West Virginia Department of Education – Office of Educator Effectiveness and Licensure - Electronic Application Processing System

How long has the program operated? What was the month and year of initiation? Has the program been in operation for nine months to three years? (Note: to qualify, the program must be between nine months and three years old as of May 26, 2017. Older programs will be considered if there has been a significant update in the same time period.)

The Department of Education - Electronic Application Processing project was initiated in July of 2015 with the first application being processed by The Office of Educator Effectiveness and Licensure in April of 2016. Over the 13 months the system has operated, multiple forms were converted to the entirely digital process including Initial applications and renewals for Teaching Certifications, Professional Administrative Certifications, Student Support Certifications and Coaching/Athletic Trainers/Limited Football trainers.

Why was it created? What problems or issues was the program designed to address?

The concept of multiple education entities collaborating with one another was an exciting but challenging task. It was obvious that the West Virginia Department of Education needed a way for new graduates or anyone needing to renew a West Virginia teaching certification to easily complete the necessary applications and make payments online. The traditional process required teachers to know which of the 43 forms they needed to submit for their certification or renewal. It was also important to standardize and streamline the approval process, while keeping the applicant informed in real-time.

In the past, teachers, principals, support staff and coaches were required to download a form for either their initial certification or a renewal. Once completed by the applicant, supporting documentation had to be provided and multiple approval signatures from Institutions of Higher Education and Certification Coordinators from the County Superintendents office manually obtained.

In many cases, the applicant was confused in regards to what documents to provide, who needed to approve the application and in what sequence. Institutions, Counties and the Department of Educations were often scrambling to determine where the application was in the approval process and its status. If for some reason an applicant's application was not processed prior to the school year starting, the county would need to fill that position with a temporary replacement.

Standardizing the approval process would be the most challenging part of the project. seamless integration with WVDE's current framework along with getting buy in from the fifty-five West Virginia county superintendents, private schools, and colleges and universities throughout the country would require unprecedented collaboration to complete.

To combat this issue, the WVEAP system was developed to help applicants easily navigate initial applications and renewals along with streamlining the approval process. Everyone involved can now easily view who has the application, the status, and if any holds have been placed.

What are the specific activities and operations of the program? (Please list in chronological order, if applicable.)

The goal of The Office of Educator Effectiveness and Licensures was to develop a secure online service that would allow applicants to complete forms online, submit for approval, and process credit card payments through the West Virginia Treasurer's Office.

There are two components that make up the the WVEAP system. The first component deals with the public-facing piece of the system in which teachers, administrators, coaches, and support staff use to apply for new credentials or renew existing ones. Second, is the back-end functionality which includes acquiring approvals from the following groups: (1) the Office of Educator Effectiveness and Licensure certification staff, (2) Institutions of Higher Learning, and (3) Certification Coordinators from all 55 West Virginia counties.

Public-Facing Component

Regarding ease of access, it was determined that the system would use the existing Department of Education's single sign-on system allowing applicants to access the WVEAP system using their existing credentials. Doing this greatly reduced the time needed to onboard teachers, administrators, coaches, and support staff to the WVEAP system.

As new forms became available online, applicants looking to download the paper form are directed to the WVEAP system where they can view a list of certificates eligible for renewal. Clicking the renew button initiates the online renewal process and requires the applicant to only answer the questions associated with the credentials and endorsements assigned to that person. For example, an applicant wishing to convert to a permanent teaching certificate would need to the proper credentials in order to be eligible for the conversion. Initial in-state, out-of-state, and coaching applications may also be completed and submitted online for approval.

Once all approvals have been granted and the applicant is ready to pay for any associated fees, the WVEAP system integrates seamlessly with the West Virginia State Treasurer's Office payment page, allowing the applicant to initiate the payment directly from the WVEAP system.

