



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is an Alternative Teacher Licensure Program?

An Alternative Teacher License is issued for one year to those participating in an Alternative Teacher Preparation Program. Upon successful completion of the program, the candidate may apply for a Colorado Initial Teacher License. Friends School has received state board approval to provide training and supervision to teacher candidates (also called alternative teachers) and is considered a Designated Agency with the state. For information on alternative teacher requirements, visit: https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprof/checklist-alt_teacher

What are the main advantages of the Friends Teacher Preparation Program?

- **Ten-month** preparation period with “**hands-on**” classroom experience
- Teaching time in the classroom for a **full school year**, learning from and working alongside, a **mentor teacher**
- Friends TPP has a **network of partner schools and mentor teachers, so we can take the lead in finding you a teaching placement** for the year. Our primary goal is to ensure a strong fit between mentor and teacher candidate, as this ultimately impacts the students in the class!
- You also have the **option of securing your own placement/position (can be paid) for the program year** as long as it is approved by the Friends TPP and your host school administrator
- An advisory system that offers advice and guidance from a **support team**
- **Weekly full-day classes** and workshops that focus on child development, classroom management, and academic core areas that reflect appropriate teaching and learning (best practice) in the elementary and early childhood classroom
- Opportunity to **share and collaborate** with other teacher candidates in different educational settings, pre-K to grade 6
- **Diverse community of learners.** This program attracts applicants from across the country with a wide range of experience. Candidates include recent college graduates, current teachers or paraprofessionals seeking licensure, and individuals from various backgrounds who have decided on a career change to education
- **Colorado Teacher License** in Elementary or Early Childhood Education
- **Optional Master’s Degree** in Learning, Developmental and Family Sciences from the University of Colorado Denver

What is the admissions and interview process for the Friends TPP?

To be part of the Friends TPP, the application and admissions process includes four components (that do *not necessarily occur in this order*):

- **One:** Completion of the online application and submission of required documents: *an essay response, resume, official transcripts, and 2 letters of recommendation*
- **Two:** Completion of CDE Alternative License Requirements
- **Three:** Formal interview with the Friends TPP program staff
- **Four:** Matching applicants with appropriate mentors. Applicants will meet with potential mentor teachers to determine a solid co-teaching partnership for the upcoming year. This is fundamental to the application process and influences final acceptances. ***If you are seeking your own placement/position at a school outside of our existing network of partner schools, this process might look a little different.*

NOTE: *Some partner schools have their own additional application and interview processes as well.*

What are the requirements prior to being accepted to the program?

In order to be accepted into the program, applicants must hold at least a Bachelor's degree. This does not need to be in the field of education or a related field. There are additional requirements for the alternative license application with CDE. For those requirements, visit: https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprof/checklist-alt_teacher or see the CDE Alternative Teacher Requirement and Instructions found on our website.

What is the Praxis Exam?

The Praxis Exam is a required component for the Alternative Teaching License that demonstrates your content knowledge in the area(s) that you are licensed to teach. The Friends TPP offers licensure pathways in Elementary Education and in Early Childhood Education. Depending on which license you choose to pursue, the Praxis requirements are different and listed below.

For Elementary Education (K-6): A passing test score on the PRAXIS 5901 series 3 subtests:

1. Mathematics 5903 (PRAXIS 5003 also accepted)
2. Social Studies 5904 (PRAXIS 5004 also accepted)
3. Science 5905 (PRAXIS 5005 also accepted)

****Fees:** \$150 to take all 3 sections at once or \$64 per section (3 sections total)

For Early Childhood Education (ages 0-8), complete the following:

1. A passing test score on the PRAXIS 5024: Education of Young Children Exam

****Fees:** \$156 for the ECE 5024

Candidates must also pass the ***PRAXIS 5205 Teaching Reading: Elementary***. This must be completed at the end of the alternative program year prior to applying for your Colorado Initial Teaching License through CDE.

