

BECOMING A CERTIFIED EDUCATOR IN ILLINOIS

The [Guide to Requirements for Licensure](#) on the State Board of Education website provides detailed application information for those individuals who have completed an approved teacher preparation program in Illinois or in another state or country. Individuals seeking an Illinois teacher, school service personnel, or administrative certificate to work in the public schools must provide official documentation that confirms completion of an approved professional preparation program at an accredited teacher education college or university.

HOW TO ENROLL IN AN ILLINOIS APPROVED PREPARATION PROGRAM

You must complete an approved teacher preparation program at an accredited college/university in Illinois or other state. Illinois has 60 accredited institutions that offer a wide range of approved programs leading to Licensure (early childhood, elementary education, secondary education, special areas such as art and music, special education, school counselor, school nurse, school psychologist, school social worker, and various administrative levels). Please see the Illinois [Directory of Approved Programs for the Preparation of Educational Personnel](#) for detailed information on each Illinois accredited institution, including contact information for the institutions' enrollment offices.

With a bachelor's degree, you have the options of considering a licensure-only program, a Master's degree in education program, or an alternative route to licensure program. The majority of institutions that are approved to offer graduate-level teacher preparation programs provide "licensure-only" and Master's degree programs.

Currently, sixteen Illinois institutions offer alternative license teacher preparation programs for individuals who have a degree(s) and work experience. Please note that the State does not have an alternative licensure process for preparing school service personnel (school counselors, school nurses, school psychologists, school social workers, or speech-language pathologists).

To learn what you will need to complete to qualify for an Illinois license, please consider selecting a few higher education institutions that are within a reasonable drive of your residence. It is recommended that you carefully consider the types of programs offered, the cost, instructional resources, faculty, and the program requirements. The expectations may vary because institutions have learned through experience that certain expectations help ensure their education candidates are prepared for their chosen professional roles.

Contact the Department/School of Education at your chosen institutions and ask to speak with an advisor. The institution will need to review your official transcripts and any materials you may have which validates related work experience. It would also be helpful to decide if there is a particular age group, ability level, and/or subject that appeals to you so the advisor can determine what would be required for you to achieve Licensure.

The following sites provide a complete list of Illinois approved teacher preparation institutions and detailed information on Illinois license requirements.

Resources	Website
Directory of Approved Programs and Institutions	http://www.isbe.net/profprep/PDFs/Directory.pdf
Guide to Requirements for Licensure	http://www.isbe.net/certification/requirements/toc.htm
Illinois Licensure Testing System	http://www.isbe.net/certification/html/testing.htm

Traditional Teacher Licensure Preparation

Traditional Teacher Preparation:

For the purpose of this comparison, **traditional** teacher preparation refers to completing the licensure requirements through a full undergraduate program of study or an approved graduate-level teacher preparation program after completing at least a bachelor's degree.

Individuals with degrees have the option of enrolling in an approved program that requires completion of the professional preparation coursework and experiences that are aligned with the certificate, and if applicable, additional content area study. These programs are commonly referred to as *licensure-only* programs. Individuals may also choose to earn a Master's in Education/Teaching. The traditional teacher preparation programs require full-time student teaching experience.

Traditional Licensure Program	
Course of Study	Complete a preparation program that ensures candidates meet the Illinois Standards for All Teachers and the applicable Content-Area Standards, and includes coursework addressing <i>the psychology of, the identification of, and the methods of instruction for the exceptional child, including without limitation the learning disabled.</i>
Major	32 semester hours in an area of specialization or a major in the field as identified by the accredited institution.
Field Experiences	Pre-student teaching field experiences
Student Teaching (25.620)/ Internship (25.27)	Student teaching at the grade level(s) and in the area of specialization appropriate to the certificate sought and after completion of the sophomore year. (25.620)
Payment: Student Teaching or Internship	Not paid - unless the student teacher is serving on a transitional bilingual certificate, a provisional vocational certificate, a temporary provisional vocational certificate, or is employed in a school that is not required to employ certified teachers. (25.620)
Assessment - Basic Skills	Prior to admission to the program (25.720)
Assessment - Content-Area Test	Prior to program completion or as required by the institution. (25.720)
Assessment of Professional Teaching	Option of requiring the assessment prior to entitlement or progression among the components of the program (25.720)
Assessment - Program Completion	As determined by the institution and/or program.
Length of Time	Undergraduate: 4-4 ½ years Graduate: 1½ to 2½ years
Licensure	Initial License (type and area determined by program individual completed)