



Renewal Requirements for Certificates Expiring in 2020 ONLY Frequently Asked Questions

Certificate Types and Renewal

1. How will the new renewal requirements affect me when I apply to renew my certificate(s) expiring in 2020?

Renewal requirements apply to full certificates – Initial, Professional, or Advanced – that are up for renewal in 2020. The number of Professional Learning Units (PLUs) required will be prorated in 2020. Therefore, progression of Initial certificates to Professional certificates will require 20 PLUs. Renewal of Professional certificates will require 15 PLUs and progression to Advanced certificates will require 15 PLUs AND the completion of an aspirational benchmark. Aspirational benchmarks can be achieved anytime during the certification cycle. The four (4) aspirational benchmarks outlined in the regulations are:

- A. National Board Certification (attaining or renewing).
- B. Conferral of an advanced degree from an accredited institution of higher learning within your renewal cycle.
- C. Receipt of state or national recognition such as the Milken Award, State Teacher of the Year, Presidential Award Winner for Math and Science (PAEMST).
- D. Issuance of an additional RIDE certification in one of the Expert Residency Shortage Areas identified by RIDE.

2. I hold one or more certificates, but did not work in a public school in Rhode Island for the entire duration of my certification cycle. Do I need to complete PLUs for the renewal of my 2020 certificates?

No. Educators who are not working in a public school in Rhode Island for the entire duration of their certification cycle are not required to complete PLUs to renew their certificates.

3. I worked for some but not all years of my certification cycle. Do I need to complete PLUs for the renewal of my 2020 certificate?

No. Educators who have worked for some but not all years of their certification cycle, or worked in a One-Year assignment, or as a Long Term Substitute, are not required to complete PLUs to renew their certificates.

4. I have worked using different types of certificates, all of which expire in 2020. Do I need PLUs for renewal?

Possibly. Here is a table describing combinations of certificate types and when PLUs are needed:

Certificate Type Combinations Currently in Use	Are PLUs required to renew?
Life + Professional/Advanced	Yes, professional learning requirements apply to the certificate that is being used in your teaching assignment. Therefore, if you are using a Professional or an Advanced certificate, you would be required to complete PLUs.



Certificate Type Combinations Currently in Use	Are PLUs required to renew?
Life + Any Preliminary	No. Educators who hold preliminary certificates are not required to complete PLUs as a renewal requirement. Instead, these educators must meet the renewal requirements as stated on their individual status forms. Additionally, lifetime certification does not need to be renewed. Therefore an educator would not be subject to PLU requirements for the lifetime certificate.
Initial/Professional/Advanced + Any Preliminary	Yes. Renewal requirements apply to all full certificates – Initial, Professional, or Advanced – that are up for renewal in 2020. Additionally, educators must meet the renewal requirements as stated on their individual status forms for the preliminary certificate. It is possible that in meeting the requirements for the preliminary certificate, you may fulfill the PLU requirements of the full certificate.
When only one certificate type is being used	
Life certificate only	No. Lifetime certificates do not need to be renewed and our professional learning requirements are explicitly tied to renewal. Therefore, an educator would not be subject to these requirements for the lifetime certificate.
Initial/Professional/Advanced only	Yes. Renewal requirements apply to all full certificates – Initial, Professional, or Advanced – that are up for renewal in 2020.
Any Preliminary only	No. Educators who hold preliminary certificates are not required to complete PLUs as a renewal requirement. Instead, these educators must meet the renewal requirements as stated on their individual status forms.

Approval and Verification of PLUs

5. Who approves my professional learning activities?

LEAs approve professional learning activities. Professional learning approval should be consistent with both the regulations and the LEA’s Professional Learning Plan.

6. What happens when LEA leadership changes? How will LEAs verify PLUs?

Educators are responsible for maintaining records of and tracking the professional learning activities that they complete. LEAs are required to have systems in place that track approved professional learning and the PLUs for each activity/series.

If the LEA does not have a system to track PLUs, RIDE has developed a sample tracker that educators can use. Download the [Word](#) version or [Excel](#) version.



7. *If I move from one LEA to another, will my professional learning units be accepted when I apply to renew in 2020?*

Yes. When an educator moves from one LEA to another, the PLUs completed in the previous LEA will be honored by the current LEA. In order to have PLUs transferred from a previous LEA, the educator completes the [PLU Verification Form](#), provides applicable evidence of the approved professional learning activities and has the superintendent/designee of the previous LEA verify the completion. Educators can then submit the [PLU Verification Form](#) to their current LEA.

IMPORTANT: Educators who have completed the required number of PLUs in their current LEA **do not** need to complete the PLU verification process from a previous LEA.

Certification Renewal Process

8. *What is the process for renewing my certificate(s) expiring in August 2020?*

The superintendent/designee in an educator's current LEA will electronically sign-off on PLUs. RIDE recommends that educators reach out to their LEAs to find out what type of documentation their superintendent/designee requires prior to renewal. Educators will not be able to renew using the online system until PLU sign-off has been completed. Paper applications mailed to our office will be returned if PLU sign-off has not been completed.

IMPORTANT: Educators who have changed LEAs between 2018-19 and 2019-20, please refer to **Q7** for more details on the PLU verification process

9. *Can I use professional learning from school year 2018-2019 to renew my certification in 2020?*

Yes. Educators are able to use professional learning activities completed and approved by the LEA during the 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years.

10. *What happens if I am unable to meet the PLU renewal requirements?*

Educators who have not completed the PLUs required for renewal of their certificate may apply for a once-in-a-career, nonrenewable special provisional certificate. This certificate is valid for one year only and allows educators to meet the required PLUs for the previous renewal cycle. Upon completion of the PLUs, they will then apply for the appropriate Initial or Professional certificate and the remaining time will be issued for their full certificate(s). Such educators will be responsible to meet all the PLU requirements for that renewal cycle.