Requirements for Level 2 and Level 3 Teaching Certificates in 50 States and the District of Columbia

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Introduction

This document presents information on teacher credentialing requirements for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The narrative synthesizes the requirements for the 51 jurisdictions and highlights several states that are implementing distinctive or innovative requirements for advanced teacher certification. Following the narrative is a matrix that provides a brief summary of initial and advanced certificate/license requirements for all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Information for this report was initially gathered through a search for teacher credentialing on state education agencies' websites. After reviewing all websites and summarizing available information, a deeper website search was conducted for eight states—Alaska, Delaware, Georgia, New Mexico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Washington, and Wisconsin—which all require some form of performance portfolio or professional development plan for a level 2 certificate. These finding are presented in two sections: First, the professional portfolio requirements are summarized for Alaska, Rhode Island, and South Carolina; then, requirements are summarized for the five states that require documentation of student progress for an advanced teaching certificate: Delaware, Georgia, New Mexico, Washington, and Wisconsin.

While all but one of the states offer a level 2 certificate (beyond the initial certification), 15 states offer a level 3 certificate. States use different terms for advanced certificates (master teacher, clear, continuing, professional), so for the sake of clarity, this document will refer to the certificates beyond the initial level as level 2 or level 3 certificates.

Synthesis of Findings

Common Requirements: Some commonalities were found among all 50 states and the District of Columbia—initial certificates/licenses require a bachelor's degree, completion of a state-approved teacher training program, and proof of subject-area competency. In most states, proof of subject-area competency is accomplished by a bachelor's degree in the subject area, an examination (in most cases the Praxis II), or both. All 50 states and the District of Columbia require proof of full-time teaching experience to apply for the level 2 and the level 3 certificate/license. The experience requirement ranges from one to six years.

Level 2 and level 3 certificate requirements vary from state to state. All but one state require a level 2 certificate in order for teachers to remain in the classroom beyond the years designated by the initial certificate (one to six years). Fifteen states offer a level 3 teaching certificate designated as master teacher or professional level, which is valid for a teacher's lifetime.

Level 2 Certificates: For level 2 certificates, many of the states require some additional university education (credits), the completion of an induction or mentoring program, or both. Three states require teaching experience only with no additional requirements.

Several states require the development of a professional development plan or a professional review portfolio. Washington, Delaware, and Wisconsin require evidence of student learning for a level 2 certification. The chart below provides a tally of the requirements for the level 2 certificate in the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Tally of requirements for level 2 certification

Requirements	Number of states using this
	requirement 3
Experience only	_
University credits only	9
Master's degree	6
Credits or master's degree	1
Master's degree or NBPTS certificate	2
Master's degree and examination	
Induction/mentoring	6
Induction/mentoring and credits, master's degree or NBPTS certificate	1
Induction/mentoring, credits, and professional portfolio	1
Induction/mentoring, Praxis II (subject area competency), and teaching evaluation	1
Induction/mentoring and Praxis III-performance examination	4
Performance review by portfolio	2
Professional development plan (PDP)	2
PDP and induction/mentoring	1
PDP and university credits	1
PDP, Induction/mentoring, university credits, and teaching evaluation	1
Teaching evaluation only	4
Other combinations	4

Level 3 Certificates: Of the 15 states that offer the lifetime level 3 certificate, 12 require either a master's degree or National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification. One state accepts a sixth year of university coursework whether or not it

leads to a master's degree. Georgia and New Mexico require a performance assessment that includes documentation of student learning for the level 3 certificate.

Highlights of Performance Review and Professional Development Plans

Alaska, Rhode Island, and South Carolina have level 2 certificate programs that include a performance review, a professional development plan, or both.

Alaska

Alaska's performance review for a level 2 certificate requires teachers to submit a 45-minute video tape of their classroom instruction accompanied by supporting documentation (lesson plans, handouts, etc.). A 59-page manual for how to submit the video, the teacher performance standards, and a scoring rubric for the teacher performance standards is provided. The video and supporting documents are evaluated by state education personnel. The manual, scoring guide, and details of the requirements are available at http://www.eed.state.ak.us/TeacherCertification/. A level 3 certificate for Alaska requires an advanced degree or a NBPTS certificate.

Rhode Island

Rhode Island requires a professional development plan (I-Plan) for teachers to receive a level 2 certificate. The I-Plan is developed by each teacher for his or her professional development and is individualized to reflect the teacher's personal and professional aspirations. It must be a goals-driven professional development plan that is informed by self-study, grounded in professional teaching standards, connected to school and district initiatives, and supported by plans for sustained professional development. Specific steps for developing and implementing the I-Plan and how it is evaluated can be found by going to www.ride.ri.gov and searching for I-Plan. Rhode Island does not offer a level 3 certificate.

