

Candidate Handbook
Graduate Elementary Programs K-8
MAT/Certification/Endorsement
2025-2026



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Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the people upon whose lands we occupy and represent today including the [14 Aaní \(Tlingit\)](#), specifically the descendants of the Áak'w Kwáan, who are stewards of their ancestral lands around Auke Lake upon which the University of Alaska Southeast resides. It is important to acknowledge the ancestors of this place and to recognize that we are here because of the sacrifices they were forced to make.

In speaking of these and all other indigenous communities across the lands marked as the State of Alaska, we honor their memory, their lives, their descendants, and their continued presence. We also remember that we are guests on this land and must do our best to move with reverence and respect.

UAS School of Education Mission

<https://uas.alaska.edu/education/mission.html>

Vision

Our graduates will be informed, reflective, and responsive teachers within diverse classroom, school, and community contexts.

SOE Core Beliefs and Values

Community: The School of Education is dedicated to creating an inclusive community of learners. Collectively we foster relationships that respect learning environments across the state of Alaska by acknowledging and advocating for the wealth of knowledge residing in local communities, families, and students. The School of Education prepares candidates who are committed to Alaskan communities and can thrive and contribute their individual intellectual and collective strengths to their communities.

Diversity and Equity: The School of Education acknowledges the impact of inequities and injustices in education that must be addressed. Faculty and candidates in the School of Education value and draw upon multiple intellectual authorities to support social, cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversity through inclusive practices and the recognition of the unique abilities of all learners.

Inquiry and Reflection: The School of Education faculty and candidates are engaged in the process of participating in inquiry, dialogue and reflection to critically examine complex ideas related to learning. Inquiry and reflection guide the development and implementation of programs, curriculum, assessment, evaluation, the understanding of ourselves, our students, and the communities we serve.

Tenets

- Students thrive in environments designed to be supportive of their strengths as learners.
- Teacher candidates shall advocate for educational equity, value students for their individuality, and recognize the collective strengths of students and their communities.
- Teacher candidates shall value the knowledge of local communities, families, and students.
- Teacher candidates shall advocate for the educational resources and the right to use pedagogical methods which they deem to be most beneficial for their students — individually and collectively.

See more: <https://uas.alaska.edu/education/mission.html>

Accreditation

The University of Alaska Southeast is accredited as an institution of higher learning by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.

SOE programs are approved by the Alaska State Board of Education and are accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation.

The Graduate Elementary Programs are nationally recognized by the Association for Childhood Education International and CAEP.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

The University of Alaska is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer and educational institution. The University of Alaska does not discriminate based on race, religion, color, national origin, citizenship, age, sex, physical or mental disability, status as a protected veteran, marital status, changes in marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, parenthood, sexual orientation, gender identity, political affiliation or belief, genetic information, or other legally protected status. The University's commitment to nondiscrimination, including against sex discrimination, applies to students, employees, and applicants for admission and employment. Contact information, applicable laws, and complaint procedures are included on UA's statement of nondiscrimination available at www.alaska.edu/nondiscrimination

Greetings from the Dean

We're glad you're here. At UAS, you'll find dedicated faculty and staff committed to preparing educators who make a real difference in the lives of students across Alaska.

Our programs are delivered statewide through flexible distance learning and summer institutes in beautiful Juneau. They support both future and current teachers. We focus on creative problem solving, multicultural understanding, and the belief that all children can learn.

UAS offers:

- Flexible course formats for working professionals
- Small, supportive classes and accessible faculty
- A unique learning environment that connects education with Alaska's communities and natural beauty

Explore our programs online, reach out, or stop by. We're here to support your journey as an educator.

Dr. Angela Lunda, Interim Dean
UAS School of Education
[School of Education Homepage](#)

Welcome and Overview

Welcome to the UAS Graduate Elementary Programs. This handbook will guide you through earning your K–8 Elementary Education Graduate Certificate, Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree, or K–8 Endorsement.

Our program is designed for bachelor's degree holders seeking to teach in Alaskan elementary and middle schools. Delivered online, the program blends coursework with field-based experience in your local community, preparing you to become an informed, reflective, and responsive educator.

Program Highlights:

- **Field-Based Learning:** Practicum and student teaching in K–8 classrooms help you apply what you learn.
- **Standards-Aligned:** Curriculum is based on CAEP, InTASC, and Alaska teacher standards.
- **Equity & Inclusion Focus:** Emphasis on teaching diverse learners and integrating up-to-date instructional technology.
- **Constructivist Approach:** We believe teachers learn best through active inquiry, collaboration, and classroom experience.
- **Cohort Model:** You'll learn alongside peers from across Alaska, forming a professional learning community.
- **Technology & Tools:**
Online Learning: High-speed internet and digital tools are essential for participation.

LiveText: A required platform for submitting assessments and tracking program progress. [See More.](#)

Capstone (MAT Only):

To complete the MAT degree, you'll:

- Conduct action classroom research project in your classroom (ED 626);

- Followed by completing a professional portfolio (ED 698) using artifacts from your coursework, field experiences, and classroom research project.

