

VCCS Career Switcher Program



Why would I want to work with an EducateVA Career Switcher?

Rigor— Before admission, candidates have to pass Praxis II, pass VCLA, submit transcripts that demonstrate a 2.5 GPA or higher, and verify 5 years of professional work experience. During the 16-week *Pedagogy Phase*, utilizing the same matrices for all education programs in Virginia, candidates must maintain an 80% average in each of five professional studies courses: Foundations, Classroom Management, Curriculum and Instruction, Methods, Reading and Writing in the Content Area. During the *Residency Phase*, the first year of teaching, having met the standards for “highly qualified” and holding a One-Year Provisional (Career Switcher) License, candidates must attend program seminars on teaching, maintain postings of reflective practice in Blackboard, and add to the teaching portfolio they began in the Pedagogy Phase—including the creation of a teaching web-page. EducateVA partners with divisions to provide mentor support and to convert to 5-year license, pending completion of a successful year of teaching.

Data—The survey, *Profile of Alternate Route Teachers*, was conducted by the National Center for Education Information, which has been documenting what is going on in this field since 1983. Last year about 35,000 individuals entered teaching through alternate routes. About half of the survey respondents (47 percent) say they would *not* have become teachers if an alternate route had not been available. Only about 20 percent say they would have gone back to college to get a teaching certificate.



Chris Elliott
French Teacher du jour.
“I can’t say I knew I always wanted to be a teacher, but it was in the back of my mind. Now I find that I don’t want to be anything but a teacher!”

Based upon an external evaluation executed in June of 2008, most Career Switchers from this program are currently teaching – 77% based on a 66% return on this survey. Also, 81% of those are still teaching in the same school.



Justin Keyes
After being laid off as an engineer, Justin found his niche as a HS math/chemistry teacher.
“First and foremost, I teach responsibility. My students understand that effective learning cannot be passive – they must work hard, think and push themselves to do their best.”

Well over half of our professionals already hold a graduate degree – and all have worked professionally for at least 5 years outside of the classroom.



Leslie Peterson
Moving from the business world to full-time education was a bit of a challenge, but Leslie has met it head on.
“Teaching ESL students not only to learn but to excel ... You can’t beat a reward like that!”

In 2009 alone, our program equipped 38 ESL teachers for the classroom—which exceeds the number equipped by every other program in Virginia combined.

“The data show for the first time the advantages of having individuals entering from alternate routes,” said Dr. C. Emily Feistritzer, president of the National Center for Education Information, publisher of [Teacher Education Reports](#) and the author of the report. “They are more mature, more satisfied with several aspects of teaching, feel competent as teachers and are more likely to remain in teaching than recent college graduates entering teaching.”

2009 First-Year Teacher of the Year Distinctions:

- Kellie Smilie—Goochland
- Ellen Johnson—Henrico
- Pam Kirby—Henrico
- Michael Kelly—Fairfax
- Anthony King—Caroline
- Teacher of the Year
- Joel Bunn—Gloucester

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