

# Certification Regulations

Promulgated  
December 2018

Office of Educator Excellence and Certification Services



**RIDE** Rhode Island  
Department  
of Education

# Objectives

- Provide an overview of newly approved certification regulations process
- Outline effective dates of new certification regulations
- Explain new reinstatement of expired certificates requirements
- Explain new certification renewal requirements
- Share new certification pathways to certification
- Share changes to existing certificate areas
- Explain professional learning, professional learning plans, impact on certification renewal requirements and describe phase in of Professional Learning Units (PLUs)

# New Certification Regulations Approved

On December 4, 2018, the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education voted unanimously to approve updated educator certification regulations.

Guiding principles for the new regulations include:

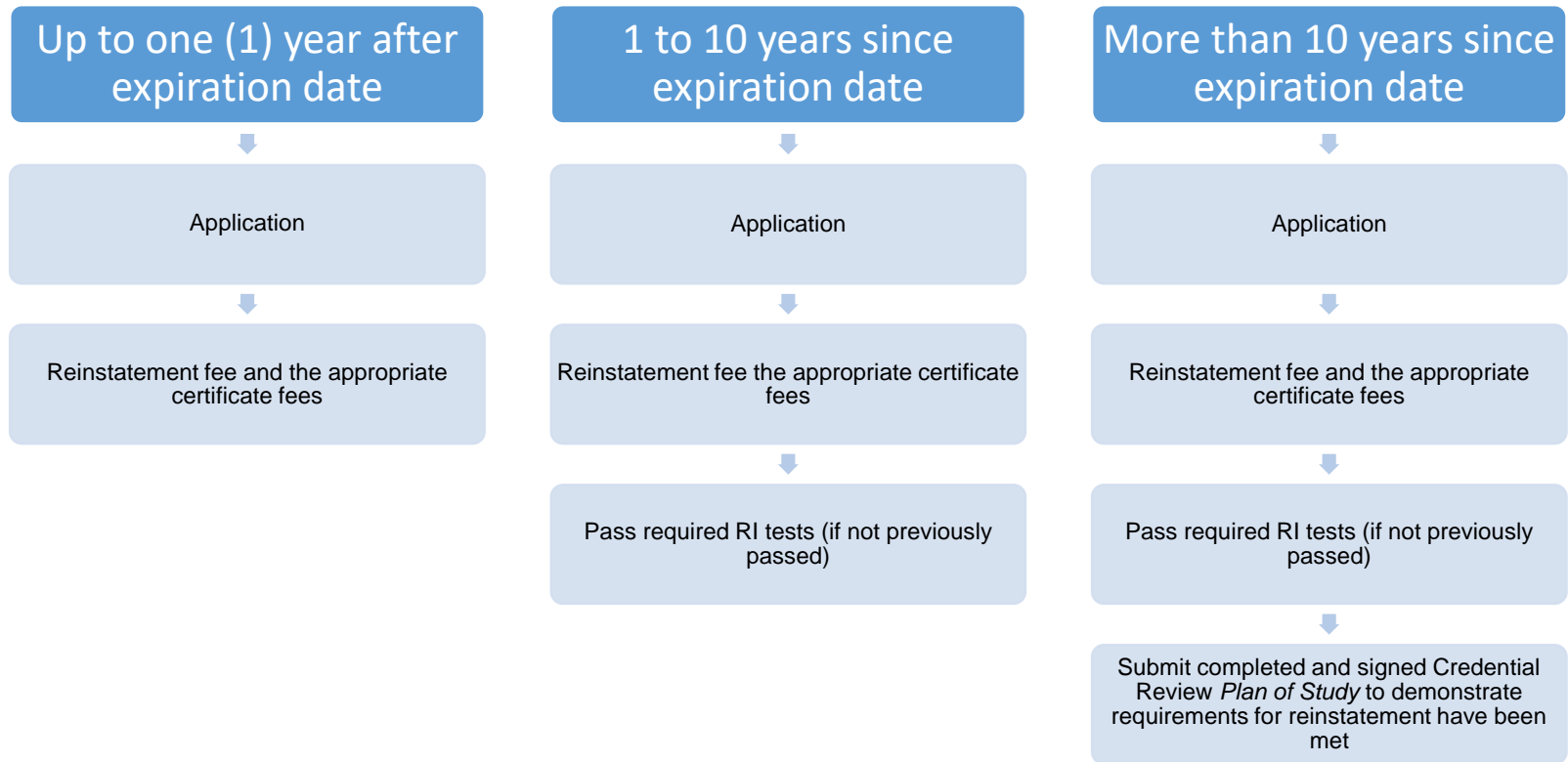
- Increasing practical experience for teacher pre-service candidates
- Opening additional pathways into the profession for shortage areas
- Re-establishing an ongoing professional learning focus for all educators