A Note on Research & Confidentiality:

You may be invited to participate in program-related research. Your participation is voluntary and confidential, and any data used will not identify you.

We're here to support your journey to becoming a successful teacher. Please reach out to me or our team if you have any questions.

Best Regards,

J. Kevin Spink,

Program Coordinator, UAS Elementary MAT Program

jspink@alaska.edu, 907-306-7602

UAS Elementary MAT Program Staff:

- Elisabeth Genaux Farmer, Student Services Assistant, edgenaux@alask.edu
- Kelsey Walsh, Academic Advisor, kawalsh2@alaska.edu
- Heather Bieber, Field Placement Coordinator, hmbieber2@alaska.edu

UAS Elementary MAT Program Faculty:

- Jessica Curry (ED 620), jpsmith7@alaska.edu
- Lorrie Heagy (ED 619), llheagy@alaska.edu
- Jennifer Pickering (ED 617), jmpickering@alaska.edu
- Clint Shultz (ED 616), cmshultz@alaska.edu
- Katy Spangler (ALST 603), klsrangler@alaska.edu
- Eldri Westmoreland (ED 618), ewwestmoreland@alaska.edu
- Melissa Wuerth (ECE 661), wuerth_melissa@asdk12.org

Program Structure & Phases

UAS offers a post-baccalaureate K–8 Graduate Certificate, K–8 Endorsement, and Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) to candidates across Alaska. Those who complete student teaching are recommended for an Initial K–8 teaching certificate. After certification, candidates may continue on to complete the MAT degree.

	Gate 1: Admission to Program & Foundation Courses	Gate 2: Completion of Methods Coursework	Gate 3: Student Teaching & Initial Licensure	Gate 4: Completion of MAT Degree
Program Phases & Delivery	Pre-admission: Beginning Completion of application & Foundations coursework.	Foundations & Practicum Methods: Practicing Program coursework and practicum field experience in elementary & middle school classrooms.	Student Teaching: Applying Semester of supervised student teaching with 6 weeks of full-time teaching.	Master's Study: Early Career Teaching Master's coursework.
Required Courses	Foundations Coursework: ED 333 ED 380 EDSE 482 These courses should be taken as early as possible in the program. They must be completed to be admitted in good standing.	Graduate Coursework: Non-Practicum Courses: ALST 603 ED 620 <i>(Take ED 620 the semester prior to student teaching and in conjunction with a content method — science or social studies — course).</i> Practica - Methods Coursework: <i>ECE 661 (must take prior to ED 615)</i> ED 615, ED 616, ED 617, ED 618, and ED 619 <i>(first methods course)</i>	Student Teaching Seminar and Field Experience: One semester, full time ED 688 (6 credits) Student teaching field experience and standards-based assessments.	Master's Courses: ED 626 Classroom Research <i>taken prior to:</i> ED 698 Masters Portfolio - Capstone Project.

	Gate 1: Admission to Program & Foundation Courses	Gate 2: Completion of Methods Coursework	Gate 3: Student Teaching and Initial Licensure	Gate 4: Completion of MAT Degree
Procedures and Requirements	<p>Meet with Program advisor – submit unofficial transcript for evaluation and review.</p> <p>Program Advisor will outline course plan in DegreeWorks (MAT/Grad. Cert.).</p> <p>Coordinator sends candidates recommended Course of Studies (K-8 Endorsement only).</p> <p>Pass Praxis CORE or state approved BCE.</p> <p>Completed application to program.</p> <p>Coordinator evaluates completed application materials to determine admission status (full or provisional admission).</p>	<p>Complete/verify background check & sign up for a LiveText account.</p> <p>Completion of all methods courses and submission to all practicum assessments in LiveText.</p> <p>Review of DegreeWorks audit or Grad. Elementary Course of Study.</p> <p>Complete UAS application for student teaching and placement.</p> <p>Attempt Praxis II Elementary Content Knowledge exam 5018 or 5017.</p> <p>Complete DEED application for student teaching certificate (or emergency certificate if hired for teaching position).</p> <p>Request UAS Proof of Program Enrollment for paid teaching position in a school district.</p>	<p>Successful completion of Student Teaching field experience (6 credits).</p> <p>Attain passing scores on Praxis II exam Elementary Content.</p> <p>Complete UAS Application for Graduation for K-8 Graduate Certificate.</p> <p>Complete DEED Application for Initial Teaching Certificate.</p> <p>Request State Approved Program Verification from UAS.</p>	<p>Completed UAS K-8 Graduate Certificate.</p> <p>If you have not already, apply for the MAT</p> <p>Completion of Capstone coursework</p> <p>Complete UAS Application for Graduation for MAT.</p> <p>Register to walk in Commencement.</p>

Phase One: Pre-Admission and Admission

Admission Overview

Which program should you apply for?