Back-End Component

Nearly all applications submitted take a similar path to their final destination, which is the Department of Education's certification database. Once an application is submitted, the Institution of Higher Education listed by the applicant is alerted by email that a new application is available for processing. A

coordinator reviews the application and may view all the information submitted along with any supporting documentation uploaded by the applicant. The coordinator has three options when finalizing the application. They may approve the application which would push the application to the next phase of the approval process. They may reject the application which stops the application from being processed any further. In this scenario, the applicant, County Coordinators, and the Department of Education would be alerted to the rejection. The final option is to initiate a "send-back". Doing this alerts the applicant that one or more parts of the application contains information that is incorrect. The applicant is required to resolve the issue and resubmit to the Institution via a reciprocal process that is handled electronically within the system.

Once the Institution has approved the application, the hiring county receives the request and follows the same steps as the Institution. Depending on the form type, the Institution or County coordinators may be required to answer additional questions prior to approving the application.
County approval sends the application back to the applicant where they are required to pay for the fees associated with processing the application. After the payment has been made, the application is officially added to the Department of Education's certification database where it is processed using an internal application.

What equipment, technology and/or software (if any) are used to operate and administer the program?

Multiple Application Program Interface (API) connections were developed to handle the transferring of data to and from the Department of Education's certification database. All information regarding credentials and endorsements are obtained by the WVEAP system from the certification database.

In addition, the WVDE's single sign-on API contains valuable information that enables the WVEAP system to determine if the person signing in is a new applicant. New applicants are automatically directed to the correct form needed to apply for licensure. This is accomplished by looking at their credentials passed within the API.

What are the annual operational costs of the program? How is it funded?

The system was developed at no cost to the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Educator Effectiveness and Licensure, through an innovative self-funded public-private partnership. Since the system was designed and developed at no cost, the state of West Virginia has saved over $170,000 in initial development cost avoidance. The WVDE has also avoided costs associated with hardware, security, software licensing and systems administration.

Has the program been effective at addressing the problem or issue? Please provide tangible results and examples.

The program established by the Department Education has greatly reduced the time needed to process an application. Applicants can now easily identify and renew expiring credentials and send instant approval requests to applicable county and institutional approvers. Applicants receive real-time status updates as their application traverses through the approval process. Using the WVEAP application has taken a process that may literally take weeks to complete to a matter of days by eliminating the manual paper forms.

What measurable impact has the program had? Has it created significant change in your state?

The impact of this initiative cannot be overstated. West Virginia has struggled keeping educators in the state and making the certification and renewal process as easy as possible is imperative. The new system provides educators with a centralized, web-based solution to help with licensing and certification to accomplish that goal.

West Virginia teachers have seen an immediate impact using the new WVEAP service. The slow manual process used in the past is replaced by an intuitive application that guides them through the entire application - o forms to download, nothing to mail out or costly trips to get county and institutional signatures, and no more being left in the dark wondering where an application is in the approval process.

During the first year alone, over 4,500 applications have been submitted using the WVEAP system. Of those 4500, approximately 3416 have been processed by the Office of Educator Effectiveness and Licensure. In addition, 326 Institutions of Higher Education and 72 West Virginia school systems have reviewed and approved applications within the system.

Implementation was very successful due to the fact everyone involved in the project played a hand in determining what functionality was needed and how to best apply it. From the WVDE legal and cert coordinators, County Superintendents and Institutions across the country, every aspect of their job was taken into consideration. The goal was not to create an online process that mimicked the current one, but to improve the experience for everyone involved. That goal was accomplished.

Did the program originate in your state? If YES, please indicate the innovator's name, present address, telephone number and email address.

Yes, the program originated in West Virginia

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Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If YES, which ones and how does your program differ?

Many states allow users to view certification information online, but very few are able to process an application from cradle to grave. The level of information provided to everyone involved is unprecedented. The applicant, Institution, County, and Department of Education can view the status of an application, if any holds have been placed, if payment has been made and when overall approval has been granted by the Department of Education. Having the ability to view this information real-time is unique to this program.

Is the program transferable to other policy areas or states? What limitations or obstacles might other states expect to encounter when attempting to adopt this program?

