.com)

See if any other tests are required such as the GRE (not needed at Evergreen)

1. Program prerequisites regardless of endorsement area such as general skills courses in math, writing
2. Endorsement coursework
3. Required gpa
4. Letters of recommendation
5. Observation and/or experience hours with children, especially in the age groups you intend to teach. Do you need a certain number of hours, or a certain type of setting? 40 hours recommended for applicants to the MiT program at Evergreen within the past two years.
6. Additional materials, such as essays, application and fees, etc.

**USE YOUR ADVISING RESOURCES AND PLAN A COURSE OF STUDY**

A**. MiT Program Advisor at Evergreen**: Maggie Foran, Sem 2 E3135, 867-6559, [foranm@evergreen.edu](mailto:foranm@evergreen.edu) for specific program questions, assistance with evaluating transcripts and endorsement worksheets

1. Teacher education program web sites, information workshops/ and visits to teacher ed classes
2. Program advisors/certification specialists in other schools’ Departments/Schools/Colleges of Education
3. College Advising Centers and Career Center (counselors, WOIS, school catalogs, etc.)
4. TESC faculty in your endorsement area and TESC faculty that do programs on education topics

### PREPARING FOR EVERGREEN’S MiT PROGRAM

- Check the MIT web site frequently at [**www.evergreen.edu/mit**](http://www.evergreen.edu/Mmit) and click on “apply”.

The current MiT catalog, application dates, program prerequisites and endorsement information are available.