- The **Graduate Certificate** program is for those who wish to receive only elementary education licensure (not a masters).
- The **Master of Art in Teaching** is for those who want a master's degree and elementary education licensure and have a bachelors in another field.
 - Graduate Certificate students may apply for the MAT program after starting the program, but an additional application and fee will be required (currently \$60.00).
- Both the **Graduate Certificate** and the **MAT** can be applied for at the same time. The master's degree requires only two additional courses beyond the Graduate Certificate.
- The **K-8 Elementary Endorsement** is for those who already have an Alaska teaching certificate in another area and who need an elementary education endorsement.
<https://uas.alaska.edu/education/programs/k-8-education.html>

**A bachelor's degree is required for admission to any of the graduate-level Elementary Education programs.*

More information about how to submit an application and necessary materials on the [Elementary Education main webpage](#).

Gate 1: Admission to the Program and Completion of Foundation Courses (ED 333, ED 380, & EDSE 482)

Application and Admission Procedures for Grad. Cert. and MAT

Application Requirements: View instructions and paperwork below and on the main [UAS Elementary Education website](#).

Process:

1. Send an unofficial transcript to the Program Advisor & Program Coordinator and schedule a conversation to discuss your goals, expectations, and experience.
2. Program Advisor & Program Coordinator will complete a transcript analysis to confirm:
 - a. Completed Bachelor's Program;
 - b. GPA of 3.0 or better;
 - c. If any of the foundation courses can be waived based on prior coursework.

3. [Apply for admission](#) to the Elementary Education Grad. Cert. or MAT and submit the application materials outlined on the [Elementary Education webpage](#) under the relevant program (scroll down to “application process” header)
4. There will be a \$60 admission fee to open the application.
5. Register for Foundation Courses (ED 333, ED 380, and EDSE 482) during, or after, application process

Send all application forms, transcripts, and information to:

UAS Admissions 11066 Auke Lake Way Juneau, AK 99801-8671 Fax: 907-796-6002
(uas.admissions@alaska.edu).

For questions and assistance with the application process, contact: Elisabeth Genaux (edgenaux@alaska.edu) Student Services Assistant.

For questions about your course of study or assistance with registration, contact: Program Advisor, Kelsey Walsh (kawalsh2@alaska.edu).

Admission Notification: You will be notified by the UAS School of Education after all documents are received/reviewed.

Admitted in Good Standing: admitted to the program with no outstanding admission requirements necessary, such as a 3.0 GPA and completion of all the foundation courses (ED 333, ED 380, and EDSE 482).

Admitted with Provisions: Admitted given that you complete the necessary outstanding admissions requirements or provide outstanding admission materials. Students will be given no longer than a year to resolve provisions from a provisional admission.

Financial aid eligibility: Students need to be admitted to a program to qualify for financial aid. You may be admitted provisionally. Admission with provisions allows you to apply for financial aid, provided you meet other eligibility criteria. Students generally have one semester to complete their provisions for full admission (good standing).

K–8 Education Endorsement Summary

The K–8 Endorsement is for certified Alaska teachers seeking an additional endorsement to teach elementary and middle school (K–8). All coursework is online. [Financial aid is not available for the endorsement](#); courses must be paid for out of pocket. Semester [payment plans are available](#) if needed.

Enrollment & Advising

Once enrolled, your transcripts and teaching experience will be reviewed. You’ll meet with the Graduate Elementary Program Advisor to create a personalized course plan. The plan will cover K–8 content and instructional methods, using either required courses or course equivalencies.

Application Process

Submit application materials to:

Student Services Assistant
uas.education@alaska.edu
907-796-6076
[K-8 Endorsement Webpage](#)

Approval & Endorsement Start

Your advisor and you will sign the official Course of Study which outlines the courses you will take in order to qualify for the endorsement. Then you can begin the endorsement and register for classes. Upon completion of the courses outlined in the Course of Study, the document will be signed by the UAS SOE Dean and Program Coordinator.

Program Requirements:

- Maintain a 3.0 GPA or higher;
- Pass the Praxis Elementary Content Exam (test code 5018 or 5017);
- Complete one full semester of student teaching in a general education K-8 classroom with all required assessments.

Final Steps

After completing your coursework, submit the UAS graduate application so your endorsement can be recorded on your transcript and documented by the School of Education. You'll then apply to DEED for the official endorsement.

Note: All policies for the Graduate Certificate program also apply to the K-8 Endorsement.

Gate 2: Full Admission and Methods Courses

You must have taken all content prerequisites and the foundation courses ED 333, ED 380, and EDSE 482 and maintain a 3.0 GPA to be admitted in good standing to the program and prior to registering for methods courses (ED 615, ED 616, ED 617, ED 618, ED 619, ED 620, and ECE 661).

Interested Person's Report (IPR): Prior to registering for the methods practicum courses, candidates must secure Interested Persons Report (IPR) from a local law enforcement agency or provide documentation of compliance from a local school district, if a current employee. This background check is required before engaging in practicum classes where Candidates will be working with students in the public education setting. These are active for one year and must be renewed, as needed. You will need to submit a copy of your active IPR to the SOE office:
uas.education@alaska.edu.

