ALABAMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION SECTION
5215 GORDON PERSONS BUILDING
POST OFFICE BOX 302101
MONTGOMERY, AL 36130-2101
Telephone: (334) 694-4557
Alabama Achieves

Certificate Reciprocity Approach

This certification approach is for individual seeking Alabama certification based on holding a valid professional educator certificate issued by another state, the District of Columbia, a U.S. Territory, or the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA).

GENERAL INFORMATION

For purposes of this application, *state* also includes the District of Columbia, U.S. Territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA). The phrase "issued by *other states*" or "issued by *another state*" refers to certificates issued by another state's authorized Department of Education, Education Agency, Board, Commission, etc., that issues certificates to teach or serve in an instructional support capacity in the public schools of that state.

1. Alabama professional educator certification is offered on the basis of valid professional educator certificates issued by other *states*, and only if the professional educator certificate issued by another state is in an area, at a grade level, and at a degree level in which Alabama offers comparable professional certification. Alabama certification is not offered on the basis of educator preparation programs completed, online or in-residence, at non-Alabama institutions. No exceptions will be made to allow the recognition of programs completed at non-Alabama institutions.
2. This approach cannot be used to reissue an expired Alabama professional educator or professional leadership certificate that was previously issued through this approach. An individual may reinstate an Alabama certificate.
3. Speech-Language Pathology certification is not available through this approach. Please see the Speech-Language Pathology Professional Educator Certificate, Speech-Language Pathology Temporary Certificate, and Speech-Language Pathology Assistant Certificate approaches for certification options.
4. 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).
5. Alabama does not offer certification at the doctoral degree level. However, sixth-year/education specialist level (Class AA) certification may be considered if the valid doctoral degree level professional educator certificate issued by another state is in an area and at a grade level in which Alabama offers comparable professional certification at the sixth-year/education specialist degree level.
6. If a valid professional educator certificate issued by another state does not reflect a degree level, the Educator Certification Section may request a Supplement VER. The purpose of the Supplement VER is to determine whether an applicant who is eligible for Alabama certification in an area may be offered an advanced degree level of Alabama certification in that area. Advanced degree level certification may be considered if a state (or the District of Columbia or U.S. Territory) approved P-12 educator preparation program leading to certification or licensure has been completed at an advanced degree level in the area of Alabama certification being offered. The Supplement VER must be completed by the dean or the authorized certification official of the college of education at the non-Alabama institution where an advanced degree level state-approved P-12 educator preparation program was completed in the area of Alabama certification being offered. Not all states have advanced degree-level state-approved P-12 educator preparation programs leading to certification or licensure.

   A master's degree level state-approved P-12 educator preparation program or a sixth-year/education specialist level state-approved P-12 educator preparation program in the area of Alabama certification being offered must be verified on Supplement VER and must have contained at least 30 semester hours of graduate credit. The transcript must post a major in the teaching field or instructional support area at the degree level of the program. However, if by institutional policy a major is not posted in the teaching field or instructional support area, verification of having earned at least 12 semester hours of discipline-specific graduate credit in the teaching field or instructional support area are required. The 12 semester hours of graduate credit may not include credit for an internship, practicum, student teaching, or lab experiences. This credit must have been earned prior to the date of program completion and must not have been applied to the prior issuance of an Alabama certificate in any area.
7. Background clearance is an ancillary requirement which MUST BE MET BY ALL APPLICANTS for Alabama certification. Professional educational work experience is also an ancillary requirement which must be met by applicants for certification in instructional support areas *(educational administration, library media, school counseling, school psychometry, school psychology, sport management, or supervision*).

REGIONAL ACCREDITATION

1. An applicant must hold at least a bachelor's degree from a senior institution that was regionally accredited at the time the degree was earned except as indicated in items 1.a. or 1.b. below.

Regional Accrediting Agencies

- Middle States Commission on Higher Education
- New England Commission of Higher Education
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges
- Distance Education Accreditation Commission
- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
- Higher Learning Commission (previously the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools)

   a. An applicant who holds both a bachelor's degree from a senior institution that was not regionally accredited at the time the degree was earned and a bachelor's degree or higher from a senior institution that was regionally accredited at the time the degree was earned shall have both degrees recognized for certification purposes.

   b. An applicant whose only degree is from a senior institution that was not regionally accredited at the time the degree was earned may apply for a Class B (bachelor's degree level) Professional Educator Certificate only if the applicant submits, at the time of application, **all** the following:
      i. Verification of completion of a state-approved P-12 educator preparation program at a non-Alabama senior institution in a teaching field in which Alabama offers comparable certification at the Class B level; **and**
      ii. Verification of a valid professional educator certificate issued by another *state* in a teaching field and at a grade level in which Alabama offers comparable certification at the Class B level; **and**
      iii. Verification of having earned nine semester hours of graduate credit with grades of "B" or above from an Alabama institution with State-approved P-12 educator preparation programs. The credit must be posted on the official transcript of that Alabama institution.

