

College and University Requirements

Excerpt from Ala. Admin. Code r. 290-3-3-.03 (Adopted 06/10/2021)

To offer approved educator preparation programs, institutions shall be accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) at the level of program(s) to be provided. To provide a Class AA program in a secondary or P-12 teaching field an institution shall offer sufficient education specialist degree level courses in that discipline to meet the requirements of Rule 290-3-3-.02(6)(a)5. If an institution loses regional accreditation at one or more levels, the educator preparation provider (EPP) must adhere to the teach-out plan negotiated between SACS and the institution. At a minimum, the EPP must notify candidates individually and in writing.

(1) Content and Pedagogical Knowledge. The provider ensures that candidates develop an understanding of the critical concepts and principles of their discipline and facilitates candidates' reflections of their personal biases to increase their understanding and practice of equity, diversity, and inclusion. The provider is intentional in the development of their curriculum and clinical experiences for candidates to demonstrate their ability to effectively work with diverse P-12 students and their families.

(a)The Learner and Learning. The provider ensures candidates are able to apply their knowledge of the learner and learning at the appropriate progression levels. Evidence provided should demonstrate that candidates are able to apply critical concepts and principles of learner development (In TASC Standard 1), learning differences (In TASC Standard 2), and creating safe and supportive learning environments (In TASC Standard 3) in order to work effectively with diverse P-12 students and their families.

(b)Content. The provider ensures candidates are able to apply their knowledge of content at the appropriate progression levels. Evidence provided demonstrates candidates know central concepts of their content area (In TASC Standard 4) and are able to apply the content in developing equitable and inclusive learning experiences (In TASC Standard 5) for diverse P-12 students. Providers ensure that candidates apply content and pedagogical knowledge as reflected in outcome assessments in response to Alabama courses of study and program approval standards and, if they choose to do so, standards of Specialized Professional Associations (SPAs), the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), or other accrediting bodies (e.g., National Association of Schools of Music - NASM).

(c)Instructional Practice. The provider ensures that candidates are able to apply their knowledge of In TASC standards relating to instructional practice at the appropriate progression levels. Evidence demonstrates how candidates are able to assess (In TASC Standard 6), plan for instruction (In TASC Standard 7), and utilize a variety of instructional strategies (In TASC Standard 8) to provide equitable and inclusive learning experiences for diverse P-12 students. Providers ensure candidates model and apply national or state approved technology standards to engage and improve learning for all students.

(d)Professional Responsibility. The provider ensures candidates are able to apply their knowledge of professional responsibility at the appropriate progression levels. Evidence provided should demonstrate candidates engage in professional learning, act ethically (In TASC Standard 9), take responsibility for student learning, and collaborate with others (In TASC Standard 10) to work effectively with diverse P-12 students and their families.

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(2) Clinical Partnerships and Practice. The provider ensures effective partnerships and high-quality clinical practice are central to candidate preparation. These experiences should be designed to develop candidate's knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions to demonstrate positive impact on diverse students' learning and development. High-quality clinical practice offers candidates experiences in different settings and modalities, as well as with diverse P-12 students, schools, families, and communities. Partners share responsibility to identify and address real problems of practice candidates experience in their engagement with P-12 students.

(a)Partnerships for Clinical Preparation. Partners co-construct mutually beneficial P12 school and community arrangements for clinical preparation and share responsibility for continuous improvement of candidate preparation.

(b)Clinical Educators. Partners co-select, prepare, evaluate, and support high-quality clinical educators, both provider- and school-based, who demonstrate a positive impact on candidates' development and diverse P-12 student learning and development.

(c)Clinical Experiences. The provider works with partners to design and implement clinical experiences, utilizing various modalities, of sufficient depth, breadth, diversity, coherence, and duration to ensure candidates demonstrate their developing effectiveness and positive impact on diverse P-12 students' learning and development as presented in Rule 290-3-3-.03(1).

(3) Candidate Recruitment, Progression, and Support. The provider demonstrates the quality of candidates is a continuous and purposeful focus from recruitment through completion. The provider demonstrates that development of candidate quality is the goal of educator preparation and that the EPP provides supports services (such as advising, remediation, and mentoring) in all phases of the program so candidates will be successful.