South Carolina

South Carolina's program for Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Professional Teaching (ADEPT) is required for a level 2 certification. ADEPT is a comprehensive and integrated system of support for and evaluation of new teachers based on ADEPT Performance Standards. Teacher education institutions use the ADEPT standards to evaluate intern teachers and also to evaluate their programs for continuous improvement. In addition, each beginning teacher must maintain an ADEPT plan on file with the state. A completed ADEPT file with teacher performance evaluations is required for teachers to advance from the initial to the level 2 (professional) teaching certificate after three years of teaching. More information and the performance standards are online at http://www.scteachers.org/Cert/index.cfm. A level 3 certificate in South Carolina requires an advanced degree or a NBPTS certificate.

Highlights of Programs using Student Outcome Data for Teacher Assessment

Delaware, Georgia, New Mexico, Washington, and Wisconsin have implemented either level 2 or level 3 requirements that include student performance components.

Delaware

Delaware has established the Delaware Performance Assessment System (DPAS) requirement for a level 2 certificate. The DPAS system uses observation and teacher portfolio development to demonstrate teaching proficiency including documentation of student learning. A teacher must successfully meet all of the requirements to receive the level 2 certificate. The areas included in the DPAS evaluation are as follows:

- 1. Planning and Preparation, which includes selecting objectives, designing instruction, demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy, and demonstrating knowledge of students.
- 2. The Classroom Environment, which includes managing classroom procedures, managing student behavior, creating an environment to support learning, and organizing the physical space.
- 3. Instruction, which includes engaging students, demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness, communicating clearly and accurately, and using questioning and discussion techniques.
- 4. Professional Responsibilities, which includes communicating with families, developing a student record system, growing professionally, and reflecting on practice.

A manual on the Delaware level 2 certification and details on the DPAS system are available online at http://www.doe.k12.de.us/csa/dpasii/default.shtml

Georgia

George offers a Master Teacher certificate at level 3. To be awarded the Master Teacher certification, a teacher must provide evidence of student progress in one of two ways:

1) Grades 2–8 teachers may submit student test score rosters for two cohorts of students.

The data then are analyzed by the district using a "growth" or "value-added" statistical model or 2) Teachers at all grade levels and in all subject areas may submit a portfolio documenting student progress through formative assessment, classroom summative assessment, or performance-based assessments. These must be accompanied by a written explanation of how these documents show progress. (This second option is reviewed by a panel of educators). In addition, all applicants for Master Teacher must provide an endorsement by their district that confirms continuing positive teaching evaluations and a high level of professional responsibility. Teachers who are working as instructional coaches may also advance to Master Teacher by submitting a portfolio documenting

impact on teaching as well as impact on student progress. Details on the Master Teacher program can be found at http://www.gamasterteachers.org/.

New Mexico

In New Mexico both the level 2 and level 3 certificates require a teacher to compile a professional dossier. To receive a level 2 certification, teachers must submit the Professional Development Dossier (PDD), complete a mentoring program, and be recommended by a superintendent in a New Mexico public school district. The PDD is a collection of documents compiled by a teacher, including classroom data (lesson descriptions, handouts, student work, video and audio recordings, photos) and written explanations of the data/documents. It must be reviewed and verified by the district superintendent recommending the teacher for the level 2 certification. The PDD is organized into five strands that align with the New Mexico Teacher Competencies and Indicators. Those aspects of the PDD that are aligned to the first three strands of the competencies, which address classroom instruction, are evaluated by an educational professional outside of the teacher's school district. The 4th and 5th strands of the competencies, which address professionalism, are evaluated by the district superintendent. For detailed information on the New Mexico Professional Development Dossier, see www.teachnm.org. For a level 3 certificate, the PDD must be updated and submitted along with proof of the teacher's completion of either a master's degree or NBPTS certificate.

Washington

Washington offers only a level 2 (Professional) certificate. To receive the Professional Certificate, teachers much complete a Pro Teach Portfolio. The Pro Teach Portfolio is based on three professional teaching standards: 1) Professional Growth and Contributions; 2) Building a Learning Community; and 3) Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment; along with12 related criteria. The Pro Teach Portfolio is a compilation of evidence and commentary developed through reflective practice that demonstrates a teacher's positive impact on student learning. The portfolio includes documentation of teacher reflective practice and evidence of effective practice through the use of student voice. The student voice is described as "evidence of learning from the students' perspective(s)" and is detailed on the website. The final portfolio is scored by professional educators. The state's website, www.proteach.org, provides details on the strategies teachers must use to collect and document student voice and as well as other requirements for the Pro Teach Portfolio.