Methods Courses (No Field Work)

- **ALST 603 Alaska Literature for Young People:** This 3-credit summer e-learning (distance delivery)course begins with a one-week intensive in early June, featuring half-day synchronous sessions, followed by weekly class meetings. It explores literature about Alaska for young readers, with projects including book annotation, curriculum development, literature evaluation with a focus on Indigenous perspectives, and the creation of an Alaska studies reading list.
- **ED 620 Curriculum Development:** This culminating course focuses on integrated, multi-subject curriculum planning using a backwards design approach. You'll build on single-subject planning to create a full interdisciplinary unit, which may be used during student teaching. The course also covers assessment strategies, standardized testing, and the development of an assessment portfolio.
**Taken the semester before student teaching, alongside a science or social studies methods course.*

Preparation for Practicum Teaching/Courses

Each methods course focuses on building a strong theoretical and research foundation with practical classroom applications. After completing all six methods courses and other certificate requirements, candidates are eligible to apply for student teaching.

Prior to the start of your practicum hours, you should:

- Review the Student Practicum Packet - Provided by Placement Coordinator, Heather Bieber (hmbieber2@alaska.edu);
- Complete outreach and establish host teacher for practicum;
- Once established, register your host teacher using the Google form linked in the Student Practicum Packet;
- Provide your host teacher with the Host Teacher Practicum Handbook ([linked on this page](#)) and remind them to attend the Host Teacher Orientation which is listed in the Handbook;
- Complete either an [Interested Person's Report \(IPR\)](#) or submit a letter of employment verifying you meet the district background requirements to uas.education@alaska.edu. This IPR or letter of employment will remain valid for up to a year.
- Attend the Practicum Student Orientation at the start of the semester (information emailed out and in the Student Practicum Packet).
- [Purchase LiveText Subscription](#) - needed prior to starting practicum hours.

Practicum Placement Information:

Each methods course requires at least 30 field experience hours in a general education public school classroom, exposing candidates to diverse grades and students. Candidates may register with the same host teacher for a maximum of two practicums unless approved otherwise. Private school placements require Program Coordinator approval and are limited to two practicum courses with certified teachers. Full-time teachers should consult the Program Coordinator for alternative options.

Practicum Methods Courses (Field Work Required)

- **ECE 661 Advanced Studies in Young Children and Literacy:** Offered each spring and fall, this course explores early literacy development, focusing on emergent reading, writing, and spelling. You will observe young children, learn assessment strategies, and build a foundation for teaching literacy in primary grades. A practicum in a K–2 classroom is required.

* *Must be completed before ED 615 (Intermediate Literacy).*
- **ED 615 Literacy in the Intermediate and Middle School Grades:** Offered each fall and spring, this course focuses on teaching reading and writing in grades 4–8. Candidates develop and apply effective instructional strategies, assess student progress, communicate with families, and collaborate with peers.

**Must be completed in an intermediate or middle school classroom (4th-8th).*
- **ED 616 Math Methods in the K-8 Classroom:** Offered in fall and spring, this course explores the theory and practice of teaching K–8 math. Candidates plan, teach, and assess three math lessons, and reflect on their growth through synchronous and asynchronous activities. Instruction aligns with Alaska Mathematics Standards.
- **ED 617 Science Methods in the K-8 Classroom:** Offered in fall and spring, this course models effective methods for teaching K–8 science, from place-based learning to virtual labs. Candidates plan, teach, and assess four science lessons, build a science learning center, and reflect on their practice through synchronous and asynchronous activities. Instruction aligns with Next Generation Science Standards.
- **ED 618 Teaching Social Studies in the K-8 Classroom:** Offered in fall and spring, this course prepares candidates to teach K–8 social studies using inquiry, constructivist models, and primary sources. Candidates evaluate current research, design standards-based lessons with backwards design, and integrate technology. Instruction draws on the Next Generation Science Standards and other relevant frameworks.
- **ED 619 Classroom Management and Discipline:** Offered each fall and spring, this course helps candidates develop strategies for classroom management and student engagement. Through theory, observation, and practicum-based projects, including a behavioral intervention case study, candidates create a classroom governance plan and reflect on disciplinary interactions.

**Recommended to be taken at the beginning of methods courses.*

Practicum Policy:

Practicum placements follow your school district's guidelines. If you work at a school, contact your principal for placement help; if not, reach out to a local principal or teacher in charge. Your instructors will provide you with an information sheet for you to provide to potential hosts to outline the practicum and give them an idea of the scope of work needed.

When you establish a host teacher, please log that teacher's information in the Host Teacher Registration in the Practicum Student Handbook. If you are struggling to make a placement contact Placement Coordinator Heather Bieber (hmbieber2@alaska.edu). Be aware that some districts (Anchorage, Mat-Su, Kodiak, or Kenai) will want you to connect with them to arrange a

placement. Connect with Heather Bieber for more details if you are in one of those districts. For Fairbanks placements, you will need to contact the UAF School of Education, Heather can connect you with the appropriate placement facilitator. Instructors will guide you on appropriate grade levels.

