

## Educator Talent and Workforce Development

# Educator Preparation Program Approval

## Teacher Preparation

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## Overview

Per [Bulletin 996](#), Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs) must be approved by the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) to recommend teacher candidates for certification. Program approval cycles are held twice a year, resulting in decisions by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) in April and October. This application is specifically for providers who train teacher candidates to obtain initial certification.

Providers will participate in the Teacher Preparation Quality Rating System (TPQRS) beginning one year after BESE approval. TPQRS ratings are published annually and used biannually for renewal decisions.

## Terms

The terms below are used by the LDOE in [Bulletin 996](#) and for the application process.

- **Add-on Certification (Endorsement)** - a permanent credential added to a teaching certificate. Upon completion of requirements for an additional area of certification, the holder of a valid Louisiana teaching certificate may have the endorsement added; private providers must receive approval to offer add-on certification programs.
- **Full Application** - required for each pathway for which a provider is applying; all certification programs must be included on a single application for each pathway requesting approval.
- **Initial Certification** - the first certification a candidate obtains; in program approvals, all providers must be approved to recommend candidates for initial certifications.
- **Innovative** - a residency within an already approved certification program; innovative residencies do not follow the requirements in [Bulletin 996](#) but are innovatively adjusted to meet specific workforce and community needs.
- **Merged-to-Integrated (Dual)** - special education mild/moderate certifications may be earned in conjunction with a core-subject (i.e., math, English, science, social studies) initial certification; providers must obtain approval to offer dual/merged certification programs.
- **Notice of Intent (NOI)** - required by [Bulletin 996](#) to show what workforce needs a certification program application will address; must be submitted and approved by the LDOE before an applicant will be moved to the full application.
- **Pathway** - the two options given within [Bulletin 996](#): Traditional or Alternative Certification.
  - Traditional = undergraduate
  - Alternative = post-baccalaureate
    - Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT)
    - Certification-Only (cert-only)
    - Practitioner

- **Program** - the individual certification program offered within a pathway by a provider.
- **Provider** - the overarching organization (e.g., Cajun College of Acadiana; Private Provider, LLC.).

## Process

Submit applications through the [online application portal](#).

1. **Notice of Intent:** Applicants will submit information regarding organizational structure, certifications being applied for, and the workforce that those certifications will support. This stage allows the LDOE to determine that an applicant is applying to the appropriate program and will meet a workforce need in our state.
2. **Full Application:** This stage requires applicants to show evidence that, as a provider, each certification program will meet policy requirements in Bulletins [996](#) and [746](#).
3. **Round 1 Evaluation:** Upon submission, the LDOE evaluation team reviews each application to ensure that providers will operate sustainably and that candidates will obtain certification through clear evidence aligned with policy-driven rubrics.
4. **Round 1 Pending Decisions:** After review, applicants will receive notice of their pending decision via email from the LDOE. Pending approvals require no additional action. Per policy, pending denials are allowed seven (7) calendar days to resubmit the application and address feedback aligned to the rubric in the Round 1 stage.
5. **Round 2 Evaluation:** Upon resubmission, the LDOE evaluation team reviews applications to determine if the gaps determined in Round 1 have been appropriately addressed with policy-aligned evidence.
6. **Round 2 Pending Decisions:** Round 2 applicants will receive a pending decision via email. Pending approvals require no additional action. **Pending denials must wait one year before resubmitting for approval.**
7. **BESE Consideration:** The LDOE pending decisions are submitted to BESE for consideration. Once approved by BESE, providers will receive a letter of approval via USPS mail to the primary address on the application.
8. **Program Enrollment:** Programs approved at the April BESE meeting may begin enrolling students on **May 1**. Programs approved at the October BESE meeting may begin enrolling students on **November 1**.

