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

A. 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: http://www.k12.wa.us/certification/default.aspx

You can also check out information on the Educator Pathways section of the Professional Educator Standards Board website (PESB) at [www.pesb.wa.gov](http://www.pesb.wa.gov). Another source about becoming a teacher is: www.teachwashington.org

There are four types of approved certification program to obtain a Residency Teaching Certificate:

**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** (for career changers with BA and experience in the workforce in a shortage area such as math , or for para-educators with AA degree, or conditional or emergency teachers with BA; less coursework, longer student teaching – see: [**https://www.pesb.wa.gov/workforce-development/growing-future-educators/alternative-routes-to-teacher-certification/find-an-alternative-route-program/**](https://www.pesb.wa.gov/workforce-development/growing-future-educators/alternative-routes-to-teacher-certification/find-an-alternative-route-program/)

**34 Washington colleges/universities and regional organizations offer teacher certification programs.** To view colleges/universities/regional consortia offering programs, and their locations, see: https://www.pesb.wa.gov/preparation-programs/educator-preparation-programs/approved-programs/

There are some out of state certification program providers (generally on-line such as USC and Phoenix) which 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. For information contact PESB (360) 725-6275

**B**. To become a certified **Career Tech Educator**, either by completing a college/university route or a business and industry (work experience) route, see information at www.k12.wa.us/certification/CTE/NotCertified.aspx

**C. 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 a NASDTEC interstate agreement, www.nasdtec.net/?page=Interstate which is a collection of agreements by 42 states, D.C, B.C, Guam and DODEA. 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 and which particular styles of certifications will be accepted. This authorization may time limited by the receiving state, and the receiving state may impose additional requirements to be accomplished before the educator can teach or practice after the end of the time limit.

**D. 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. **Take a look at what is taught in endorsement area by looking at learning standards** at [www.k12.wa.us](http://www.k12.wa.us) and also endorsement competencies at https://www.pesb.wa.gov/preparation-programs/endorsement-competencies/

* 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, generally **Kindergarten thru self-contained 6th grade except special education and English Language Learners which also requires the specialized endorsement.** You may also teach in self-contained classrooms grades 7-8 but principals may prefer teachers with the relevant middle level or secondary content endorsement.
* 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 visual arts, languages, etc.
* **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 are encouraged to have two endorsements, and must have for certain areas, see our policies at: http://www.evergreen.edu/mit/mit-endorsement-policies

1. **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 undergrad or grad 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, see worksheets at: <http://www.evergreen.edu/mit/endorsements>
2. There is a **process to add endorsements after you finish your certification program**, see: [**http://www.k12.wa.us/certification/Teacher/Endorsement.aspx**](http://www.k12.wa.us/certification/Teacher/Endorsement.aspx)for info on pathways. Most endorsements can be added through test only except for elem ed, special ed, early childhood educ, early childhood special ed, reading, English language learner, bilingual ed, agriculture, business and marketing, family consumer sciences, technology ed and library media. Teachers can also check out the educator retooling conditional scholarship program to see if their desired new endorsement area might make them eligible for some financial support for testing and courses, see:

[**https://www.pesb.wa.gov/workforce-development/developing-current-educators/educator-retooling/**](https://www.pesb.wa.gov/workforce-development/developing-current-educators/educator-retooling/)

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

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

Take the **WEST-B**, a multiple choice, basic skills assessment with three subtests of reading, writing and math. See: [**www.west.nesinc.com**](http://www.west.nesinc.com) for study guide, fees, test dates. **Another option** is to submit **official SAT or ACT** scores meeting passing minimums, see **http://assessment.pesb.wa.gov/assessments/westb/west\_b-alternative**. Applicants residing out of state may at time of application to a MiT program may also use equivalent tests listed at: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hTqp6YC1iDHOdvakDGqhf6\_4p6r7uTVY9tVZwnVbQQk/edit. May have mix of the tests as long as have acceptable scores.

Take the **WEST-E or NES** if your program requires it: a multiple choice subject assessment for each endorsement area. Evergreen’s MIT program does require a WEST-E/NES for each endorsement as part of the admissions process see [**www.west.nesinc.com**](http://www.west.nesinc.com). Some programs have you take these tests before student teaching rather than when applying. World language endorsements require besides the WEST E, 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. General program prerequisites regardless of endorsement area such as general skills courses in math, writing. See Evergreen’s MiT general prerequisites for all applicants: www.evergreen.edu/mit/apply
2. Endorsement coursework, at Evergreen see: http://www.evergreen.edu/mit/endorsements
3. Required gpa (3.0 minimum expected for last 90 quarter credits or equivalent good/strong evaluations for MiT applicants at Evergreen)
4. Letters of recommendation – number needed? From whom? at Evergreen see apply webpage
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? Do you need to official document in some way? 40 hours in past two years in public schools for applicants to Evergreen’s MiT. Complete the Recent School Experience Hours log found at: http://www.evergreen.edu/mit/apply.htm
6. Additional materials, such as essays, application and fees, etc. At Evergreen see the link to the application form, and the description of the two essays needed at [http://www.evergreen.edu/mit/apply](http://www.evergreen.edu/mit/apply.htm)
7. Application deadlines.

**F. Use your advising resources and plan a course of study**

**1. MiT** Program Advisor **at Evergreen**: **Jazminne Bailey** Sem 2 E3135, 867-6559, [**baileyj@evergreen.edu**](mailto:baileyj@evergreen.edu) for specific

program questions, assistance with evaluating transcripts, endorsement worksheets and arranging visits to classes

**2**. Teacher education program web sites, information workshops/ and visits to teacher ed classes

At Evergreen, our only certification program is the Master in Teaching (MiT) program: [**www.evergreen.edu/mit**](http://www.evergreen.edu/Mmit)

**3**. Program advisors/certification specialists in other schools’ Departments/Schools/Colleges of Education

**4**. College Advising Centers and Career Center (counselors, WOIS, school catalogs, etc.)

**5**. TESC faculty in your endorsement area and TESC faculty that do programs on education topics

**6**. If planning to apply to Evergreen’s MIT program and you need **assistance to locate a public school classroom to**

**observe** or do volunteer work in, contact Evergreen MiT Field Placement Office Mr. **Loren Petty** at

**pettyl@evergreen.edu**