Attendance: Practicum students are considered a member of the school faculty and should set their weekly schedules with their host teacher.

Observation: Begin by actively observing students and classroom processes, focusing on learning goals. Be sure to take the initial period to become acquainted with students and learn their names. This is a time for you to be a learner from a seasoned host teacher, not a critic.

Planning: Prepare all lesson plans prior to reviewing with the host teacher, followed by a debrief afterward. Preparation is essential for effective teaching.

Assessment: You will be observed and assessed formatively during teaching. Self-assessments and feedback via the PAF (Practicum Assessment Form) and the PCA ([Professional Characteristics Assessment](#)), along with LiveText evaluations, document your progress.

Lesson Design: Students will use the [elementary MAT lesson design template](#). You may be asked to provide additional information in your various courses, but this template remains the backbone of any lesson you write up. Remember that you must provide a lesson design for any lesson that is observed by a host teacher or UAS Clinical Supervisor.

Confidentiality: Maintain strict confidentiality about students and staff. Discuss concerns privately with appropriate personnel. Use pseudonyms, or first name only, when referencing case studies.

** If hired as a teacher during practicum, contact the Program Coordinator for necessary program adjustments and paperwork.*

Gate 3: Student Teaching and Initial Licensure

Prior to student teaching candidates must meet/complete the following requirements:

- Be fully admitted to a Graduate Elementary Ed program and in good standing
- Pass all required graduate coursework, including all practicum courses, the semester prior to student teaching with a C or higher, 3.0 GPA.
- Pass [the Praxis II](#) - test code 5017 or 5018, you can retake this exam until you pass. This is required by the state for you to be certified.
- Complete the AK Dept of Education and Early Development application to student teach and district student teaching application (if needed)- follow the instructions as outlined on our [Student Teaching page](#).

Deadline to submit student teaching related applications

- Fall Student Teaching Semester: 15 February
- Spring Student Teaching Semester: 15 September
- Submit a copy of the completed Student Teaching Authorization or (if in a paid role) Initial Certificate through Program Enrollment once processed to uas.soedeed@alaska.edu.

Please do not contact teachers directly to request student teaching placements. All requests must go through UAS and district applications. District administrators will coordinate with our Placement Coordinator to find the best match.

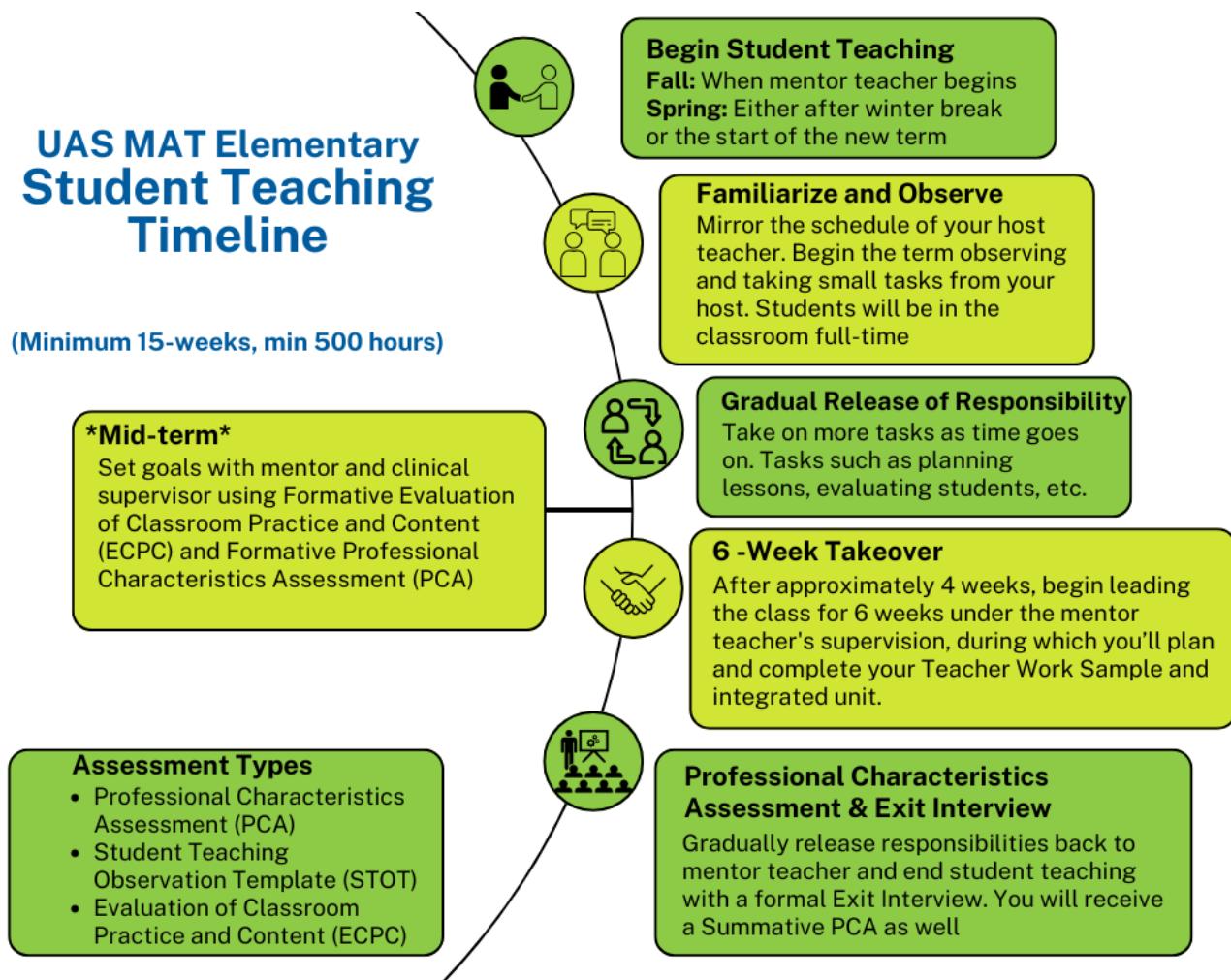
Student teaching for the K-8 certificate must take place in a public, general education K-8 setting. It cannot be done in high schools, special education, intervention, online, specialized, or private school classrooms. Middle school placements require prior approval from the Program Coordinator.