Other states, including Oregon, have expressed interest in the program. Many states follow a similar licensing structure and could modify the system to meet their needs. Some customization would be required when adopting the program, including having access to a single sign-on system and developing API's to access the relevant Department of Education's data.
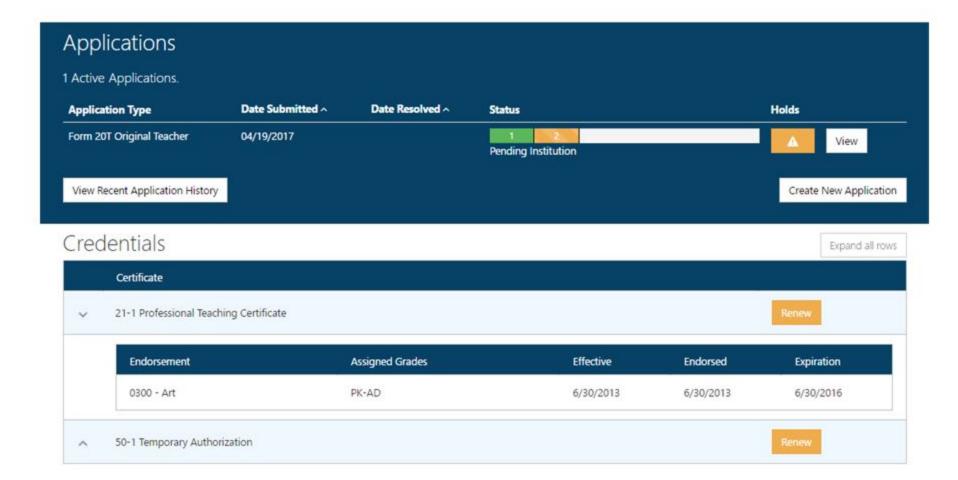
West Virginia Department of EDUCATION

Mary Anderson

Charleston, West Virginia

Certification ID: T7V139600021

US Citizen: Yes

US Veteran: No

Applications

1 Active Applications.

Application Type	Date Submitted ^	Date Resolved ^	Status	Holds	
Form 20T Original Teacher	04/19/2017		1 2 Pending Institution	⚠	View

| View Recent Application History | | | | | Create New Application |

Credentials

Expand all rows

	Certificate				
⌄	21-1 Professional Teaching Certificate				Renew

Endorsement	Assigned Grades	Effective	Endorsed	Expiration
0300 - Art	PK-AD	6/30/2013	6/30/2013	6/30/2016

| | 50-1 Temporary Authorization | | | | Renew |

Application for Licensure

Please choose license type

| Teacher | ▼ |

I wish to apply for...

| Initial Teaching Certificate | ▼ |

I am applying...

| for certification upon completion of a teacher preparation program from a regionally accredited institution of higher education in West Virginia. | ▼ |

Initial Teaching Certificate

Use this form when applying for certification upon completion of a teacher preparation program from a regionally accredited institution of higher education in West Virginia.

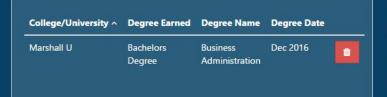Download Applicant Consent/Release of Background Results

U.S. Citizenship

Are you a U.S. Citizen? ● Yes   ○ No

Educational Degree(s) History

List the institutions from which a degree has been earned

Institution List

College/University ^	Degree Earned	Degree Name	Degree Date	
Marshall U	Bachelors Degree	Business Administration	Dec 2016	🗑

Add Institution

State

| West Virginia | ⌄ |

College/University

| Select College/University | ⌄ |

Degree Earned

| Select Degree | ⌄ |

Degree Name

| |

Degree Date

| | 📅 |

[Add Institution]

Fingerprinting Information

First-time applicants are required to have fingerprints processed by L-1 Solutions.

● I have previously received certification through the Department of Education and understand I do not need to resubmit my fingerprints.

○ I have not submitted my fingerprints to L-1 Solutions and will mail the required documentation to the WVDE.

○ I have never held WV Certification in WV and have recently submitted my fingerprints to L-1 Solutions.