

Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification in Rural Wisconsin

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In 2002, I was the teacher education chair at the former Mount Senario College. That year we began a small pilot alternative certification program with a dozen teachers. When the college closed, we continued the program with the help of the Ladysmith-Hawkins School District and now as a private company.

In the past six years Project Teaching (our program for persons with bachelor's degree majors in shortage areas)¹, 10SPED (special education), and WiscAd (administration) have helped 391 persons to be certified.

Teachers and Administrators Certified by Norda 2003 to Present

Certification	#
Music	11
Math	18
Art	20
Foreign Languages	26
Business Education	27
Science	48
Other teaching certifications	58
Special Education	141
Administrators	43
Total	392

Alternative certification programs available in rural Wisconsin

<i>CESA 6</i> –Residency in Teacher Education (RITE)	Shortage content fields and Cross-Categorical Special Education
<i>CESA 7</i> –Alternative Licensure Program	Shortage content fields and Cross-Categorical Special Education
<i>Marian College</i> (Appleton, West Bend, Wausau)	Middle Childhood to Early Adolescence - Regular Education
<i>University of Wisconsin-Green Bay</i> (MSAL)	Shortage content fields
<i>University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh</i> (ACT!)	Mathematics and Science
<i>Norda, Inc.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Teaching • 10SPED • EdNova • WiscAd 	Shortage content fields Cross-Categorical & Early Childhood Special Education Added certifications & removing stipulations for licensed teachers Principal, Business Manager, Special Education & Pupil Services Director, Superintendent

¹ Shortage areas are agriculture, art, business, computer science, engineering, English as a second language, family & consumer education, foreign languages, mathematics, music, sciences, & technology

Regarding alternative routes to certification in rural Wisconsin

- **Teacher shortage in rural schools**
 - Those teaching fields that are in shortage are often “revolving doors” with young teachers leaving after a few years.
 - Those college-educated residents of rural communities should be more likely to remain teaching in the rural community than a young person from the suburbs (a typical college graduate)

- **Shortage areas we see now** (people who come to us with emergency licenses)
 - Spanish
 - Science
 - Mathematics
 - Art
 - But all shortages are local

- **Typical shortage area candidate**
 - Second career professional
 - Holds bachelors degree with major in the subject area
 - Lives in a rural community
 - Works as a substitute teacher

- **Typical special education candidate** About half are emergency-licensed elementary or secondary teachers

- **Typical administrator candidate** Most are working under one-year permits or are administrators adding new areas

- **Emergency licenses**
 - Emergency-licensed teacher need to enter into a certification program within their first semester teaching
 - Alternative route to certification can be completed with in two school years

- **What is a two-year permit?**
 - Persons who complete first portion of program are eligible for a two-year permit
 - Two-year permit is a full teaching license for a two-year period and thus removes the need for the justifications required for an emergency license
 - School district must provide a supervising teacher to work with the two-year permitted teacher
 - After second year permitted teacher is eligible for an initial educator license