(a)Recruitment. The provider presents goals and progress evidence for recruitment of high-quality candidates from a broad range of backgrounds and diverse populations that align with their mission. The provider demonstrates efforts to know and address local, state, regional, or national needs for hard-to-staff schools and shortage fields. The goals and evidence should address progress towards a candidate pool which reflects the diversity of America's P-12 students.

(b)Monitoring and Supporting Candidate Progression. The provider creates and monitors transition points from admission through completion that indicate candidates' developing content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical skills, critical dispositions, professional responsibilities, and the ability to integrate technology effectively in their practice. The provider identifies a transition point at any point in the program when a cohort grade point average of 3.0 is achieved and monitors this data. The provider ensures knowledge of and progression through transition points are transparent to candidates. The provider plans and documents the need for candidate support, as identified in disaggregated data by race and ethnicity and such other categories as may be relevant for the EPP's mission, so candidates meet milestones. The provider has a system for effectively maintaining records of candidate complaints, including complaints made to the Alabama State Board or Department of Education or CAEP, and documents their resolution.

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(c)Competency at Completion. The provider ensures candidates possess academic competency to teach effectively with positive impacts on diverse P-12 student learning and development through application of content knowledge, foundational pedagogical skills, and technology integration in the field(s) where certification is sought. Multiple measures are provided, and data are disaggregated and analyzed based on race, ethnicity, and such other categories as may be relevant for the EPP's mission.

(4) Program Impact. The provider demonstrates the effectiveness of its completers' instruction on P-12 student learning and development and completer and employer satisfaction with the relevance and effectiveness of preparation.

(a)Completer Effectiveness. The provider demonstrates that program completers:

- (i)** Effectively contribute to P-12 student-learning growth and
- (ii)** Apply in P-12 classrooms the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions that the preparation experiences were designed to achieve. In addition, the provider includes a rationale for the data elements provided.

(b)Satisfaction of Employers. The provider demonstrates employers are satisfied with the completers' preparation for their assigned responsibilities in working with diverse P12 students and their families.

(c)Satisfaction of Completers. The provider demonstrates program completers perceive their preparation as relevant to the responsibilities they encounter on the job, and their preparation was effective.

(5) Quality Assurance System and Continuous Improvement. The provider maintains a quality assurance system that consists of valid data from multiple measures and supports continuous improvement that is sustained and evidence-based. The system is developed and maintained with input from internal and external stakeholders. The provider uses the results of inquiry and data collection to establish priorities, enhance program elements, and highlight innovations.

(a)Quality Assurance System. The provider has developed, implemented, and modified, as needed, a functioning quality assurance system that ensures a sustainable process to document operational effectiveness. The provider documents how data enter the system, how data are reported and used in decision making, and how outcomes of these decisions inform programmatic improvement.

(b)Data Quality. The provider's quality assurance system from Rule 290-3-3-.03(5)(a) relies on relevant, verifiable, representative, cumulative, and actionable measures to ensure interpretations of data are valid and consistent.

(c)Stakeholder Involvement. The provider includes relevant internal (e.g., EPP administrators, faculty, staff, candidates) and external (e.g., alumni, practitioners, school and community partners, employers) stakeholders in program design, evaluation, and continuous improvement processes.

(d)Continuous Improvement. The provider regularly, systematically, and continuously assesses performance against its goals and relevant standards, tracks results over time, and documents modifications and/or innovations and their effects on EPP outcomes.

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(6) General Requirements

(a) Courses, Credits, and/or Programs Acceptable to Meet State-Approved Program Requirements.