RIDE received input and feedback from:

- Stakeholder meetings
- Four public hearings
- 14 public meetings
- Review of approx. 400 pieces of written feedback

# Effective January 1, 2019

## Eligibility to Reinstate\*



# Educator Evaluation and Certification

- Effective January 1, 2020, final effectiveness ratings will no longer be a requirement for renewal or progression of certificates.
- Educator evaluation is an important process to provide educators with feedback and support that lead to continuous improvement of professional practice. Information from evaluation may help planning for professional learning.
- Certificates expiring in 2019 are required to have effectiveness ratings as part of renewal

# Professional Learning For Certification

- Effective January 1, 2020, professional learning will be required for the renewal of certificates.
- RIDE views professional learning as critical for educators to maintain and grow the knowledge and skills they need to effectively educate students.
- To encourage cohesive systems of professional learning that support educators, the regulations also require districts to create professional learning plans.

# Professional Learning Units (PLU) Required\*

- Professional learning will be measured using the Professional Learning Unit (PLU).
- PLU requirements will be phased in starting with certificates that expire in August of 2020.
- Teachers renewing professional or advanced certificates will be required, once fully phased in, to complete the equivalent of **20** professional learning units annually.
- Teachers seeking to transition from initial to professional certificates will be required, once fully phased in, to complete the equivalent of **30** professional learning units annually.

# Professional Learning Units (PLUs) Phase-In Initial 3-year certificates\*

The amount of professional learning units required will be phased in between 2020 and 2025. Beginning in 2020, applicants will submit the professional learning units outlined in the chart below.

Year of Certificate Expiration/Renewal	Formula to Pro-rate Units	Total Units to Be Completed for Renewal
2020	1x20	20
2021	2x20	40
2022	3x25	75
2023	3x25	75
2024	3x25	75
2025	3x30	90

\*Section 1.8.2 of Regulations Governing Certification in RI



# Renewal of Initial (3-year) Certificates

Not employed\* during the 3 years

- No PLUs
- Renew as 3-YR Initial

Employed\* fewer than 3 years

- No PLUs
- Renew as 3-YR Initial

Employed\* fewer than 3 years with leave of absence

- Pro-rated number of PLUs based on years worked
- Letter confirming Leave status
- Progress to 5YR Professional

Employed\* all 3 years

- Appropriate number of PLUs (See Phase-In chart)
- Progress to 5-YR Professional

# Professional Learning Units (PLUs) Phase-In Professional 5-year Certificates

Individuals who already hold a Professional Certificate or Advanced Certificate as of December 31, 2019 will submit the professional learning units outlined in the chart below.

Year of Certificate Expiration/Renewal	Formula to Pro-rate Units Per Year	Total Units to Be Completed for Renewal
2020	1x15	15
2021	2x15	30
2022	3x15	45
2023	4x15	60
2024	5x15	75
2025	5x15	75
2026	4x15 and 1x20	80
2027	3x15 and 2x20	85
2028	2x15 and 3x20	90
2029	1x15 and 4x20	95
2030	5x20	100

# Professional Learning Units (PLUs)

## Professional 5-year Certificates

Individuals who hold an Initial Certificate that expires between 2020 and 2025 and are issued a Professional Certificate between 2020 and 2025 will submit the professional learning units outlined in the chart below.

Year of Certificate Expiration/Renewal	Formula to Pro-rate Units Per Year	Total Units to Be Completed for Renewal
2025	5x20	100
2026	5x20	100
2027	5x20	100
2028	5x20	100
2029	5x20	100
2030	5x20	100

# Renewal of 5-year Professional Certificates & Progression to 7-year Advanced Professional Certificates

## Not employed\* during the 5 years

- No PLUs
- Renew as 5-YR Professional

## Employed\* fewer than 5 years with leave of absence

- Pro-rated number of PLUs based on years worked
- Letter confirming leave status
- Renew as 5-YR Professional

## Employed\* all 5 years

- Appropriate # of PLUs (See phase-In chart)
- Renew as 5-YR Professional

## Employed\* all 5 years and Eligible for Advanced Certificate

- Appropriate # of PLUs
- 5 years of employment
- Meet any one aspirational benchmark
- Progress to 7-YR Advanced Professional

# Renewal of 7-year Advanced Professional Certificates

## Not employed\* during the 7 years

- No PLUs
- Renew as 5-YR Professional

## Employed\* fewer than 7 years with leave of absence

- Pro-rated number of PLUs based on years worked
- Letter confirming leave status
- Renew as 5YR Professional

## Employed\* all 7 years

- Appropriate # of PLUs (See Phase-In chart)
- No aspirational benchmark
- Renew as 5-YR Professional

## Employed\* all 7 years

- Appropriate # of PLUs
- Employed for 7 year period
- Meet any one aspirational benchmark
- Renew as 7-YR Advanced Professional

