**Self and Career Exploration Questions For Those Considering Teaching**

**What do I believe and know:**

**About children**? About the potential of children? About youth? About college students? Where did my beliefs emerge from (formal study, socialization, practical experiences?)

**About my own competence** (knowledge, skills, attitudes)?

**About the components of teaching**? (planning and preparation, classroom environment, instruction, professional responsibilities)

**About the education system** **and teacher education preparation**? Can I participate in a regulated system that demands teacher & student accountability? What do I believe are the primary roles and responsibilities of teachers? Are teachers to be scholars, community members, guardians, visionary leaders, change agents, effective practitioners, etc.?

**About why I want to teach?** What do I expect kids to get out of education? What do I perceive are the benefits, opportunities and challenges of working in education?

**Some further reflection questions:**

What age groups do I enjoy, understand, connect with?

What amounts and types of experience have I had with children and in what settings? Do I have experience in public schools?

Do I have a philosophy/theory about education? About child development?

What are the underlying theories, models and field experiences within the teacher education programs I am researching?

Do I have a content area(s) I understand, am comfortable with, and can be endorsed in, so as to facilitate students’ knowledge and skills?

Are my own basic skills adequate for a post-baccalaureate or master’s level certification program (writing, knowledge of statistics, computer literacy, research skills, etc.)?

**What further experiences and education do I need to help me answer these questions**?

Observation time, volunteer or paid work, internships in school settings? In other settings such as non-profit or state agencies? Introductory courses in education? More coursework for an endorsement (content area specialty)?

**Teaching Career Pathways**

**College Teaching**

* Master’s or Doctorate (Ph.D.) usually in your content area expected. In some fields, a master’s is sufficient for teaching at the community college level. Most 4 year universities expect teachers to have a doctorate.
* Colleges can hire whomever they choose, but generally look for people that had some teaching experience in graduate school. Having worked on research and/or published may or may not also be expected. You do not have to complete a teacher education program.
* The Career Center can help you research graduate schools, and prerequisites for graduate school. Talking with faculty and advisors for recommendations may also be helpful.

**Teaching in Kindergarten to Grade 12 in Public Schools**

In this state, you must complete an approved teacher certification program, whether it is part of a bachelor’s degree, a post-baccalaureate certificate (sometimes called a “5th year program”), or a Master in Teaching degree in order to receive the **Residency (beginning) teacher certificate**.

* All teacher certification programs include student teaching and education coursework on knowledge and skill areas such as classroom management, curriculum planning, working with special needs learners, etc.
* For career changers and paraeducators, an alternative certification program may also be an option see: www.pesb.wa.gov.

Besides completing the certification program, one must have completed coursework and testing for one or more endorsements (subject specialties). There are approximately 33 regular endorsement areas that can be completed at colleges.

* Elementary education: can teach all subjects, grades K-8
* Middle level grades 4-9: in humanities (English language arts & social studies), or math, or science
* Secondary endorsements: single subjects such as history, biology, math, English, for grades 5-12
* All level endorsements: good for preschool to grade 12 in areas such as world languages, art, health, music, special ed, English language learners

Thus, **one should map out an educational plan during one’s undergraduate years that includes expected endorsement coursework and general prerequisites for a teacher certification program**. Common prerequisites include statistics, speech, expository writing. Endorsement coursework is usually spelled out on the education program’s website, and gets very specific about the need for a variety of subcategories in your endorsement. For example, a social studies teacher needs credits in US, world, and Pacific Northwest history, economics, geography, political science, and social sciences.

There are also **career and technical education endorsements** that range from automotive mechanics, to graphic arts, to computer network software management, to floristry, etc. These teaching areas require a much shorter teacher education program, but also require work experience in the field. For information see: <http://www.k12.wa.us/certification/CTEMain.aspx>

**Teaching Kindergarten to Grade 12 in Private Schools**

Private schools may hire whomever they find that has the best qualifications for their circumstances, whether that person is certified or not. However, the school must submit a report annually to the state listing the number of non-certified teachers and the reasons the school has hired/continues to employ them. Many private schools, including alternative schools, do prefer certified teachers.

**Working as an Educational Staff Associate including School Counselor, School Psychologist, School Social Worker, Occupational and Physical Therapists in schools, School nurses, School Speech Pathologists and Audiologists:**

See: http://www.k12.wa.us/certification/ESAMain.aspx

**Working as a School Administrator (principal, superintendent, program administrator)**

http://www.k12.wa.us/certification/AdminMain.aspx

**Other Careers Working with Children/Teens**

Check with the career center on researching careers that work with youth in settings other than schools such as therapists, parole officers, case managers, shelter advocates, tutors, etc.

**Evergreen’s Master in Teaching (MIT) Program**

A full time teacher certification program of six 10-week quarters, including two quarters of student teaching resulting in a master’s degree of 96 credits and recommendation for the residency teaching certificate. This is the only certification option available at Evergreen.

1. Some attributes of the program mirror the Evergreen undergraduate experience – non-graded, integrated (not separate classes), team-taught, intensive reading/writing, narrative evaluations. You can get much information on the MIT program web page: [www.evergreen.edu/mit](http://www.evergreen.edu/mit).
2. A 45 member cohort starts once per year, in Fall. Placements are in schools within 40 miles of TESC. If you want to visit a class, contact MIT advisor Maggie Foran.

How to apply to the program, application form, information and links to entrance test registration web sites, and endorsement worksheets at <http://www.evergreen.edu/mit/applying.htm>. The time to apply is in Fall and Winter – applications are accepted starting Oct. 1 with an early admission deadline late January and final deadline early May. Applications on a space available basis after the final deadline.

**Maggie Foran**, [foranm@evergreen.edu](mailto:foranm@evergreen.edu), (360) 867-6559, SEM 2 E 3135 for catalogs, advising appointments, questions

**Web Sites for Exploring Teacher Education**

**TeachWashington.org** is an informational website on the process of becoming a teacher with links to teacher education programs.

**Professional Educator Standards Board – www.pesb.wa.gov**

PESB sets policies, informs the legislature, and is the decision making authority overseeing the educator preparation and certification system in the state of Washington.

**The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) –www.k12.wa.us**

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction leads, supports, and oversees K-12 education, ensuring the success of all learners. Teaching standards and curriculum, assessments, support programs, and more on their website. The certification office within OSPI processed 31,428 certificates including new certification, adding endorsements, certifying teachers from out of state, etc.

Pathways to Becoming a Teacher, including checklist, timelines, teacher preparation programs, questions: <http://sites.google.com/a/pesb.wa.gov/future-teachers/>

PESB-Approved College/University Programs: Teacher Preparation, Endorsement, Administrator, ESA: <http://www.k12.wa.us/certification/pubdocs/EndorsementTable.pdf>

http://www.k12.wa.us/certification/pubdocs/TeacherCertificationProgramsAS116.pdf

Menu to select by program or endorsement:

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

Location of Teacher education programs:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/certification/pubdocs/LocationofTeacherCertProgramsAS117.pdf>

Alternative routes to certification: http://sites.google.com/a/pesb.wa.gov/future-teachers/alternative\_routes

Washington’s Teacher Assessments: http://www.pesb.wa.gov/educators/assessments

Testing companying offering the WEST-B and WEST-E, and how to prepare: <http://www.west.nesinc.com/>

Laws, regulations, reports concerning teacher certification:

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

**The NASDTEC Interstate Agreement** -Facilitating Mobility of Educational Personnel: http://www.nasdtec.org/agreement.php