*Once students are placed in their student teaching classroom, they need to complete the student teaching (ED S688) and Master's courses with a *B or higher* to be considered passing.

Placement Extenuating Circumstances and Considerations

- ***If no suitable placement is available locally***, students may be placed elsewhere or may need to delay placement. Students who choose to student teach outside their community are responsible for travel and housing costs.
- ***If a student in good standing must move out-of-state before finishing the program***, they may request a placement in the new location. UAS may approve and hire a qualified local UAS Clinical Supervisor if available. All placements require advance approval from the SOE Dean, Program Coordinator, and sometimes the local university.

ED 688 Student Teaching - 6 credit hours



Student Teaching Assessments & Assignments

The state, UAS School of Education, and program standards are assessed through lesson observations, feedback from your mentor teacher and UAS Clinical Supervisor, and assignments on LiveText.

Key assessments include:

- Lesson Observation Forms for formal lessons
- Midterm Goal Setting using the Formative [ECPC \(Evaluation of Classroom Practice and Content\)](#) and [PCA \(Professional Characteristics Assessment\)](#)
- Final Evaluations via Summative STOT ([Student Teaching Observation Template](#)) and [ECPC](#) and an Exit Interview
- Teacher Work Sample and Integrated Unit demonstrating standards-based instruction

ED 688 Seminar:

A biweekly seminar supports you in completing these requirements. Register for 6 credits unless advised otherwise. The schedule is on the ED 688 course website.

Student Teacher Handbook:

This serves as your Student Teaching syllabus and is available on the ED 688 Black Board course site and [program website](#).

Student Teaching Improvement Plan and Dismissal Policy:

If a candidate presents serious deficiencies or is not making satisfactory progress, the Program Coordinator/faculty supervisor will meet with the candidate and, as appropriate, the student's mentor, the program coordinator/faculty supervisor, and the program chair. Except as otherwise provided in these procedures, the Program Coordinator will develop a written improvement plan for the candidate. The plan will include the nature of the problem or concern, the specific behaviors or skills to be improved, any activities or requirements the candidate must complete, and the timeline by which improvement must be demonstrated and any required activities completed.

If a candidate improvement plan has been implemented and the candidate does not successfully meet the terms of the improvement plan, the Program Coordinator, with input from the mentor and candidate, can recommend the candidate be dismissed from the program or revise and/or extend the improvement plan.

If a candidate presents serious professional, ethical, or performance issues, such as a safety risk to children, a disqualifying change in the candidate's criminal background, or the hosting district and/or clinical supervisor requests the removal of the candidate from the placement, the Program Coordinator may remove candidates immediately from placements and recommend their dismissal from the program without implementing an improvement plan.

[Read more about our dismissal plan](#) and see an [example of the improvement plan linked here](#).

After Student Teaching: (Completion of Gate 3)

Teaching Certification & Next Steps

After successfully completing student teaching, you may apply for the **Alaska Initial Teaching Certificate (K-8)** through DEED: [DEED Website](#).

- If you held an **Initial Certificate through Program Enrollment**, you're eligible to renew for another initial certificate.
- If you held a **Student Teacher Authorization**, you may now apply for the Initial Certificate (required before applying for a Professional Certificate).

Application Process

- [Apply to graduate with your Graduate Certificate through UAS](#)
 - **Application Due:**
 - **Fall Grad** - Oct 1st
 - **Spring Grad** - Feb 1st
- Apply to DEED through the [Teach AK portal](#). Please review the information outlined on our [Applying for Certification webpage](#).
- Request a **Program Verification Form** from the Administrative Assistant. It will be signed by the Dean and sent back to you via DocuSign for your DEED application packet. **Praxis Core or other approved Basic Competency Exam (BCE) (for program admission) and Praxis II (5018 or 5017) must be passed before we can complete your program verification.*
- Submit all documents to DEED via the [Teach AK portal](#).