1. Any courses and/or credits verified on an official transcript and used to meet State-approved program requirements must be from regionally accredited institutions.
2. Transferred courses and/or credits that meet the definition of professional studies courses in Rule 290-3-3-.01(39) must have been completed at a regionally accredited institution that prepares teachers on the same degree level of certification.
3. Courses, credits, and/or degrees accepted from institutions outside the United States shall be substantiated by an evaluation of the foreign credentials from a state, federal, or private foreign credential evaluation service recognized by the Alabama State Department of Education Office of Teaching and Leading. The evaluation must show that courses, credits, and/or degrees were earned at an institution equivalent to a regionally accredited institution in the United States.
4. Remedial courses cannot not be used to meet approved program requirements.
Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.01(46).
5. Coursework used to meet Class B certification requirements and/or bachelor's degree requirements cannot be used to meet requirements for Class A certification in any teaching field or area of instructional support. Coursework used to meet Class A certification requirements and/or master's degree requirements cannot be used to meet certification requirements for Class AA certification in any teaching field or area of instructional support. However, graduate courses used to renew a certificate may be used to earn an advanced degree.
6. A candidate cannot be recommended for certification based on completion of a program for which State approval expired more than seven years prior to the date of program completion.
7. Individuals in undergraduate programs may enroll in master's-level courses in an approved Class A or Alternative Class A program in accordance with written institutional policies and State standards for program admission. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.03(6)(a)5.
8. Individuals in a master's program may enroll in courses in an approved Class AA program in accordance with written institutional policies and State standards for program admission. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.02(6)(a)5.

(b) General Studies. The EPP shall ensure that candidates have completed general studies courses and experiences. General studies shall include courses in English language arts, social studies, mathematics, and science.

1. Individuals in Class B programs in early childhood education, elementary education, early childhood special education, or collaborative special education teacher (K-6 or 612) 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.

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- (i) To meet the English language arts requirement, EPPs are encouraged to require courses in reading comprehension, writing, literature, and speech.
- (ii) To meet the mathematics requirement, EPPs are encouraged to require courses that extend candidates' knowledge of and ability to teach counting and cardinality; operations and algebraic thinking, number and operations with base-ten and fractions, measurement and data, and geometry.
- (iii) To meet the science requirement, EPPs are encouraged to require a laboratory experience and courses in physical science, life science, Earth/space science, and engineering or technology or applications of science or computer science.
- (iv) To meet the social studies requirement, EPPS are encouraged to require courses in economics, history, geography, and civics/political science.

2. Individuals applying for admission to Alternative Class A programs in early childhood education, elementary education, early childhood special education, or collaborative special education teacher (K-6 and/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 or earned the current passing score on the prescribed Praxis subject assessment of the Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program (AECAP). Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.44(2)(d).

(c) Teaching Field. Institutions may elect to meet appropriate Alabama State Board of Education rules for specific teaching fields, CAEP-affiliated specialty organization guidelines, or the guidelines of other national teaching field specific accrediting agencies.

1. Major requirements. The Class B middle-level, secondary, and P-12 teaching fields shall include one of the following options:

- (i) A comprehensive teaching field in English language arts, general science, or general social studies.
- (ii) A single teaching field that includes a minimum of 30 semester hours of credit with at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit in a single teaching field, such as chemistry or history.
- (iii) A single teaching field in an area of health education, career and technical education, physical education, or special education that includes a major with a minimum of 30 semester hours of credit with at least 18 semester hours of upper division credit.

2. Methods course requirements. Each Class B and Alternative Class A middle, secondary, and P-12 teaching field shall be supported by at least one 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) Criminal History Background Check.

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1. Effective no later than the beginning of the fall 2008 semester, any candidate applying for admission to a State-approved educator preparation program shall be required to be fingerprinted for a criminal history background check through the Alabama State Department of Education to the Alabama Bureau of Investigation (ABI) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) pursuant to Ala. Code § 16-23-16.2 (1975).
2. The candidate shall be fingerprinted by a service provider approved by the Alabama State Department of Education. Additional information about approved providers, fees, and procedures is available from the Certification Office.
3. The candidate is responsible for the nonrefundable, nontransferable fee.
4. The candidate shall be issued a suitability determination from the State Superintendent of Education. The candidate must provide the designated official of the EPP documentation of having cleared the criminal history background check prior to admission to a State-approved educator preparation program.
5. A candidate whose suitability determination precludes admission to a State-approved educator preparation program has the right to due process procedures in accordance with the current Educator Certification Chapter of the *Alabama Administrative Code*.

(e)Field Experiences and Internships (Class B, Class A, and Class AA Programs).

1.Field experiences.