### Annual Application Cycle

Cycle	Application Window Opens	Notice of Intent Due	Full Application Due	Round 1 Evaluation Period Begins	Notification of Pending Decisions	Round 2 Evaluation and Notification (as needed)	BESE Consideration
Spring	September 1	October 1	December 10	December 11	February 15	TBD	April TBD
Fall	May 1	June 1	July 10	July 11	August 26	TBD	October TBD

# FAQs

## What is the difference between initial and innovative program approval?

“Initial” refers to the initial certification program the provider is applying to offer to teacher candidates. “Innovative” refers to an innovative residency program design; only Providers who are already approved to offer initial certification may apply for innovative residency approval. Program approval requirements are outlined in [Bulletin 996](#).

## Are there any fees required to submit a program application?

There are no fees required to submit a program application.

## What is the difference between credit hours and contact hours?

Credit hours refer to coursework hours assigned by university providers. Contact hours refer to training hours conducted by private providers. Hours are converted using a 1:15 ratio (i.e., 3 credit hours = 45 contact hours).

## What if an annual deadline falls on a weekend? When is it due?

The deadlines are firm regardless of the day of the week they fall on. Please plan accordingly.

## If not approved, what are the next steps?

Applicants who are denied at the BESE Consideration meeting must wait one calendar year before resubmitting the same program application to BESE. During that time, applicants are encouraged to reach out to [believeandprepare@la.gov](mailto:believeandprepare@la.gov) for support in aligning with policy requirements.

## If approved, what are the next steps?

Approved applicants will receive a letter of approval from BESE and may begin enrolling students. The LDOE will reach out to the application’s primary contact to begin onboarding newly approved programs.

## Evaluation Criteria

The LDOE provides rigorous evaluation criteria for program approval. Applications are evaluated based on [current versions](#) of Bulletin [996](#), Bulletin [746](#), Bulletin [146](#), and Bulletin [130](#). Current versions of these bulletins may be found on the [BESE website](#). Please review these bulletins to determine eligibility before submitting an application.

The LDOE will evaluate the criteria on a "Pass/Not Pass" basis. The LDOE will interpret the evaluation criteria in the current versions of the previously mentioned bulletins using the [Initial/Innovative Teacher Preparation Program Approval Rubric](#).

## Evaluation Process Notes

- The LDOE evaluation team will evaluate each application based on the Initial/Innovative Teacher Preparation Program Approval Rubric. Initial Applications must "pass" all five sections of the rubric to become an approved provider. Innovative applicants must apply to innovate previously approved programs, and must "pass" all six sections of the rubric to adjust the residency model. Innovative applications will not be accepted as an initial application for a provider or as an initial program application.
- The application must include the correct assurances, completed accurately, for the pathway for which the provider is applying during this round of program approval, for the application to be accepted.
  - [Assurances for Initial Program Approvals](#)
  - [Assurances for Innovative Model Program Approvals](#) (Program must be previously approved by BESE to apply for innovative residency)

- To ensure a thorough and accurate review of the application, each applicant will also be required to submit a navigation guide explaining where to find each component of the rubric.
  - Examples of navigation guidance include, but are not limited to:
    - Completed competency checklist with course codes listed in column B, indicating where in the coursework the competency is covered.
    - Completed rubric showing where each part of the rubric is represented in the application.
    - A short video guiding reviewers through your application, showing where to find each component of the rubric.

# Application Questions

## Submit Assurances

1. Submission- Submit applicable assurances

## Program Information

1. Program Name
2. Program Type:
  - a. Community College
  - b. Early Childhood Community Network Lead Agency
  - c. Private Organization
  - d. School System
  - e. University
  - f. Other
    - i. If you chose “other” for Program Type, please specify the type of program.
3. Provide a brief description of your organization: Example: Corporate structure and organization, number of years in business, mission statement, third-party evaluations.:
4. Program Address (including street, city, state, zip code)
5. Program Phone Number
6. Program Contact Information (may include primary and secondary contacts) First Name, Last Name, E-mail address.

