

Thinking of Earning an Advanced Degree?

Alabama State Department of Education
Educator Certification Section
July 2017



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.

Contact information can be found [here](#).



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 state that issued the certificate 2) in the area of certification on the certificate and 3) 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.
- ▶ All inclusive information pertaining to certificate reciprocity can be found [here](#).

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

If the advanced degree was earned **prior to** July 1, 2017, any degree area is acceptable for higher pay.

Option 2

If the advanced degree was earned **on or after** July 1, 2017, **BUT** initial graduate credit (grade of C or better) was earned toward the advanced degree **prior to** July 1, 2017, any degree area is acceptable for higher pay.

Option 3

If the advanced degree is earned **in a field of study** for which the educator is teaching/serving or properly certified, the educator will be eligible for higher pay.

How do I know what I am properly certified to teach?

Visit [Certificate/HQT Search](#)

How do I know which degree areas have been approved for my field of study?

Visit [Degree Correlation](#)

Option 4

If the advanced degree is earned **in the same area** for which the educator currently holds a valid Alabama certificate, the educator will be eligible for higher pay.



Option 5



If the advanced degree is earned in **one** of the following, the educator will be eligible for higher pay:

Arts (Dance, Music, Theatre, Visual Arts)	Counseling
Education Administration	Engineering
English for Speakers of Other Languages	Language(s) other than English
Library Media	Mathematics
Reading	Science
School Psychology	School Psychometry
Special Education	Speech-Language Pathology
Teacher Leader	Technology



- ▶ There are a few additional options which can be found on the [Verification of Higher Degree \(VHD\) form](#).
- ▶ 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.

Information contained in this document is based on current requirements and is subject to change.

Additional and all-inclusive information on Alabama Educator Certification can be found at www.alsde.edu/edcert.