*For more information, test dates and sites, and to register, visit: <https://www.ets.org/praxis>

How much does the Friends TPP cost?

- Tuition for the Friends TPP is posted on our website (see Financial Outline) and is set each year by our Community Board (*The cost of the Master's program through CU Denver is separate from the program tuition cost.*)
- Teacher candidates placed at Friends School will receive a tuition remission
- Payment plans are available for the Friends TPP tuition during the program year
- Through our partnership with the University of Colorado Denver, a Master's degree program in education is offered as an option at a substantially reduced rate. The fee depends on tuition rates determined by CU Denver in the fall of each year. (See "Financial Outline" for estimated costs.) Teacher candidates pursuing the Master's degree may be eligible for federal financial aid/student loans
- Visit our website for the full financial outline

Will I be paid as a teacher during the internship year?

If you choose the residency option, then no. This is because during your teacher preparation year, you will not be the "Teacher of Record", meaning that you are not solely responsible for your classroom of students and families while you are in training. Instead, that is the job of your Mentor Teacher, while your main focus is on gaining experience and pedagogical knowledge through your work in the classroom, during seminars, and in your program coursework. Therefore, many TCs are contracted in an unpaid residency position at the school for the year.

*Applicants may also secure a paid position/placement **on their own**, perhaps in an associate/assistant teacher role. Partnership with a school not on our current list must be approved by the Friends TPP and the host school before moving forward to ensure that requirements for licensure can be completed.*

In the interest of your long-term success and sustainability in the teaching profession, the Friends TPP provides purposeful and personalized support on a regular basis through a Mentor Teacher, an Advisor who coaches you on your teaching practice, and the program staff.

What happens during the program year?

- A teacher candidate is placed with a mentor teacher in a classroom at one of our partner schools or through an approved partnership (*Information on our partner schools is available on our website.*) Placement opportunities range from preschool through 6th grade
- If in a residency, the mentor and teacher candidate work closely together in a co-teaching role. The mentor gives guidance, support, encouragement and words of timely advice. The teacher candidate works first with individuals, then small groups, developing and refining his/her philosophy and teaching skills while creating a resource of curriculum ideas for future use
- This field placement experience is not only a requirement for licensure but also provides opportunities for observation, guided practice, detailed planning and more to the teacher

- candidate in collaboration with their mentor teacher
- Once each semester the mentor and teacher candidate spend time together in a formal collaborative evaluation process
 - An advisor, as well as the mentor and program director, supports and supervises the teacher candidate's professional development. Each candidate is observed in the classroom and given feedback and advice from his/her advisor
 - During the year, the teacher candidate completes a Child Study assignment and a Thematic Unit. The Child Study is an observational study of several domains of child development as pertains to a particular student. The Thematic Unit assignment involves planning and presenting a detailed integrated study with the entire class of children
 - Additional major assignments include a course about Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum, Critical Reflections as a teaching professional, and the creation of a resume and cover letter

What happens during the seminar days?

- On seminar days, the teacher candidates develop and practice an appropriate repertoire of techniques and ideas in the context of an effective "best practice" approach. The sessions, under the guidance of the Director, focus on child development and core areas that reflect the appropriate teaching and learning in the elementary and early childhood classroom. A variety of guest presenters are invited to present on their area of specialization
- The sessions address curriculum in the context of the Colorado Academic Standards and Common Core Standards in areas of literacy, math, social studies, science, and the arts, as well as classroom management, learning differences, multiculturalism, technology, legal issues, assessment, and job application procedures
- Visiting instructors also lead sessions on a range of educational topics and pedagogy. We have a variety of current educators, retired educators, university professors, specialists, administrators, and more! This provides exposure to a multitude of perspectives in the field of education, allows teacher candidates to experience different teaching styles as a student in an adult-learning environment, and allows for ongoing networking opportunities
- The seminars meet and exceed the required 225 content hours required by the Colorado Department of Education and align with the Teacher Quality Standards as well as the ECE, Elementary and English Learner required standards