## Program and Pathway Information

1. Are you a currently approved Louisiana teacher preparation provider or a new teacher preparation provider?
  - a. I am a Louisiana BESE-approved provider.
  - b. I am a NEW provider.
2. Select the program you are applying to offer.
  - a. Initial Certification Teacher Preparation Program
  - b. Innovative Residency Model Teacher Preparation Program (for previously approved programs only)
3. Select the pathway you are applying to offer. If applying for multiple pathways, you should apply for each pathway using multiple applications (one for each pathway).
  - a. Undergraduate
  - b. Post-Baccalaureate: Certification Only
  - c. Post-Baccalaureate: Master’s Degree
  - d. Post-Baccalaureate: Practitioner Teacher Program
4. Are you currently approved to offer the pathway you selected above, or are you applying to offer a new pathway?

- a. I am currently APPROVED to offer the pathways.
- b. I am applying to offer a NEW pathway.

## Application Section 1: Initial and Innovative Applicants

1. Submit evidence of regional accreditation status. This requirement is for university providers only (303.B2).
2. Submit a resume or curriculum vitae for each faculty member (no longer than two pages per person) who teaches courses or provides direct coaching to teacher or educational leader candidates who possess sufficient knowledge, skills, training, and expertise (303.B3) (Note: Mentor Teacher resumes are not required).
3. Submit evidence to show that the institution's governing structure or organization endorses and financially supports a teacher preparation program, educational leader preparation, or add-on program. Examples of evidence: full budget report for the implementation of programs, internal and external sources of funding, hard and soft monies, cost to administer the program, and costs for the student to participate in the program (303.B4).
4. University provider: Submit evidence of an articulation agreement to transfer credit hours with another Louisiana-approved teacher or educational leader preparation institution that agrees to recommend the institution's candidates for certification, continuous progress, and program completion as needed.
  - a. Non-university provider: Submit a plan to make students financially whole in the event of the institution or program closure (303.B5).
5. Annual Evaluation Plan: Submit a description of the system for monitoring and evaluating candidates, programs, operations, and graduates' performance.
6. Describe the plan for measuring the quality of the pathway and associated program(s) design, effectiveness of clinical faculty and mentor teachers/ leaders, quality of practice experiences, preparedness of program completers to succeed, and use of program evaluation data to improve the program. Describe how school system partners will be involved in evaluating the program.
  - a. How the provider effectively assesses programs, effectiveness, and candidates, and provides follow-up data on graduates (303.B6).
7. Upload the rubric that will be used in the observation of candidates during their one-year residency. The rubric must be "...in general alignment with the partner (local education agency) LEA's teacher evaluation system pursuant to the requirements in teacher preparation/certification/evaluation, Bulletin 130-Regulations for the Evaluation and Assessment of School Personnel" (303C4d).
8. Evidence of Program Completer's Teaching and/or Leadership Effectiveness: If the provider is currently operating or has operated in Louisiana or any other state, upload evidence of program completers' teaching and/or leadership effectiveness, including but not limited to: value-added results, principal survey results, state accountability system and evaluation results, local assessment or evaluation results, or other measures of effectiveness.
9. The program includes the minimum number of credit hours or equivalent contact hours in the teaching of reading and literacy (303.C2).
  - a. 743 A and 745 B: a portion of the total hours must include the minimum number of credit hours or equivalent contact hours in the teaching of reading and literacy as follows:
    - i. for certification in PK-3 and grades 1-5: 9 credit hours or 135 contact hours;
    - ii. for certification in middle grades 4-8: 6 credit hours or 90 contact hours;
    - iii. for certification in secondary grades 6-12, all-level K-12: 3 credit hours or 45 contact hours; and

- iv. for special education areas (early interventionist, hearing impaired, significant disabilities, visually impaired, or mild/moderate special education grades 1-5, 4-8, or 6-12): 9 credit hours or 135 contact hours.

## Application Section 2: Initial and Innovative Applicants (Residency)

1. Submit a description of the required practice experiences for teacher preparation, including, at a minimum, a one-year supervised residency in a school setting, and practice experiences in classroom settings within schools with varied socioeconomic characteristics (303.C3).
2. Ensure alignment of program faculty, residency school site administrator, and residency school site mentor teacher expectations for candidates' development and performance (303.C3b).
3. Explain how the program recruits, develops, and evaluates clinical faculty who model effective practical teaching knowledge and skills (303.C3a).

