

# Thinking of Earning an Advanced Degree?

Alabama State Department of Education  
Educator Certification Section  
Updated October 2019



# Questions to ask Yourself....

- ▶ Is my goal to obtain additional certification?



- ▶ Is my goal to obtain higher pay?



If your goal is to obtain additional certification and you wish to attend an Alabama college/university:

You will need to speak with the certification officer at an Alabama college/university about completing requirements of their State-approved educator preparation program.



If your goal is to obtain additional certification and you wish to attend a non-Alabama college/university:



Alabama certification is offered on the basis of valid professional educator certificates issued by other states, the District of Columbia, U.S. Territories, or the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), provided Alabama offers comparable certification in terms of the certificate type, areas, grade levels, and degree levels.

Alabama certification is not offered on the basis of educator preparation programs completed outside of Alabama. No exceptions will be made to allow the recognition of program completion outside of Alabama.

So what do you do?????

# You will need to apply through Certificate Reciprocity....



- ▶ Submit the appropriate applications and fees
- ▶ Obtain background clearance
- ▶ Submit a valid professional educator certificate from the other state
- ▶ Submit official transcripts verifying the degree earned from a senior institution that was regionally accredited at the time the degree was earned and official transcripts of all credits and degrees earned
- ▶ Submit the appropriate professional educational work experience if applying for an area of instructional support (educational administration, library media, school counseling, school psychometry, school psychology, sport management, or supervision)
- ▶ After being advised on eligibility from the Educator Certification Section, meet a testing option:
  - ▶ Current requirements of the Alabama prescribed Praxis subject area tests, OR
  - ▶ Verify that a content knowledge test was passed for issuance of the area(s) of certification on the valid professional educator certificate in the state for which you hold certification, OR
  - ▶ Verify three years of full-time professional educational work experience within ten years prior to applying for Alabama certification. The full-time experience must have been 1) in the area of certification on the certificate and 2) in the area for which Alabama certification is being sought.



# Additional information regarding Certificate Reciprocity....

- ▶ Alabama Professional Educator Certificates are issued at the **bachelor's** degree level (Class B), **master's** degree level (Class A), and sixth-year/education specialist level (Class AA). Alabama Professional Leadership Certificates are issued at the **master's** degree level (Class A) and sixth-year/education specialist level (Class AA).
- ▶ Alabama does not offer certification at the doctoral degree level; however, sixth-year/educational specialist level certification may be considered for holders of doctoral degree level professional educator certificates issued outside of Alabama provided Alabama offers comparable certification at that degree level.
- ▶ Additional information may be requested if the professional educator certificate brought to Alabama does not reflect a degree level.
- ▶ Speech-Language Pathology certification is not available through certificate reciprocity. Please see the Speech-Language Pathology Professional Educator Certificate or Speech-Language Pathology Temporary Certificate approaches for certification options.

# If your goal is to obtain higher pay:



Based on current requirements, the advanced degree must be earned from a senior institution that was regionally accredited at the time the degree was earned. The regional accrediting agencies are:

- ▶ Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SC)
- ▶ New England Association of Schools and Colleges (EH)
- ▶ Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NW)
- ▶ Middle State Commission on Higher Education (M)
- ▶ Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WC)
- ▶ Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NH)

An Alabama teacher or instructional support (e.g., principal, school counselor) staff member may be entitled to be paid for earning an advanced degree if he/she:



- ▶ holds a valid Alabama Certificate,
- ▶ is employed with an Alabama public school system,
- ▶ is paid based on the state minimum salary schedule, and
- ▶ **certain additional criteria are met.....** *(See Options on next slides)*



Option 1	Earned an advanced degree prior to July 1, 2017  <i>Any degree area is acceptable.</i>
Option 2	Earned initial graduate credit (grade of C or better) toward the advanced degree <u>prior to</u> July 1, 2017, and earned the advanced degree <u>on or after</u> July 1, 2017  <i>Any degree area is acceptable.</i>



<p>Option 3</p> <p><i>Subject matter of advanced degree shall be liberally construed for these teaching fields.</i></p>	<p>Earned an advanced degree in a field of study for which the educator is properly certified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collaborative Teacher K-6</li><li>• Early Childhood Education</li><li>• Early Childhood Special Education</li><li>• Elementary Education</li><li>• Middle School (English language arts, Mathematics, Science, <u>and</u> Social Science)</li><li>• Middle School Generalist</li><li>• Special Education Alternative Achievement Standards</li></ul>
<p>Option 4</p> <p><i>Use for any area not included in Option 3.</i></p>	<p>Earned an advanced degree <u>in a field of study</u> for which the educator is teaching/serving or properly certified</p>



<p>Option 5</p> <p><i>Use for any area not included in Option 6.</i></p>	<p>Earned an advanced degree in the same area for which the educator currently holds a valid Alabama certificate</p>	
<p>Option 6</p>	<p>Earned an advanced degree in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arts (Dance, Music, Theatre, Visual Arts)</li><li>• Counseling</li><li>• Education Administration</li><li>• Engineering</li><li>• English for Speakers of Other Languages</li><li>• Language(s) other than English</li><li>• Library Media</li><li>• Mathematics</li><li>• Reading</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Science</li><li>• School Psychology</li><li>• School Psychometry</li><li>• Special Education</li><li>• Speech-Language Pathology</li><li>• STEAM</li><li>• STEM</li><li>• Teacher Leader</li><li>• Technology</li></ul>



<p>Option 7</p>	<p>Holds an advanced degree and ONLY a valid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emergency Certificate</li><li>• Interim Employment Certificate</li><li>• Provisional Certificate in a Career and Technical Teaching Field</li><li>• Provisional Certificate in a Teaching Field</li><li>• Provisional Certificate in Library Media</li><li>• Provisional Certificate in School Counseling</li></ul>
<p>Option 8</p> <p><i>This option may be used if all criteria apply and none of the other Options (1-7) are applicable.</i></p>	<p>Earned an advanced degree and is a teacher of a critical shortage area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teaching field was reported by LEA to the ALSDE as critical shortage area <u>and</u></li><li>• Letter is being submitted for approval as this is a critical shortage area for the LEA and the individual does not fit into any of the other advanced pay options.</li></ul>

- ▶ Once the advanced degree is earned, the Alabama public school system superintendent must submit Form VHD and the official transcript verifying the degree to the State Superintendent in order for the degree to be recognized for salary purposes.
- ▶ Questions about being paid based on earning an advanced degree may be sent to [payforadvanceddegrees@alsde.edu](mailto:payforadvanceddegrees@alsde.edu).