

Alternative Education: Classroom Teacher Placements

Michigan Compiled Laws (MCL) [380.1531](#) and the Administrative Rules Governing the Certification of Michigan Teachers ([Teacher Certification Code](#)) **require** teachers hold the endorsement for the grade-level and content area in which they are assigned to teach.

Teachers who hold the appropriate grade-level and content area endorsements on a valid Michigan educator certificate may be placed in an assignment to provide instruction in corresponding courses. This also applies to Alternative Education settings. Due to the difficulty with staffing and the diverse settings for Alternative Education classrooms, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is providing this additional guidance to support local programming.

A classroom teacher for a departmentalized single-subject Alternative Education program for students in all grade levels (K-12):

- **Must** hold a valid Michigan teaching certificate with appropriate grade-level and content area endorsement.

A classroom teacher for a Self-Contained Alternative Education program for students in grades K through 8:

- **Must** hold a valid Michigan teaching certificate and be endorsed at the grade level for the students being taught (K-5 All Subjects, K-8 All Subjects Self-Contained, or a K-8 All Subjects endorsement on a valid Michigan teaching certificate).

A classroom teacher for a Self-Contained Alternative Education program for students in grades 6 through 12:

- **Must** hold a valid Michigan teaching certificate and be endorsed at the grade level of the students being taught.
- **Should** hold an endorsement in one or more of the content areas being taught. For content areas in which the teacher is not endorsed, they should demonstrate to the district that they hold the content knowledge and skills for all content areas being instructed. These skills can be demonstrated through passing the appropriate Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC) assessment or by successfully completing a rigorous local district portfolio process.

Online and Virtual Settings

- Districts who provide online or virtual setting as their Alternative Education should follow the guidance for staffing those courses. This guidance can be found in the [Online or Computer-Based Instruction](#) document.

If a certified teacher does not hold the appropriate endorsement or is not available for the assignment, additional options for placement exist. Michigan has developed a system of permits that is structured to support the appropriate placement beliefs outlined in this document. The [Michigan Substitute Permits](#) are available for all settings. Additionally, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) also strongly recommends that districts take advantage of co-teaching/co-planning practices for students. Through this practice, districts can ensure that all students receive content expertise along with direct support for other student needs.