

## **South Carolina Approved Alternative Route Certification Programs 2022-23**

Alternative route certification programs provide an opportunity for an individual who holds at least a bachelor's degree, but who has not completed an educator preparation program, to obtain certification and work as a classroom teacher in a South Carolina public school. Candidates for alternative route programs have the requisite academic course work and content knowledge in a certification field prior to program admission and then complete preparation in pedagogy while working as a teacher.

### **Alternative Route Certification Eligibility**

To qualify for entrance into any alternative certification program, an individual must have earned at least a conferred bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university and meet any additional academic requirements of the specific program. Participants in an alternative route program are limited to three one-year Alternative Route or conditional certificates. South Carolina statute may allow for a fourth-year extension for participants in some programs unless a fourth-year certificate option is limited by other federal or state requirements. Because an individual is limited in the number of conditional certificates that may be issued, a prospective educator who has participated in, but not completed, one alternative route certification program in South Carolina is not eligible for admission to or participation in another alternative route certification program. Additionally, an individual who has been enrolled in student teaching in a traditional teacher preparation program may not be eligible for participation in an alternative certification program. For issuance of an Alternative Route certificate, the prospective educator must meet all application and eligibility requirements and earn a passing score on an approved certification assessment in the subject area.

### **South Carolina Approved Alternative Route Certification Programs**

An individual who successfully completes one of the approved programs below is eligible for advancement to a standard, renewable Professional certificate.

#### ***Program of Alternative Certification for Educators (PACE)***

PACE is facilitated by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) and is designed to allow career changers to enter the teaching profession in a PACE-approved subject area aligned with their conferred degrees or completed coursework. Over a three-year period, qualified PACE participants work toward full certification while teaching in their content area, participate in training institutes and seminars, and must complete nine hours of college course work in identified areas. To qualify for enrollment, the prospective educator must have earned an academic major or major equivalency in the subject area of the certification field.

#### ***American Board***

The American Board is a non-partisan, non-profit organization established by the United States Department of Education. In June 2007 the South Carolina General Assembly passed the American Board for the Certification of Teacher Excellence Act, which allows state public school districts or charter schools to hire individuals who use the American Board process to obtain a South Carolina teaching certificate. Individuals seeking enrollment must have a conferred bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited university.

#### ***Teach for America (TFA)***

Approved by the State Board of Education in 2010, TFA recruits candidates who have earned at least a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution to serve as teachers in partner districts and schools through an application and selection process conducted by the national organization. Upon selection, TFA corps members commit to teaching for two years in a partner district or school to which

they are assigned. South Carolina is one of fifty-two TFA partner regions across the country. Placement is based on local need, candidate qualifications, and personal preference. TFA participants are eligible for an Alternative Route certificate in all classroom-based teaching fields. After the two-year commitment, State Board of Education guidelines allow a TFA corps member to pursue a standard, renewable Professional certificate by maintaining employment in a South Carolina public school, completing performance evaluation requirements, and completing at least nine hours of college coursework in identified areas.

### ***Teachers of Tomorrow (ToT)***

ToT is for-profit organization approved to offer an alternative route program in several states including South Carolina. After applying for ToT program enrollment, prospective educators complete a series of self-paced trainings in order to qualify for a Statement of Eligibility to apply for South Carolina public school positions. ToT candidates that gain employment in a South Carolina public school are then eligible to for issuance of a South Carolina Alternative Route certificate. To be eligible for ToT, an individual must have earned at least a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution with a major or major equivalency in an offered certification area and meet GPA requirements.

### ***Alternative Pathways to Educator Certification Program (APEC)***

The APEC program is offered through Columbia College with specific school district partners and prepares candidates through coursework, classroom experiences, and mentoring to become successful classroom teachers. While participating in the program, candidates are employed in a work-embedded teacher residency while completing hybrid courses. Eligibility for APEC follows an application including a formal review of all coursework through official transcripts, an overall grade-point average (GPA) of 2.5, an interview, and letters of recommendation. APEC works with specific partner school districts.