Certificate & Employment

- DEED will notify applicants when their application for their initial license has been finalized. Then the applicant should be able to log into Teach AK and print their certificates on demand.
 - Need proof sooner? We can provide a letter of program completion.

We encourage you to attend job fairs in your area and consider continuing into the Master's program if you are not already.

Surveys

Please complete the program surveys after certification, and again after your 1st and 3rd years of teaching. Your feedback helps improve and accredit our programs. *If you are not continuing on to complete the MAT program please update your preferred email in UAOnline, or forward your UA email, to a personal email so we can stay in contact!*

Gate 4: Master's Coursework & Graduation

Final MAT Courses & Capstone

After you begin teaching or working in a school, you'll complete two final courses that connect theory to practice:

- **ED 626 Classroom Research (Offered in Spring):**
Design and conduct qualitative research to improve student learning in your classroom. You must have regular access to a student group throughout the semester. ***This course is a prerequisite for ED 698.**
- **ED 698 Master's Portfolio (Offered in the Summer, 3 credits, Capstone):**
Create a professional portfolio using work from your MAT program, aligned with the SOE Conceptual Framework. Reflective writing will link theory, research, and best practices to your teaching. The portfolio is reviewed by your graduate committee using the Portfolio Rubric.

Your committee includes the Program Coordinator and a professional from the field. Faculty may also serve on the committee.

Tip: Save student work, projects, and teaching artifacts throughout your program to use in your portfolio.

MAT Graduation/Degree Completion

Apply to graduate with your MAT through UAS. ***You should have already applied for graduation once with your Graduate Certificate. However, a second application is required when you are ready to complete the MAT.**

Graduation Application Due:

Fall Grad - Oct 1st

Spring Grad - Feb 1st

Graduation Ceremony

UAS Commencement is typically held the first weekend of May in Juneau, and we encourage you to attend. View more information on how to register to walk in the ceremony and other details on [UAS's Graduation site](#).

Not in Juneau?

You may participate in a local UA campus ceremony with prior arrangements—contact us and your local UA Registrar. A separate application may be required to participate in a non-UAS campus ceremony. A hooding ceremony may also be held in Anchorage for local UAS graduates.

Appendices

Program Roles & Responsibilities

Program Coordinator

- Conduct an initial interview and review transcripts
- Serve as chair of your graduate committee

Placement Coordinator

- Student Teacher Placements
- Practicum Host Teacher Orientations
- Mentor Teacher Orientations

Program Advisor

Your advisor supports you from admission to graduation. They:

- Support the Program Coordinator through the review of transcripts.
- Provide program information and guidance through all gates.
- Recommend you for student teaching and certification.

Practicum Host Teacher

Practicum host teachers are volunteers who support candidates during the six methods courses. Each course requires about 3 hours/week (30 hours total) of classroom experience. Host teachers:

- Welcome and introduce you to their students and classroom routines.
- Complete the Practicum Host Teacher Orientation and Assessment Training
 - An email will be sent with instructions on how to complete the training once the semester starts
- Review course expectations and help you navigate school policies;
- Provide access to classroom materials and curriculum;
- Review and approve lesson plans before teaching;

- Observe lessons, offer feedback, and complete evaluations (PAF-Practicum Assessment Form & PCA - [Professional Characteristics Assessment](#)) in LiveText;
- Contact the course instructor if concerns arise.

Credit Option: Practicum host teachers may register for ED 593 (1–3 credits, 1 credit per practicum hosted) for credit and may also join the course alongside their candidate.

Site Administrators (Practicum)

Site administrators facilitate practicum placements. In many districts, candidates must contact the principal or HR directly. The SOE Placement Coordinator can assist. Administrators may also observe and support candidates.

Mentor Teacher (Student Teaching)

The mentor teacher is an experienced master educator who volunteers to model exemplary practices and evaluate student teachers. The mentor teacher is the most influential figure in your transition from student to professional.

Mentor teachers:

- Attend Mentor Teacher Orientation with University Clinical Supervisor and Student Teacher;
- Complete the Mentor Teacher Assessment Training
 - An email will be sent with instructions on how to complete the training once the semester starts
- Prepare the classroom and students for the student teacher's arrival;
- Introduce student teacher to staff, parents, and community;
- Provide planning materials and instructional resources;
- Guide lesson planning and gradually increase the student teacher's teaching responsibilities;
- Observe, assess, and offer feedback regularly via LiveText;
- Support your 6-week solo teaching experience;
- Participate in midterm (formative) and final (summative) evaluations using the ECPC ([Evaluation of Classroom Practice and Content](#)) and PCA ([Professional Characteristics Assessment](#));
- Write a final evaluation reflecting your growth and SOE competencies.

