



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

March 26, 2020

Alabama
State Board
of Education

Governor Kay Ivey
President

Jackie Zeigler
District I
President Pro Tem

Tracie West
District II

Stephanie Bell
District III

Yvette M. Richardson, Ed.D.
District IV

Tommie T. Stewart, Ph.D.
District V

Cynthia McCarty, Ph.D.
District VI

Jeff Newman
District VII
Vice President

Wayne Reynolds, Ed.D.
District VIII

Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
Secretary and
Executive Officer

MEMORANDUM

TO: Deans of Education
Certification Officers

FROM: Eric G. Mackey *EGM*
State Superintendent of Education

SUBJECT: Temporary Flexibilities Regarding Program Admission, Internship, and Assessment Requirements as a result of 2020 COVID-19 P-12 school closure

The Alabama State Board of Education and the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) recognize the 2020 COVID-19 grades P-12 school closure ordered by Governor Kay Ivey is impacting the duration of clinical experiences and internship placements during the 2020 spring semester. The closure is placing Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs) and candidates at risk of not meeting certain Educator Preparation and/or Certification requirements.

In response to the extraordinary circumstances related to COVID-19, the ALSDE is providing additional guidance and flexibility for all candidates currently enrolled in an Alabama Educator Preparation Program whose clinical experiences and/or internship placements have been affected.

The ALSDE is temporarily waiving length of placement requirements, as well as any hour requirements associated with 2020 spring clinical experiences and internship placements. EPPs will have flexibility to make decisions regarding a candidate's overall performance and eligibility for certification recommendation based on the professional judgment of EPP faculty, in consultation with the clinical supervisor and P-12 cooperating educator. Observations, evidence, and documentation collected during the modified clinical experience or internship placement should be used to support the EPP's decision regarding whether a candidate has fulfilled state and institutional expectations.

The following will serve as guidance for program completers who experienced an interruption in 2020 spring clinical experiences and internship placements as a result of the 2020 COVID-19 grades P-12 school closure.

Instructional Support Areas and Teaching Fields That Do Not Require edTPA for Certification:

An EPP may submit an NAL application and recommend for certification a candidate affected by the 2020 COVID-19 grades P-12 school closure, if **all** the following conditions are met:

1. The candidate completes internship requirements for the specific instructional support area or teaching field(s) during the 2020 spring semester;
2. The candidate completes all program requirements for the specific instructional support area or teaching field(s) during the 2020 spring semester or 2020 summer semester;
3. Passing scores for all required Praxis subject-area assessments are verified through electronic submission to the ALSDE;
4. The official transcript indicates the candidate has earned an overall satisfactory grade for the internship placement in the specific instructional support area or teaching field(s);
5. The official transcript indicates the date of program completion and the degree conferred. The ALSDE will accept the overall GPA posted on the official transcript.
6. For applicable areas, the required professional education work experience has been met.

Teaching Fields That Require edTPA for Certification (Candidate has met edTPA assessment requirement):

An EPP may submit an NAL application and recommend for certification a candidate affected by the 2020 COVID-19 grades P-12 school closure, if **all** the following conditions are met:

1. The candidate completes internship requirements for the specific teaching field(s) during the 2020 spring semester;
2. The candidate completes all program requirements for the specific teaching field(s) during the 2020 spring semester or 2020 summer semester;
3. Passing scores for all required Praxis subject-area assessments are verified through electronic submission to the ALSDE;
4. A passing score for the required edTPA assessment is verified through electronic submission to the ALSDE;
5. The official transcript indicates the candidate has earned an overall satisfactory grade for the internship placement in the specific teaching field(s);
6. The official transcript indicates the date of program completion and the degree conferred. The ALSDE will accept the overall GPA posted on the official transcript.

Teaching Fields That Require edTPA for Certification (Candidate has not met edTPA assessment requirement):

The ALSDE recognizes the edTPA as a valuable performance-based, subject-specific assessment which emphasizes, measures, and supports the skills and knowledge needed by all educators prior to entering the classroom. The ALSDE also recognizes that the sudden closure of P-12 schools during the 2020 spring semester may have interfered with a candidate's ability to successfully complete this requirement for professional educator certification in the state of Alabama. Therefore, the ALSDE has developed the Pre-edTPA Certificate for those affected by the 2020 COVID-19 P-12 school closure.

An EPP may submit an NAL application and recommend for certification a candidate affected by the 2020 COVID-19 grades P-12 school closure, if **all** the following conditions are met:

1. The candidate completes internship requirements for the specific teaching field(s) during the 2020 spring semester;

Deans of Education
Certification Officers
Page 3
March 26, 2020

2. The candidate completes all program requirements for the specific teaching field(s) during the 2020 spring semester or 2020 summer semester;
3. Passing scores for all required Praxis subject-area assessments are verified through electronic submission to the ALSDE;
4. The official transcript indicates the candidate has earned an overall satisfactory grade for the internship placement in the specific teaching field(s);
5. The official transcript indicates the date of program completion and the degree conferred. The ALSDE will accept the overall GPA posted on the official transcript.

Candidates who meet requirements outlined above will be issued the Pre-edTPA Certificate. The Pre-edTPA Certificate will be valid from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. It is not renewable and cannot be used to seek admission to a traditional master's or education specialist level Educator Preparation Program. Candidates who are issued the Pre-edTPA Certificate, will have until June 30, 2021 to obtain the required score on the appropriate edTPA assessment. EPPs are encouraged to provide assistance, whenever possible, to candidates as they work to complete the edTPA requirement while holding the Pre-edTPA Certificate. If the candidate fails to earn the required score on the appropriate edTPA assessment prior to July 1, 2021, the Pre-edTPA Certificate will expire, and the NAL application on file at the ALSDE will be closed.

In the event the EPP determines the 2020 COVID-19 grades P-12 school closure has impeded a candidate's ability to demonstrate appropriate proficiency, the EPP should not recommend the candidate for the Pre-edTPA Certificate. The EPP should explore options such as extending the internship experience for the candidate and/or assigning a grade of incomplete until the candidate can return to the clinical setting and satisfy all requirements.

Admission Requirements:

The ALSDE also recognizes that a candidate's ability to meet EPP requirements the exceed state requirements for unconditional admission to a program may be affected by unexpected Praxis test center closures and/or the rescheduling of Praxis tests. In that event, individual EPPs should consider the implementation of flexible options that will allow candidates to begin program coursework prior to meeting additional EPP requirements associated with unconditional admission to a program.

I am confident that the ALSBE will endorse these measures to assist you and prospective educators on April 9, 2020. For additional information regarding internship and assessment modifications, please contact Dr. Jayne A. Meyer, at jmeyer@alsde.edu.

EGM/JAM/SG

cc: Board Members
City and County Superintendents of Education
Dr. Daniel Boyd
Mrs. Jessica Sanders
Dr. Jayne A. Meyer
Mrs. Shavon H. Cummings
Dr. Deanise F. Peacock