2. An applicant who does not meet all of the conditions outlined in item 1.b., but who has earned a valid professional educator certificate from the state where the non-regionally accredited senior institution is geographically located, may be admitted to an Alternative Class A (master's degree level) teaching field program at an Alabama college or university at the discretion of the head of the educator preparation unit.

3. Degrees above the bachelor's level from senior institutions that were not regionally accredited at the time the degrees were earned will not be recognized for certification purposes.

FOREIGN CREDENTIALS

An applicant whose degree was earned at a college or university in another country that is not a U.S. Territory must obtain an evaluation of his/her credentials from a foreign credential evaluation agency approved by the Alabama State Department of Education. A list of approved evaluation agencies can be found at Alabama State Department of Education (click *Teachers & Administrators* ☞ *Teacher Center* ☞ *Teacher Certification* ☞ *Other Approaches* ☞ *Foreign Credentials*). The Certificate Reciprocity application form cannot be used to apply through the Foreign Credentials Approach.

CERTIFICATE RECIPROCITY FOR TEACHING FIELDS

1. Certificate reciprocity provides recognition of a valid professional educator certificate in a teaching field issued by another *state* if that certificate is in an area, at a grade level, and at a degree level in which Alabama offers comparable professional educator certification.

2. An applicant who holds at least **a bachelor's degree** from a senior institution that was regionally accredited at the time the degree was earned and a valid professional educator certificate in a teaching field issued by another *state* that is in an area, at a grade level, and at a degree level in which Alabama offers comparable professional educator certification may apply for a Professional Educator Certificate in that teaching field on the basis of certificate reciprocity.

CERTIFICATE RECIPROCITY FOR "IN-FIELD," "SUPPLEMENTAL," "ENDORSEMENT," OR "ADD-ON"

1. Some *states* issue professional educator certificates in areas of certification designated as "In-Field," "Supplemental," "Endorsement," or "Add-On," which are contingent upon the individual holding a valid base professional educator certificate in that state. Certificate reciprocity for In-Field, Supplemental, Endorsement, or Add-On areas provides recognition for those areas if Alabama offers an area of comparable professional educator certification.
2. An applicant who holds at least a bachelor's degree from a senior institution that was regionally accredited at the time the degree was earned and a valid professional educator certificate with an In-Field, Supplemental, Endorsement, or Add-On area issued by another *state* that is in an area and at a degree level in which Alabama offers comparable professional educator certification may apply for a Professional Educator Certificate in that area on the basis of certificate reciprocity.
3. If the Educator Certification Section determines an applicant is eligible for an area of Alabama certification based on an In-Field, Supplemental, Endorsement, or Add-On area held in another *state*, to have that area of certification issued in Alabama, the applicant must meet Alabama's current Praxis Subject Assessment (content knowledge) for the area.
   a. Test requirements will be individually prescribed by the Educator Certification Section when eligibility for certification has been determined. **Individuals who choose to test prior to receiving a letter of eligibility from the Educator Certification Section do so at their own risk.**
   b. Information about the current Alabama-prescribed Praxis Subject Assessments (content knowledge) of the Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program (AECAP) may be obtained at Praxis Tests (click *Reciprocity*) or by contacting the staff in the Educator Assessment Section at (334) 694-4594 or edassessment2@alsde.edu.
   c. **ONLY Alabama-prescribed Praxis Subject Assessments (content knowledge) are accepted.** Praxis Subject Assessments (content knowledge) that are not prescribed for use in Alabama will not be reported to the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) by Educational Testing Services (ETS). **For Alabama-prescribed tests taken outside Alabama, the code 7020 is used to designate the Alabama State Department of Education as a recipient of official score reports.**
   d. **PAPER SCORE REPORTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** Only official Praxis score reports, electronically submitted with the applicant's complete Social Security number directly from ETS to the ALSDE, will be accepted. Failure to provide the complete and correct Social Security number to ETS will delay the certification process.
   e. If determined eligible for an area of instructional support, the applicant must also verify the years of full-time professional educational work experience in a P-12 school system(s) required for issuance of the area (see next section of this document).

