

## Alternative Teacher Certification

# Frequently Asked Questions

### ***What is the alternative teacher certification program?***

The alternative teacher certification program at Palo Alto College is designed to meet the needs of individuals interested in a nontraditional route to teaching and helps address the teacher shortage in our state. Current programs lead to teacher certifications in English Language Arts and Reading grades 4-8, and grades 8-12,

Science grades 8-12, Career and Technology Education grades 6-12, and EC-4 Generalist. The Alamo Community College District is an approved teacher preparation program provider and can be found on the state board for educator certification (SBEC) website.

### ***What are the minimum criteria for eligibility in the program?***

Applicants must have:

- an official transcript documenting a bachelors degree
- a 2.5 cumulative GPA on a 4.0 scale
- pass the THEA exam (Texas Higher Education Assessment)
- complete 20 hours in documented field experience in a school, (observation in the area of specialization)
- interview with the coordinator of the alternative teacher certification program
- a completed application packet
- a \$50 non-refundable application fee

### ***How do I apply to the teacher certification program?***

You must go online to the PAC Corporate & Community Education Website <http://www.accd.edu/pac/ce> and download the application. After completing the application, set up an appointment with Lisa Sanchez, Program Coordinator, in Admin. Room 153, call 210-921-5590 or email her at [lsanchez@accd.edu](mailto:lsanchez@accd.edu).



## CORPORATE & COMMUNITY EDUCATION

### ***Where can I get information for the THEA exam?***

For registration and deadline information visit the NES website at [www.thea.nesinc.com](http://www.thea.nesinc.com). Scores should be sent directly to Palo Alto College 1400 W. Villaret San Antonio, Texas 78224, unless scores are already imprinted on an OFFICIAL college transcript. For previous TASP or THEA scores contact the THEA website.

### ***How much does the program cost?***

The approximate cost is \$5,000.00. This amount includes content courses, PPR – pedagogy and professional responsibility courses and internship fees. Books, parking, (Texas Examination for Educator Standards) TEXES exam fees, certificate application fees, background check, and other state related fees are not included in this price. Price is subject to change depending on program.

### ***Is there any financial assistance for this program?***

Troops to Teachers: [www.esc13.net/troops](http://www.esc13.net/troops)

GI Bill benefits: [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov)

Texas Workforce Commission/WIA: [www.twc.state.tx.us](http://www.twc.state.tx.us)

Sallie Mae continuing education loan: [www.salliemae.com](http://www.salliemae.com)

### **Palo Alto College, Alternative Teacher Certification Program Monthly Payment Plan:**

Please note the following:

If you are applying for any kind of loan please allow up to 2 months prior to enrollment for approval process. In the event that your loan has not been approved by the payment due dates you will be responsible for making the payments until the loan approval process is complete and we have received payment.

If your account becomes delinquent 10 days you will be placed on a hold status which will make you ineligible to test, register for PPR or receive any documents from ATCP, ect. If you become 2 months behind in payments you may be disenrolled from the program.

**\*TRADITIONAL FINANCIAL AID NOT APPLICABLE\***

### ***What if I received a degree from a foreign country?***

All foreign transcripts must be submitted with one (1) official translation and course by course-by-course evaluation from an approved credential evaluation service. For a list of foreign credential evaluation services, please visit the following SBEC website [www.sbec.state.tx.us/SBECOnline/certinfo/forcredevalservice.asp](http://www.sbec.state.tx.us/SBECOnline/certinfo/forcredevalservice.asp)

Also submit official scores from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).



## **CORPORATE & COMMUNITY EDUCATION**

### ***When will I be notified if I am accepted into the program?***

After review of application and supporting documents, applicants will be notified by mail of their acceptance status into the program.

### ***What credits will I earn for this program?***

Continuing Education Units (CEU) and certificate are awarded for successful completion of courses.

### ***When should I enroll?***

Students accepted into the program will be notified of enrollment deadlines and scheduled course days and times.

### ***Where are classes held?***

Classes are held on the campus of Palo Alto College, 1400 W. Villaret, San Antonio, Texas and in surrounding school districts. We currently have students meeting at Indian Creek Elementary and McCollum High School. Classes are held evenings.

### ***How do I achieve a Texas teacher certificate through the program?***

Full teacher certification is achieved after all program requirements have been met and students pass the appropriate TEXES exams. The academic and internship components must be successfully completed to achieve program completion. The Academic component is achieved by successfully mastering the CEP courses (content and pedagogy 303 clock hours). The internship component is completed by successfully serving as a teacher of record with a probationary certificate in a TEA (Texas Education Agency) accredited school for one year. The program may be completed in either a one or two year format. In order to achieve certification in one year, the applicant must be considered "highly qualified." This means that the applicant must have passed the content part of the TEXES exam and already have twenty four hours in the content area to be taught with a GPA of 2.5 or higher.

### ***What is the curriculum?***

The accelerated standards based curriculum is correlated to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and the Texas Examination for Educator Standards framework (TEXES). To learn more about TEKS visit [www.tea.state.tx.us/teks](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/teks). To learn more about the TEXES frameworks, visit [www.texas.ets.org](http://www.texas.ets.org).

### ***When can I register to take the TEXES exam?***

After successful completion of the TEXES practice exam, earning 70% or higher, the student will be approved to register for the TEXES exam. Test dates, deadlines and fee information can be found at [www.texas.ets.org](http://www.texas.ets.org).



### ***Who are the program instructors?***

The instructors are highly qualified and experienced educators in their academic fields. Alternative Teacher Certification Program instructors include teachers, curriculum and instruction specialists, principals, assistant principals, assistant superintendents, and counselors from local and surrounding schools.

### ***How can I find a list of TEA accredited schools?***

The internship component of the program must be completed in a TEA accredited school. A list of TEA accredited schools can be found at <http://askted.tea.state.tx.us>

### ***Do I get paid during the internship?***

Yes! The internship is a one year contract and you will get paid as a first year teacher. The internship dates and terms coincide with the probationary certificates issued by the state board for educator certification (SBEC). The applicant is responsible for obtaining a teaching assignment in the area that they are seeking certification. A one time fee of \$500.00 is required upon obtaining an internship. Completion of the program is contingent upon the student successfully securing and completing the one year internship.

### ***What if I am offered an internship with extra curricular duties?***

Due to the intensive academic presentation and accelerated nature of the program, candidates are discouraged from considering additional duties such as coaching, or other similar activities during the internship period. Any absences caused by these activities will NOT be excused absences. All courses comply with the college attendance policy.

### ***What additional training is needed to fulfill the internship requirements?***

Interns automatically will be a part of the Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS) mentoring program. Interns will be given a mentor and will attend workshops and are given training in how to fulfill TxBESS requirements.

### ***Are there any other professional growth/development requirements?***

A required 16 hours per semester of professional development training will be offered through the cooperating ACCD ATCP programs. These workshops will be held on evenings and/or Saturdays to fulfill the requirement. Dates, times, and locations will be announced.



***Are courses offered online?***

We currently offer EC-4 Generalist classes online and hope to add more online classes in future.

***Will a criminal background check be required?***

Yes. Each student in the ATCP program is required to be fingerprinted through the state-sponsored vendor, IDENTIX. There will be times available on selected class days for students to do this on campus.

For additional information please visit the continuing education website at: [www.accd.edu/pac/ce](http://www.accd.edu/pac/ce) or call Lisa Sanchez at 210-921-5590.