

**Alternative Certification
Program for
Special Education**

**Boone County Schools
Teacher Launchpad**

Identified Partners: Boone County Schools (BCS), Marshall University (MU), and the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE)

Description of the Program:

The *Boone County Schools Teacher Launchpad Program* for special education endorsements, is an alternative pathway designed to provide a unique route for earning a Professional Teaching Certificate when an area of critical need and shortage exists. BCS plans to provide a rigorous program in partnership with MU and the WVDE in accordance with West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) Policy 5901. The WVDE is only providing assistance as needed in the areas of proposal development, revisions, updates, and changes for the alternative certification program.

Boone County Schools will find candidates for qualifying vacancies by posting jobs on the BCS and WVDE websites and participating in job fairs across the state. The program of study will be provided by BCS in cooperation with iteach via a contractual agreement established between BCS (program provider) and coursework provider (iteach). MU coursework focused on special education is also required in addition to the iteach coursework. Participants will complete at least 240 contact/seat hours of staff development including online iteach modules and 6 semester hours of coursework at MU. Instruction will be provided using nontraditional methods of electronically delivered instruction including a series of online course modules via iteach, online coursework from MU, and job-embedded mentoring.

Through the iteach platform, candidates complete interactive modules, applied assignments, and targeted assessments that prepare them for licensure while building confidence and readiness for the first day of teaching. Required coursework includes the following: Course 5000 – Program Overview, Course 5100 – Learning Environments (Classroom Management/SEL Best Practices/Trauma Informed), Course 5200 – Learner Development (Development and Learning), Course 5300 (Curriculum), Course 5400 (Educational Computers/Technology), Course 5500 (Special Education/IDEA/School Law), Course 5600 (Diversity), EDTC 6160: Special Education Specific, EDTC 6600: Special Education Strategies, and 6601: Special Education Modifications. The iteach coursework is self-paced, so there are no formal due dates. The MU courses follow a semester-based schedule. The iteach courses are designed to cover required topics including student assessment, development and learning, curriculum, classroom management, use of educational computers and other technology, special education and diversity, and law. The iteach courses also cover required topics of West Virginia’s Third Grade Success Act. MU courses are designed to cover required topics including developing Individualized Education Plans (IEP) with WVBE content standards and objectives, differentiated instruction, school and IDEA law, behavioral interventions and supports, and other topics required for autism endorsement. The proposal identifies academic and performance standards that the alternative program teacher will be following, evaluated and assessed upon, to include the WV Professional Teaching Standards.

Program participants must complete all iteach modules, quizzes (minimum 80% grade required), assignments, and learning checks. They must also demonstrate mastery on all iteach performance-based tasks, complete required reflections, lesson plans, and content-specific application activities. Each iteach course must be finished in sequence before unlocking access to the next required course. BCS will reimburse the full cost of tuition for all iteach and MU coursework, except for any courses dropped or failed, any MU courses with lower than a 3.0 GPA grade, or any reimbursement requested that does not meet the county tuition reimbursement policy’s criteria, including meeting fiscal year deadlines. Candidates are responsible for any other expenses (textbooks, instructional materials, etc.). The current estimated cost of tuition for all iteach coursework is \$3,300, and successful completion of coursework

does not result in being awarded college semester hour credit(s). The required Marshall University coursework is estimated at current in-state graduate tuition rates to cost around \$2,600-\$2,700 and results in college semester hour credits.

BCS will select and train members of the Professional Support Team. The Professional Support Team will conduct mentoring, observations, evaluations and other assistance as described in W. Va. Code and WVBE Policy 5901. Program completers must meet all WVBE approved teacher certification requirements, including criteria found within the West Virginia Licensure Testing Directory, to receive a Professional Teaching Certificate with the special education endorsements of multi-categorical including autism.

Identified Endorsements: Multi-Categorical (E/BD, MI, SLD, excluding Autism) K-6, Autism K-6, Multi-Categorical (E/BD, MI, SLD, excluding Autism) 5-AD, and Autism 5-AD.