# Activities for PLUs\*

General categories are listed below that might help everyone understand what can count for PLUs. These categories include activities that improve, enhance or increase any of the following:

- Subject matter/content knowledge and skills
- Pedagogical knowledge or pedagogical content knowledge and skills
- Curriculum implementation knowledge and skills
- Enhance educator effectiveness

# Example Activities\*

- **Site-Based Professional Learning** such as induction, structured PLCs, lesson study and student work analysis
- **Coaching** involving trained coaches utilizing observation / feedback cycles
- **Proficiency Based Learning** such as micro credentials
- **University Coursework** at accredited institutes of higher education
- **National Board Certification**
- 3rd party facilitated **Workshops**
  
- **Note:** Activities that do not directly relate to improving educator practices, such as general logistics, school daily operations, safety trainings, and most committee work do not qualify for professional learning units. These are important activities for schools but are not considered professional learning.

# Assigning Value to Activities\*

To help translate activities into PLUs, guidance is provided for how to convert common professional learning activities into units.

- 1 hour of a professional learning activity = 1 PLU
- 1 college credit = 15 PLUs
- 1 demonstrated competency = 5-10 PLUs
- 1 component of National Board Certification = 45 PLUs
- Completion of National Board = 180 PLUs
- Renewal of National Board = 90 PLUs



# Approval and Record Keeping of PLUs\*

- All educator PLUs will be approved by the district superintendent or designee.
  - Decisions on approval will be consistent with the regulations
  - Once there is a professional learning plan in place, decisions will also be consistent with that plan
- PLUs for superintendents will be approved by the chair of the school committee.
- Educators are responsible for the completion of PLUs and must maintain records of all activities that attest to participation in the activity and the PLUs earned.
- Records must be available upon request to RIDE, if selected for audit.
- RIDE will audit a percentage of renewal applications each year to ensure the professional learning requirement is being implemented as required by the new regulations.

# Professional Learning Plans\*

LEAs should support educators in meeting the professional learning requirements. To that end, each LEA must create, in collaboration with their educators, a professional learning plan. These plans must include:

- Identification of needs / interests of educators based on student data, educator evaluation, surveys, etc.
- Alignment to educator, district, and school needs through review of existing strategic / school improvement plans
- Examples of allowable activities, consistent with regulations
- Mechanisms for the approval of PLUs
- Structures and plans to ensure opportunities for professional learning activities that take place within the school context over time and are ongoing rather than reliance on one-time activities.
- Alignment and differentiation to ensure relevance

# Bilingual Dual Language Certificate Eligibility for ESL certificate

- Effective date June 1, 2019
- Applies to individuals who hold a valid Bilingual Dual language certificate
- Eligible for English to Speakers of Other Languages certificate
- Must demonstrate English proficiency AND complete the following coursework:
  - First and Second Language Acquisition, English Linguistics and Curriculum Assessment and Methods for English Learners

# ESL certificate Eligibility for Bilingual Dual Language Assignments

- Effective date June 1, 2019
- Individuals who hold ESL certification may teach in English in Dual Language programs
- If the teacher has taught in a BDL-English classroom for less than two years, specific professional learning is required for certification renewal:
  - Foundations of Dual language Programming
  - Implementation of Dual Language Programming

# Career and Technical Education Certificates: Alignment to Industry Standards

- Effective June 1, 2019
- Changes to experience and education requirements
- Candidates must hold the appropriate level of post- secondary education for the CTE area identified by RIDE
  - Example: Career and Technical Education-Auto Mechanic
  - Requirement of a GED or High school diploma and demonstration of content and pedagogical competencies
- Candidates must still meet content and pedagogical competencies through teacher preparation programming

# Career and Technical Education Certificates: Alignment to Industry Standards

- Five years of work experience requirement varies depending on post-secondary education

Post-Secondary Education	Work Experience Requirement
High School Diploma or GED	Requires five (5) years work experience
Associate's degree or bachelor's degree in the career and technical field	Requires three (3) years of experience

# Career and Technical Education Certificates: Testing

- Individuals who hold advanced state issued licenses or advanced industry certificate are NOT required to complete subject matter testing requirements (NOCTI)
- Principles of Learning and Teaching test is still required for full certification
- Work experience or a degree completed MORE than ten (10) years prior to date of application require completion of subject matter test (NOCTI)

# Hiring and Assignment Flexibility-20% Rule

- Effective June 1, 2019
- A certified teacher may be employed for a maximum of 20% of his/her time in a teacher certificate area and/or grade level for which s/he does not hold a certificate.
- The following conditions must be met prior to the assignment of the teacher:
  - Evidence of competence in the subject matter
  - Superintendent and teacher mutually agree to the assignment
  - Superintendent must obtain a waiver from the Commissioner and notify the local educator union prior to requesting the waiver.
- Waivers will not be approved if the Commissioner finds the LEA is attempting to use this flexibility to avoid filling full-time positions.



