

Your Question: You asked for information on alternative teacher certification pathways for music teachers and what some of these pathways might have in common.

Our Response: Alternative certification programs can vary from both state to state and within a state, between licensure options and different educator preparation provider (EPP) requirements. An Education Commission of the States policy brief, [State Policy Levers to Address Teacher Shortages](#), explains that alternative preparation pathways are able to recruit from a pool of candidates that traditional teacher preparation programs do not because they are often geared toward individuals who have already earned a bachelor’s degree. We identified seven states with options for alternative certification for music teachers. Some common requirements for alternative certification for music teachers include passing content exams, GPA requirements, coursework or preparation through the EPP, proving relevant content knowledge, and completing the EPP’s requirements. This table highlights some commonalities among the state approaches to alternative certification requirements we found for music teachers.

State	GPA for a Bachelor’s Degree	Content Exam or Proof of Content Expertise	EPP Requirements	Additional Requirements
Connecticut	X 3.0*	X	X	X
Colorado		X	X	
Louisiana	X 2.5*	X	X	X
Maine		X	X	X
South Carolina	X 2.75	X	X**	X
Texas	X 2.5	X	X	X
West Virginia	X 2.5	X	X	X

* May apply for a waiver or alternative demonstration of GPA.

**Depends on certification pathway.

Below you’ll find examples of requirements for alternative certification for music teachers.

State Examples

Connecticut: Applicants to the [Alternative Route to Certification](#) (ARC) Program for music must have a bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited institution with a 3.0 GPA (or fill out a form to get the requirement waived), earn passing scores on PRAXIS Core Academic Skills Test (or meet requirements for the waiver), earn passing scores on PRAXIS II Subject Area Music exam, and complete Connecticut’s U.S. History credit requirement. The [ARC program](#) is hybrid and requires candidates to complete orientation, two courses: Foundations of Teaching and Methods of Teaching, and a practicum.

Colorado: Applicants to [alternative certification programs](#) must have a bachelor’s degree or higher in the content area and either 24 semester hours of specific coursework in the content area or a passing score on an approved PRAXIS exam to show content proficiency. They must also enroll in an approved Colorado alternative certification program. There are [22 programs](#) in Colorado that offer alternative certification programs for teaching music.

Louisiana: Applicants to [certification-only alternative certification](#) programs are required to hold a bachelor’s degree with a 2.5 GPA. If the applicant did not earn a 2.5 GPA, they must have successfully completed an interview

with the program admissions officer. The applicants must pass the PRAXIS I or meet one of the requirements to waive this requirement (such as a graduate degree or an acceptable ACT score). The applicants must also pass the content-specific PRAXIS exam. Louisiana offers certification only or Master's degree pathways. There are [eight programs](#) offering alternative certification for music (click music under All Level Areas to see options for music). Candidates in the educator preparation programs complete between 27-33 credit hours and will earn their Practitioner License 2 when they complete their classroom readiness training and have secured employment. This license is only valid for one school year but may be renewed three times while candidates complete the preparation program requirements.

Maine: Applicants to educator preparation programs under the [Adjunct Teaching Path](#) should have content-specific knowledge and skills (including arts professionals), a four-year degree, passed content knowledge assessments required by the Maine State Board of Education, passed the Principles of Learning and Teaching assessment, and be employed by a local school administrative unit.

South Carolina: Applicants to alternative certification programs must hold a bachelor's degree and must not have participated in student teaching in a traditional educator preparation program or another South Carolina approved alternative certification program. At least one approved alternative certification program in South Carolina offers a music pathway: [Teach Charleston](#) which is based in Charleston. To be eligible to apply, you must have a bachelor's degree with a 2.75 GPA, submit a writing sample, and have a passing score on all of [South Carolina's required exams](#). Another alternative certification pathway is to earn an [Advanced Fine Arts](#) certificate. This certificate provides a way for individuals with professional experience in the area of fine arts to earn a professional teaching certificate. Applicants must have earned an undergraduate or graduate degree in a specific area of fine arts from an accredited institution of higher education or from an approved institution with programs approved for teacher education. The applicants must provide evidence of at least two years of professional experience in the area they are applying to teach. They must also pass the required content area assessments required for certification.

Texas: Applicants to [alternative certification](#) via educator preparation programs must have a bachelor's degree with a 2.5 GPA, a minimum of 12 credit hours in the subject they are seeking certification in, and pass the required content exam. Additionally, the applicant must meet the Texas Success Initiative [requirements](#) for basic skills in reading, writing, and math. They must also demonstrate English language proficiency skills. EPPs are responsible for ensuring candidates meet all the requirements and may set additional requirements to the minimum requested by Texas. There are [74 educator preparation programs](#) that offer a music pathway.

West Virginia: Applicants to West Virginia's [Alternative Certification Program](#) must have a bachelor's degree with a 2.5 GPA, pass PRAXIS basic skills and content exams, meet additional programmatic requirements, and either hold an academic major in the content area or have occupational qualifications that suggest the applicant would be able to pass subject matter tests. Applicants must contact a school district with an approved program and receive a job offer in an identified area of critical need and shortage. To gain their provisional professional teaching license, applicants must complete their preparation program. This includes completing any coursework options required by the educator preparation program, passing the Principles of Learning and Teaching exam (or receiving a waiver), and completing any content-specific courses required by the program. We found [one educator provider](#) program offering a music pathway.