### ***Carolina Collaborative for Alternative Preparation (Carolina CAP)***

Carolina CAP is an alternative route program offered through the College of Education at the University of South Carolina–Columbia (UofSC) in partnership with the Center for Teaching Quality. Drawing upon teacher candidates holding at least a bachelor's degree and who are identified by partner school districts, Carolina CAP provides a combination of coursework and micro-credentials to address the identified needs of beginning teachers. Eligibility is determined by coursework and GPA requirements. Carolina CAP works with specific partner school districts.

### ***Converse Alternative Certification-Art Education (CACAE)***

The Converse Alternative Certification–Art Education (CACAE) program at Converse College is an alternative route program for the preparation of teachers in the field of Art. The program targets prospective teachers who have obtained undergraduate degrees in studio art and other related applied arts fields. CACAE works with specific partner school districts.

### ***Greenville Alternative Teacher Education (GATE)***

Greenville County Schools offers a district-embedded alternative certification program to prepare teachers in critical needs areas. In partnership with Public Education Partners, GATE provides a teaching experience in a Greenville County School, supported by a team of on-site professional mentors and coaches. To qualify for GATE, an individual must have a major or an emphasis in the teaching field.

### ***TeachCharleston***

Charleston County School District offers TeachCharleston as an option for individuals to pursue certification. The three-year job-embedded teacher development program provides training and professional learning in a cohort setting to prepare and support selected participants for classrooms. TeachCharleston certification area eligibility is determined by possessing a major or major equivalency in the field. TeachCharleston is specific to that school district.

## Certification Fields by Alternative Route Program

The following are the certification fields offered by each program. Specific eligibility requirements may differ for each certification area and program.

	PACE	American Board	Teach for America	Teachers of Tomorrow	APEC	CarolinaCAP	Converse Art	GATE	TeachCharleston
<b>Certification Field</b>									
<b>PK–Grade 12</b>									
Art	X		X	X			X		X
Dance	X		X	X	X				
Health	X		X	X					
School Librarian	X		X	X					
Music	X		X	X					X
Physical Education	X		X	X					
Special Education: Emotional Disabilities	X		X	X					
Special Education: Learning Disabilities			X	X					
Special Education: Multi-categorical			X		X	X		X	
Theater	X		X	X					
French	X		X	X				X	X
Spanish	X		X	X				X	X
Chinese	X		X	X					
German	X		X	X					
Japanese	X		X	X					
Latin	X		X	X					
Russian	X		X	X					
ESOL	X		X	X					
<b>Early Childhood/Elementary</b>									
Early Childhood (PK–Grade 3)			X		X	X			
Elementary (Grades 2–6)			X	X	X	X			X
<b>Middle Level (Grades 5–8)</b>									
ML Language Arts	X	X	X	X	X			X	X
ML Mathematics	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
ML Science	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
ML Social Studies	X		X	X	X			X	X
<b>High School (Grades 9–12)</b>									
Agriculture	X		X	X					X
Biology	X	X	X	X		X			
Business & Marketing Education	X		X	X				X	X
Chemistry	X	X	X	X		X			
Computer Science	X		X						X

	PACE	American Board	Teach for America	Teachers of Tomorrow	APEC	CarolinaCAP	Converse Art	GATE	TeachCharleston
English	X	X	X	X	X			X	X
Family and Consumer Science	X		X	X					X
History	X		X	X					
Industrial Technology	X		X	X					X
Mathematics	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Physics	X	X	X	X		X			
Science	X	X	X	X				X	X
Social Studies	X		X	X				X	X

To learn more about each program provider including costs, application process, and contact information, please visit the respective program provider’s website. A link to each program provider and appropriate contact information can found on the South Carolina Department of Education website under [Alternative Certification Programs](#).

**For general information, please contact:**

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