- (i) All Class B, Alternative Class A, Class A and Class AA programs shall require extensive field experiences in diverse settings. If permitted by written EPP policy, individuals who are employed in positions appropriate to the area of their current program (e.g., an ESOL teacher of both elementary and secondary students in a diverse setting) may complete field experiences on the job, but those experiences must be planned with specific purposes and assessments.
- (ii) Except as noted in Rule 290-3-3-.03(6)(e)(v), the majority of field experiences must occur in P-12 schools.
- (iii) At least half of the field experiences shall be in the candidate's teaching field or area of instructional support.
- (iv) For pre-kindergarten education programs, field experiences must span birth through age 4 in both childcare and Office of School Readiness programs.
- (v) For early childhood education and early childhood special education programs, field experiences shall include placements in at least two of the three main types of early education settings [early school grades (K-3), childcare centers and homes, and Office of School Readiness programs.]

2.Internships in Class B and Alternative Class A programs.

- (i) The internships in Class B and Alternative Class A programs shall equal at least a full semester, full-time in the teaching field for which certification is sought and may include more than

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one classroom or grade level, with experiences of the intern progressing to the full responsibilities of the teacher. Prior to program completion, an intern must teach full-time for at least five consecutive days.

- (ii) For candidates who are seeking certification in two or more distinct teaching fields, an additional internship(s) shall be required (e.g., mathematics and biology).
- (iii) For candidates who are seeking certification in two or more related fields (e.g., chemistry and physics or elementary education and elementary-level collaborative special education or health education and physical education), the internship may be divided between no more than two teaching fields.
- (iv) For P-12 programs and for individuals seeking certification in collaborative special education at both the K-6 and 6-12 levels, the internship shall be divided between early childhood/elementary and middle/secondary grades.
- (v) For pre-kindergarten education programs, the internship must span birth through age 4 in both childcare and Office of School Readiness programs.
- (vi) For early childhood education and early childhood special education programs, the internship shall include a placement with at least two of the following age groups: birth-age 3, age 3-5, age 5-8.
- (vii) For elementary education or collaborative special education (K-6) programs, the internship shall include lower elementary (grades K-3) and upper elementary (grades 4-6) placements unless substantial field experiences were completed at both levels.
- (viii) A candidate who has met all State requirements for unconditional admission to an Alternative Class A program and is employed in an Alabama school may complete the internship in the candidate's classroom if both of the following requirements are met:
 - (I) The candidate holds a valid Interim Employment Certificate endorsed for the teaching field appropriate to the candidate's teaching assignment, AND
 - (II) On-the job internship placements are permitted by EPP written policy. See Rule 290-3-3-.02(6)(f)3. for information about cooperating teacher requirements.

3. Internships in Class A and AA programs. Class A and Class AA programs may require an internship. Refer to the specific rules for each program: Class A programs for teaching fields in Rule 290-3-3-.41(5)(e), instructional leadership in Rule 290-33-.47(3)(e), library media in Rule 290-3-3-.48(4)(e), school counseling in Rule 290-33-.49(5)(e) and (f), school psychometry in Rule 290-3-3-.50(4)(e), sport management in Rule 290-3-3-.52(3)(e), Class AA programs for teaching fields in Rule 290-3-3-.53(5) (e), and school psychology in Rule 290-3-3-.57(4)(e).

(f) Faculty Qualifications.

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1. Educator preparation provider (EPP) faculty at the institution shall have earned doctorates from regionally accredited colleges or universities or exceptional expertise that qualifies them for their assignments.
2. Faculty who teaches professional education courses or supervise interns for teaching field programs should be thoroughly familiar with the current professional responsibilities of the P-12 practitioners in that teaching field.

P-12 clinical faculty (cooperating teachers) who supervise interns shall be accomplished school professionals who are properly certified at the Class A level for their present assignment or hold National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification that is appropriate to their present assignment, have at least three years of professional educational work experience in their field of specialization, and are currently teaching classes in the intern's area(s) of specialization. (i) For candidates in Class B programs and candidates in Alternative Class A programs who are not employed on the basis of holding an Interim Employment Certificate, if no acceptable teacher with Class A certification in the intern's area(s) of specialization is available in the institution's service area, then the EPP head may document and grant an exception for a cooperating teacher who meets the other criteria but holds a valid Class A certificate endorsed for Educational Administration or Instructional Leadership or a valid Class B Professional Educator Certificate rather than a Class A Professional Educator Certificate in the intern's area of specialization. In addition, an intern in a Pre-K, early childhood education, elementary education, or collaborative special education program (K-6 or 6-12) may be supervised by a cooperating teacher who holds a Class A certificate endorsed for reading specialist.