## Application Section 3: Initial and Innovative Applicants (Memorandum of Understanding, MOU/Memorandum of Agreement, MOA)

1. Partner School Systems: MOUs and MOAs, Candidate Intervention Plan, Residency Support, Observation & Feedback Experiences, Program Design.
2. Submit evidence that the program is jointly developed and administered in partnership with one or more local educational agencies in which candidates complete the one-year residency. Examples of Possible Evidence: a formal agreement, such as a memorandum of understanding or memorandum of agreement (303.C4).
  - a. The agreement includes the roles and responsibilities of program faculty, LEA leaders, residency school site administrators, and residency school site mentor teachers (303.C4a).
  - b. The agreement includes criteria and a process for residency school site selection, development, and evaluation of effectiveness, to occur in concert with LEA leadership (303.C4b).
  - c. The agreement includes targets, criteria, and a process for mentor teacher recruitment, development, and evaluation, to occur in concert with LEA leadership (303.C4c).
  - d. The agreement includes protocols for administering assessments of candidates' teaching skills in cooperation with the residency school site administrator or his/her designee during the one-year residency and in general alignment with the partner LEA's teacher evaluation system pursuant to the requirements in teacher preparation/certification/evaluation.
  - e. Bulletin 130:Regulations for the Evaluation and Assessment of School Personnel (303.C4d).
  - f. The agreement includes protocols for the secure exchange of data relative to program improvement and evaluation (303.C4e).

## Application Sections 4 and 5: Initial and Innovative Applicants (Competencies)

Certification Area/Program Design:

1. Please select the certification area you are applying to offer within the pathway. (Up to six certification areas will be accepted per application)
  - a. Agriculture (6-12)
  - b. Art (K-12)
  - c. Birth To Kindergarten
  - d. Business (6-12)
  - e. Computer Science (6-12)
  - f. Dance (K-12)
  - g. Early Childhood (Pk-3)

- h. Elementary (1-5)
- i. English (6-12)
- j. English/ Language Arts (4-8)
- k. Family And Consumer Science (6-12)
- l. Health And Physical Education (K-12)
- m. Journalism (6-12)
- n. Marketing (6-12)
- o. Mathematics (4-8)
- p. Mathematics (6-12)
- q. Music: Instrumental Music (K-12)
- r. Music: Vocal Music (K-12)
- s. Science (4-8)
- t. Science: Biology (6-12)
- u. Science: Chemistry (6-12)
- v. Science: Earth Science (6-12)
- w. Science: Environmental Science (6-12)
- x. Science: General Science (6-12)
- y. Science: Physics (6-12)
- z. Social Studies (4-8)
- aa. Social Studies (6-12)
- bb. Special Education: Early Interventionist (B-5)
- cc. Special Education: Hearing Impaired (K-12)
- dd. Special Education: Mild/Moderate (Elementary 1-5) Add-On
- ee. Special Education: Mild/Moderate (Elementary 1-5) Integrated To Merge
- ff. Special Education: Mild/Moderate (Middle Grades 4-8) Add-On
- gg. Special Education: Mild/Moderate (Middle Grades 4-8) Integrated To Merge
- hh. Special Education: Mild Moderate (Secondary 6-12) Add-On
- ii. Special Education: Mild Moderate (Secondary 6-12) Integrated To Merge
- jj. Special Education: Significant Disabilities (1-12)
- kk. Special Education: Visually Impaired (K-12)
- ll. Speech (6-12)
- mm. Technology Education (6-12)
- nn. World Language: Chinese (6-12)
- oo. World Language: Chinese (K-12)
- pp. World Language: French (6-12)
- qq. World Language: French (K-12)
- rr. World Language: German (6-12)
- ss. World Language: German (K-12)
- tt. World Language: Italian (6-12)
- uu. World Language: Italian (K-12)
- vv. World Language: Latin (6-12)
- ww. World Language: Latin (K-12)
- xx. World Language: Spanish (6-12)
- yy. World Language: Spanish (6-12)
- zz. World Language: Spanish (6-12)
- aaa. Other
  - i. If "other" was selected as a certification area for the previous question, specify the content area and grade levels for the preparation program you are applying for below.