Credit & Compensation: Mentor teachers are eligible for 3 credits via ED 593 and an honorarium.

Site Administrators (Student Teaching)

Administrators:

- Sign MOUs with UAS (one per district);
- Approve and support placements;
- May observe or write recommendation letters;
- May participate in exit interviews.

UAS Faculty & University Clinical Supervisors

Faculty teach methods courses, provide syllabi, and assign grades.

UAS Clinical Supervisors serve as mentors and evaluators during student teaching.

They:

- Provide orientation to you and your mentor teacher;
- Conduct biweekly observations of the student teacher regularly (at least one in-person visit per semester for remote);
- Conduct observations and submit evaluations (ECPC, STOT) in LiveText;
- Facilitate midterm/final conferences;
- Evaluate the TWS, UbD unit, and portfolio.
- Assign the final grade for ED 688.

Candidate Responsibilities

As a candidate in the program, you are expected to:

- Uphold professional ethics and conduct (per Alaska Code of Ethics);
- Follow all program and handbook requirements;
- Complete required coursework, including ED 333, ED 380, and EDSE 482, before taking, and passing, the methods courses;
- Complete 30+ hours per practicum and 500 hours during student teaching;
- Maintain confidentiality and respect school policies and personnel;
- Use APA format and Microsoft Word for written work;
- Dress and act professionally;
- Sign and return the [Statement of Agreement](#) (required for program enrollment).

Student Teaching Notes:

- Must be fully admitted prior to student teaching;
- Must pass all program coursework before placement (unless a waiver is approved);
- Plan on a full 15-week commitment for student teaching;
- Placements are arranged by UAS and school districts—not candidates;
- Avoid additional coursework during student teaching.

For All Potential K-3 Teachers: AK Reads Act Endorsement Requirement

All educators planning to work in grades K–3rd must earn an AK Reads Act endorsement. The endorsement **requires 45 hours of DEED-approved training or passing an approved exam.**

Completing the requirement early prevents being labeled “out-of-field” and facing teaching restrictions after completion of your licensure program. The district can arrange training if a teacher is hired out-of-field but completing it before licensure is strongly recommended if K–3 teaching is possible.

Please find the list of approved trainings and tests listed on the [DEED's AK Reads Act Site](#).

Capstone Requirements (MAT Only)

After student teaching, MAT candidates complete:

ED 626: Classroom Research

You will design and implement a classroom-based research project that improves student learning. Regular access to students is required.

ED 698: Master's Portfolio

A professional portfolio, aligned with the SOE Conceptual Framework, includes:

- Standards-informed reflections;
- Materials created during coursework and student teaching;
- Evidence of growth and understanding of theory, practice, and research.

Graduate Committee

Your 3-member committee includes your advisor and a professional educator (faculty may serve). They:

- Guide your portfolio development;
- Use the official rubric to evaluate your work in LiveText;
- Approve your MAT degree completion.

Academic Policies

- Maintain a **3.0 GPA**
- A grade of **C– or lower** is not accepted for any program course
- ED 626, 688, and 698 require a **B or better**
- More than one C in initial coursework may result in review
- Use of **AI tools to generate content** is considered a violation of academic integrity

Administrative Withdrawal may occur if candidates do not participate or meet course requirements.

Candidate Improvement Plans are used if professional or academic concerns arise. These plans outline specific actions, goals, and timelines for improvement. Repeated or serious issues may lead to **dismissal**.

Standards & Alignment

Program activities align with:

- [SOE Conceptual Framework](#)
- [Alaska Beginning Teacher Standards](#)
- [InTASC Model Core Standards](#)
- [CAEP Elementary Teacher Prep Standards](#)
- [Culturally Responsive & Digital Literacy Standards](#)

Alignment Matrix [\(view online\)](#)

Resource	Link or Contact
UAS SOE Homepage	<u>https://uas.alaska.edu/education/</u>

Faculty Contacts	SOE Directory
APA Guidelines	Purdue OWL APA 7
LiveText	LiveText Info
Library & Research	UAS Library, SLED
Counseling & Support	Counseling Services
Financial Aid	Financial Aid Office
Title IX & Safety	Title IX Policy

Research Consent

You may be invited to participate in research to help improve teacher education. Participation is voluntary, confidential, and unrelated to your grades or program status.

Contact the Program Coordinator for more details.

Acknowledgement Form

Please check each box and sign and date (required)*

- I have read this Candidate Handbook for the academic year 20__-__.
- I understand the contents of this handbook and agree to the policies, requirements, and expectations that are designed to support the effective completion of my Elementary Endorsement, Graduate Certificate, and/or Master of Arts in Teaching programs in elementary education as required by the UAS School of Education and the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development.
- I confirm that I have asked questions for clarification about the program requirements, as needed, and have received sufficient information in response.
- As a student in the Elementary Endorsement, Graduate Certificate, or MAT program(s), I understand that I am a possible participant in education research and give my consent to participate in such research.

Candidate Name:

Candidate Signature:

Date:

*This form is a required document prior to entering into a field placement