# Certificate Areas

## District Level Administrator- Special Education

- Effective June 1, 2019
- Valid for assignment as a District Level administrator- Special Education in grades PK-12
- Holds advanced degree from regionally accredited institution
- Has three (3) years of professional education experience as a speech language pathologist, social worker, school psychologist or teaching special education
- Coursework Requirement Changes:
  - Completion of 9 graduate credits in special educationAND
  - Completion of graduate level credits in the following areas:
    - Supervision of Special Education Programs and Services,
    - Supervision of Personnel,
    - Supervision of Instruction or Program Evaluation, and
    - School and District Finance

# Certificate Areas

## All Grades Registered School Nurse

- Effective June 1, 2019
- Valid for assignment as a Registered School Nurse in grades PK-12 in Rhode Island public schools
- Individuals who hold this certificate are *not* eligible to serve as teacher of record
- Superintendent must submit verification to RIDE that they were unable to hire a certified School Nurse Teacher or that the position does not involve serving as a teacher of record.
- Requirements include: bachelor's degree, completion of professional nursing program, three (3) years of documented experience as a professional nurse, current RN license from Department of Health
- First renewal requirements: complete professional learning units in school-based nursing procedures, child and adolescent development and supports for student learning needs

# Certificate Areas

## Special Provisional Certificate

- Effective date June 1, 2020
- Issued to any RI certified educator who has not met the required Professional Learning units (PLUs)
  - Only educators renewing Initial, Professional or Advanced Professional certificates are eligible for this certificate
- Allows one year to meet PLU renewal requirements
- Upon submission of PLUs, certificate will be extended to the full term of the certification
- Valid for 1 year
- Nonrenewable, issued one time in an educators career

# One -Year Practical Residency or the Equivalent for Pre-Service Teachers

- Effective date December 31, 2022
- Residency may take place over the course of one-year or may take place over multiple terms
- Definition of “equivalent” and examples will be developed in consultation with preparation program providers
- RIDE will work with programs to develop creative residency options
- Sixty (60) hours field experience completed prior to or following residency

# Adding Endorsements\*\* to Existing Certificates

- Effective June 1, 2019
- Designed to expand and recognize specialty area expertise
- State does not require endorsements for assignments in schools
- Renewal requirements do not apply to endorsements
- RIDE will designate endorsement areas
- RIDE will publish competencies for the issuance of endorsements

# Substitute Teachers-Definitions

## Day to day Substitute Teacher

- An individual who is employed on a temporary basis, for fewer than forty-five (45) days in the same assignment
- Must hold a bachelor's degree of higher Or
- An Associate's degree Or
- Complete a minimum of two years college completion on a four year degree track

## Substitute Teacher-Long Term

- An individual who is employed, on a temporary basis, for more than forty-five (45) consecutive days in the same assignment
- Must hold an appropriate certificate for the assignment

# Additional Certificate Area Changes

Effective June 1, 2019

- American Sign Language has been added as a language option for the All Grades World Language certificate
- Educators who hold a general All Grades Teacher content certificate are now eligible to apply for Special Education certificate(s).

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# Reciprocity with Massachusetts and Connecticut

Effective June 1, 2019

- Applicants from the State of Connecticut or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts who hold full certification in those states are eligible for reciprocity without any additional requirements
- Exception- must also hold the appropriate independent certificate(s) issued by Rhode Island for certification in:
  - Special Education,
  - English as a Second Language, Bilingual/Dual Language
  - Math Specialist or Reading Specialist



# Reporting Misconduct

Effective January 1, 2019

LEAs shall report persons who are dismissed for performance-based or fitness related reasons and shall also report the following in writing to RIDE within 15 days of discovery of the occurrence:

- arrest, indictment or conviction of a certified educator for any misdemeanor or felony
- allegations that the educator has engaged in sexual or romantic activity with a child or student
- allegations that the educator has caused physical injury to a child or student due to negligence or malice.
- information that certified educator is the subject of a report filed with the Child Abuse and Neglect Tracking System
- any educator who has resigned, retired or otherwise separated from employment with the agency after it became aware of an allegation that the educator engaged in misconduct
- any certified educator who the agency has provided notice of intent to dismiss, suspend or place on leave for misconduct regarding physical abuse or sexual or romantic activity.
- employing agencies shall report any person who is dismissed for performance-based or fitness related reasons to the Department of Education.
- reports must be filed with the Office of Educator Excellence and Certification Services at RIDE

# For Additional Questions or Guidance



For specific questions please email the  
Office of Educator Excellence and Certification Services at  
[eqac@ride.ri.gov](mailto:eqac@ride.ri.gov)