(ii) For a candidate in an Alternative Class A program who is employed full-time as a teacher in the area of the candidate's Alternative Class A program, if no acceptable teacher with Class A certification in the intern's area(s) of specialization is available in that school, then the EPP head may document and grant an exception for a cooperating teacher who meets the other criteria but holds a valid Class A certificate endorsed for Educational Administration or Instructional Leadership or a valid Class

B Professional Educator Certificate rather than a Class A Professional Educator Certificate in the intern's area of specialization. In addition, an intern in a Pre-K, early childhood education, elementary education, or collaborative special education program (K-6 or 6-12) may be supervised by a cooperating teacher who holds a Class A certificate endorsed for reading specialist.

4. An intern placed in a pre-kindergarten setting may be supervised by a teacher who meets the criteria indicated above, or if a teacher who meets those criteria is not available in the EPP's service area (Class B) or the school (Alternative Class A), the intern may be supervised by a lead teacher designated by the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education and employed in a setting accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.
5. P-12 faculty shall provide regular and continuing support for interns through such processes as observation, conferencing, group discussion, and e-mail and the use of other technologies.

(g)Governance and Accountability for Educator Preparation.

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1. The president of the institution shall designate the administrative head of educator preparation (the EPP head).
2. One person shall be authorized by the EPP head to represent the EPP as the certification officer, who certifies to the Alabama State Department of Education that an applicant for a certificate has successfully completed the approved program for the certificate sought and is recommended for certification.
3. Unless specified differently in other sections of this chapter, there shall be at least one specialist in each curriculum area for which a program leading to certification is offered who holds the doctorate with a major area of specialization in the curriculum area to which the faculty member is assigned. At the Class AA level, there shall be at least two specialists for each certification program. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.01(33).
4. The unit shall limit its program offerings to ensure that courses are offered at appropriate times and with sufficient frequency to accommodate the levels of the candidates (Class B, Class A, and Class AA).

(h) Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) Accountability.

1. Support for program completers. The EPP shall establish, publish, and implement policies to guarantee the success of individuals who complete its approved programs and are employed in their area(s) of specialization in Alabama. The EPP shall provide remediation at no cost to such individuals whose performance indicates the need for additional support within the first two years after the beginning valid date of the Professional Educator Certificate, which was issued based on recommendation by the EPP. Assistance may be requested by the new employee, the employee's principal, or the employing superintendent. In no case, shall the EPP be required to provide remediation for more than the first two years of employment.
2. New programs. Authorization by the Alabama State Board of Education shall be secured before a proposal for a new program is reviewed. Candidates shall not be enrolled in courses unique to a proposed program prior to program approval.
3. Discontinuation of programs.
 - (i) If the Alabama State Board of Education chooses to eliminate standards for a teaching field or area of instructional support, the State Superintendent of Education will communicate directly with EPP heads.
 - (ii) If an institution chooses to discontinue a program or place it on inactive status, the EPP head shall give written notification of this decision to the State Superintendent of Education. The notification shall include the names and other identifying information of candidates who have been unconditionally admitted to the program to be discontinued or placed on inactive status, along with each candidate's anticipated program completion date. Receipt of that notification shall be confirmed by the State Superintendent of Education. No other candidates shall be admitted to the program.
 - (iii) An EPP may choose to reactivate an inactive program at any time prior to the expiration date of the inactive program if all standards applicable to the inactive program are met. If the inactive program is not reactivated at the time of the next comprehensive review, it must be

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addressed as a new program. (Programs may be placed on inactive status if faculty requirements are not met.)

4.State and/or federal reports. Institutions that do not provide requested data in a timely manner may have any or all of the institution's program approval rescinded as authorized in Rule 290-3-3-.59(6). By July 1, 2019, and each July 1 thereafter, each EPP shall submit to the State superintendent of education an annual report summarizing assistance provided to help LEAs analyze and solve school-based problems.

5.Alternative Approaches. EPPs must provide prospective educators with information about alternative approaches to earning a Professional Educator Certificate or a Professional Leadership Certificate.

Ala. Admin. Code r. 290-3-3-.03

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