CERTIFICATE AND EXPERIENCE RECIPROCITY FOR INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT AREAS

1. Certificate and experience reciprocity provides recognition of a valid professional educator certificate in an instructional support area issued by another *state* if that certificate is in an area, at a grade level, and at a degree level in which Alabama offers comparable professional educator certification, and if experience requirements have been met. **In Alabama, certification in all instructional support areas is initially offered at the master's degree level.**
2. An applicant who holds **a graduate degree** from a senior institution that was regionally accredited at the time the degree was earned and a valid master's or sixth-year/education specialist level professional educator certificate **in an instructional support area other than educational administration or supervision** (i.e., library media, school counseling, school psychometry, school psychology, or sport management) issued by another *state* that is in an area, at a grade level, and at a degree level in which Alabama offers comparable professional educator certification may apply for a Professional Educator Certificate in that same instructional support area on the basis of certificate and experience reciprocity. The applicant must verify, at the time of application for Alabama certification, two full years of full-time professional educational work experience in a P-12 school system(s). Professional educational work experience in increments of less than one semester will not apply toward the calculation of two full years of full-time professional educational work experience.
3. An applicant who holds **a graduate degree** from a senior institution that was regionally accredited at the time the degree was earned and a valid master's or sixth-year/education specialist level professional educator certificate **in educational administration and/or supervision** issued by another *state* that is in an area, at a grade level, and at a degree level in which Alabama offers comparable professional leadership certification may apply for a Professional Leadership Certificate in an area of educational administration and/or supervision on the basis of certificate and experience reciprocity. The applicant for educational administration and/or supervision certification must verify, at the time of application for Alabama certification, three full years of full-time professional educational work experience in a P-12 school system(s) which must include at least one full year of P-12 full-time classroom teaching experience. In Alabama, teaching experience while the applicant was serving in an instructional support role (to include, but not limited to, behavior interventionist, instructional leader/administrator, media specialist, reading coach, school counselor, etc.) is not acceptable to meet the classroom teaching experience requirement. Professional educational work experience in increments of less than one semester will not apply toward the calculation of three full years of full-time professional educational work experience.

REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY

	A $38.00 ***nonrefundable*** application fee. Each additional certificate for which an applicant is determined to be eligible will require a $38.00 nonrefundable fee for issuance. A transaction fee will be applied.
	Background clearance is based on a fingerprint review.

- For applicants seeking **initial certification, additional certification, or certificate renewal** to teach in Alabama, your criminal history background checks must have been completed by both the Alabama State Bureau of Investigation (ASBI) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). You can check the status of your background checks and confirm whether you meet the state's suitability requirements for teaching at Certification Search.
- For Applicants who **have not** been cleared by both agencies through the Educator Certification Section of the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), you will need to undergo fingerprinting for a criminal history background check. Details on how to complete the background review process can be found at Teacher Certification. If you have any questions about our criminal history background check process, you can contact us at (334) 694-4557 or bgr@alsde.edu.
- Applicants may verify receipt of their criminal history results at the ALSDE by visiting Certification Search. If your results are not located, or you have questions about your status, please allow 10 business days from the date of fingerprint submission before making an inquiry.

	A valid professional educator certificate issued by another *state.* **(Applicants should be prepared to upload this information.)**
	Official transcripts of all degrees and credits earned must be submitted to the Educator Certification Section in a sealed envelope from the institution(s). Official transcripts may also be submitted securely to the Educator Certification Section through electronic transmission by only the transcript services listed below. The applicant's current full name and Social Security number or ALSDE ID must accompany the transcript(s).

Official transcripts may be submitted securely to the Educator Certification Section using one of the following options:

Option 1:

- ☐ Mailed to the Educator Certification Section in a sealed envelope from the institution.

Alabama State Department of Education
Educator Certification Section
5215 Gordon Persons Building
Post Office Box 302101
Montgomery, AL 36130-2101

Option 2:

- ☐ Submitted securely to the Educator Certification Section through electronic transmission by National Student Clearinghouse. **Do not select the ETX option.**

Option 3:

- ☐ Submitted securely to the Educator Certification Section through electronic transmission **from the institution** as an electronic PDF to certtranscripts@alsde.edu.

Transcripts submitted from an individual or a personal/business email account will not be accepted.

	Supplement EXP verifying appropriate professional educational work experience. The Supplement EXP must be used to verify the experience required for issuance of an **instructional support area certificate** (i.e., an area of educational administration, library media, school counseling, school psychometry, school psychology, sport management, or supervision).

Applicants are encouraged to read this document in its entirety to ensure requirements are met to apply. To apply through this approach, visit Teacher Certification (click *Out of State Certificate*) and follow provided instructions.