2. Submit course syllabi and general plan of study/scope and sequence **for the certification area selected** that demonstrate the following:
  - a. The program's design ensures that candidates master the Louisiana Teacher Preparation Competencies or Educational Leader Competencies (303.C1).
    - i. The program's design centers on courses and practice experiences that integrate content, theory, and practice (303.C1).
    - ii. The program's design expressly treats current Louisiana student standards and instructional resources (303.C1).
    - iii. The program requires candidates to demonstrate mastery of required competencies through a series of performance assessments and tasks (303.C1)
  - b. In **undergraduate programs**, descriptions of coursework include evidence of ample opportunity to develop content area mastery, instruments for effectively assessing candidates' content knowledge, and procedures for remediation, if necessary. For initial approval, an academic major in the content area for secondary certification areas may be evidence of ample opportunity (303.C1a).
  - c. In **post-baccalaureate programs**, descriptions of coursework or contact hours include instruments for effectively assessing candidates' content knowledge for teaching and/or leading, and procedures for remediation, if necessary (303.C4b).
  - d. In **add-on certification programs** proposed by non-university providers, descriptions of coursework or contact hours must include instruments for effectively assessing candidates' content knowledge, include procedures for addressing unfinished learning, and align with the requirements to add endorsements to existing certifications, which are found in Part CXXI, Bulletin 746- Louisiana Standards for State Certification of School Personnel (303.C4c).
3. Fill out the "literacy competencies for lit review.xlsx" file (attached below) with the literacy coursework **for the certification area selected** that will be required for the course of study, and submit the course descriptions showing that all literacy competencies have been met.
  - a. If you are submitting coursework on behalf of an already BESE-approved preparation provider, you may upload the previously approved "literacy competencies for lit review.xlsx" file.
4. Submit the completed "literacy competencies for lit review.xlsx" file **for the certification area selected**.

## Application Section 6: Innovative Applicants Only

### (Innovative Residency Programs are for Previously Approved Louisiana Programs)

1. Teacher preparation providers may seek approval to offer an innovative residency model that does not meet the minimum instructional time requirements but meets a specific workforce need and includes high-quality clinical experiences throughout the program and intensive clinical experiences throughout the residency year. The certification area must already be BESE-approved to apply for an innovative residency.
  - a. Submit a plan that shows how the proposed innovative program identifies a workforce need and includes high-quality clinical experiences throughout the program and intensive clinical experiences throughout the residency year (747.C3d) and (745.D6iv).
  - b. Submit a plan that shows how the proposed innovative program includes an overview of residency requirements, including residency start dates, and the minimum percentage of time candidates will engage in residency activities at the school site. Examples of residency requirements may include school or teacher-based collaborations, classroom teaching experiences, instructional planning, etc.

- c. Submit a plan that shows how the proposed innovative model includes feedback and observation cycles that will adequately prepare candidates to enter the profession. The plan outlines the process for observing candidates, including who will conduct the observations and the tool used for this purpose.

## Navigation Guide

(Required for Approval)

1. Submit Navigation Documents to support the review team as they review the application.
  - a. Examples of navigation guidance include, but are not limited to:
    - i. Completed competency checklist with course codes listed in column B, indicating where in the coursework the competency is covered.
    - ii. Completed rubric showing where each part of the rubric is represented in the application.
    - iii. A short video guiding reviewers through your application, showing where to find each component of the rubric.

## Resources

[Initial/ Innovative Program Approval Rubric](#)

[Bulletin 996](#)

[LDOE Program Application Portal](#)

[Accessing an Open Application in the Professional Learning Platform](#)

[Creating My.LA Credentials](#)

[Assurances Initial Certification](#)

[Innovative Program Assurances](#)

**The following items are uploaded into the Professional Learning Platform:**

- Competency Checklist
- Literacy Competencies

Further questions can be directed to [believeandprepare@la.gov](mailto:believeandprepare@la.gov).