Wisconsin

Wisconsin requires that teachers submit a detailed professional development plan for the level 2 teaching certificate. Wisconsin's professional development plan (PDP) is one of the most detailed and extensive among the states. The PDP outlines a job-embedded, sustained professional development process that includes goals and objectives selected from Wisconsin's teaching standards and clearly verifies professional growth and the

effect of that growth on student learning. The PDP must be approved by a professional development team consisting of teachers and administrators who have completed the PDP training program. The plan is a combination of documented reflection on professional practice; goals for professional development; plans for participation in jobembedded, sustained professional development; and concrete evidence (through classroom observations and documentation) of an impact of the professional development on student learning. Detailed information on the Wisconsin Professional Development Plan is available at http://dpi.wi.gov/tepdl/pdp.html. Wisconsin does not offer a level 3 certificate.

MATRIX OF STATE CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS			
STATE	Requirements for Standard Certificate All states require years of teaching experience. These range from 1–6 years.	Requirements for Advanced Certificate	Notes
Alabama	Class A Certificate: Completion of an approved master's degree-level teacher education program from an NCATE accredited institution.	Class AA Certificate: Education specialist degree-level teacher education program or a 6th-year level teacher education program from an NCATE accredited institution.	
Alaska	 Professional Certificate: Six semester hours of coursework plus one course in multicultural education and one course in Alaska state history, Content area exam, and Performance Review (45-minute teaching video and supporting documents). 	Master Teacher Certificate: Granted to teachers who complete all requirements for the Professional Certificate and earn the National Board Certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).	Highlighted in narrative.
Arizona	Standard Certificate: Additional coursework in teaching reading and structured English immersion.	None	

STATE	Requirements for Standard Certificate All states require years of teaching experience. These range from 1–6 years.	Requirements for Advanced Certificate	Notes
Arkansas	Standard Certificate: Completion of induction/mentoring program (novice teachers will have a site-based, trained mentor assigned to support their practice and professional growth) and Praxis III performance assessment to be administered when novice teachers and their mentors decide that their teaching meets the mentoring requirements.	None	
California	Clear Certificate: Complete an approved induction program (through a school district). The induction program includes the advanced study of health education, special populations, computer technology, and teaching English learners.	None	
Colorado	Standard Certificate: Completion of a Colorado State Board of Education approved induction program (provided by Colorado schools, school districts, some private and charter schools, approved facilities and/or BOCES). The induction program must include • Supervision by mentor teachers, • Ongoing professional development and training, including ethics, and • Performance evaluations.	None	

STATE	Requirements for Standard Certificate All states require years of teaching experience. These range from 1–6 years.	Requirements for Advanced Certificate	Notes
Connecticut	Standards Certificate: Additional coursework based on endorsement (no credit amount stated).	None	
District of Columbia	Standard Certificate: Unspecified amount of coursework for initial license renewal.	None	
Delaware	Continuing Certificate: Satisfactory approved state educator performance system (DPAS) annual summative evaluations for the period of initial licensure.	Advanced Certificate: NBPTS	One failed DPAS makes an initial teacher ineligible for level 2.
Florida	 Professional Certificate: Bachelor's degree and subject mastery (Praxis II or master's degree), General knowledge mastery (Florida state test, two years of college teaching, out of state certificate, NBPTS or American Board of Certification of Teacher Excellent certificate (ABCTE), and Teaching mastery (NBPTS certificate, ABCTE certification, two years teaching experience, or completed state approved teacher preparation program). 	None	

STATE	Requirements for Standard Certificate All states require years of teaching experience. These range from 1–6 years.	Requirements for Advanced Certificate	Notes
Georgia	Clear Certificate: • Subject area competency (Georgia state examination or National Board Certificate (NBPTS), or completion of approved university program or out-of-state teaching certificate, and • Teaching experience or university credits within five years.	 Master Teacher Certificate: Clear certificate, Full-time Georgia teacher, Teacher Performance Assessment including evidence of student progress, and Evidence of professional responsibility, as evidence by district endorsement. 	Highlighted in narrative.
Hawaii	Standard Certificate: Experience only (3 years)	Advanced Certificate: Master's, specialist, or doctoral degree and 5 years of successful teaching.	
Idaho	Standard Certificate: 24 additional credits in the subject area with at least two years satisfactory experience in teaching.	None	
Illinois	Standard Certificate: Professional development credits.	Master Teacher Certificate: NBPTS.	
Indiana	Proficient Practitioner License: Two years of mentoring program.	Accomplished Practitioner License: Master's degree.	
Iowa	Standard Certificate: Experience only (2 years).	Master Certificate: Master's degree.	

STATE	Requirements for Standard Certificate All states require years of teaching experience. These range from 1–6 years.	Requirements for Advanced Certificate	Notes
Kansas	Professional Certificate: • Full year of district induction/mentoring and • Professional performance assessment.	Accomplished Teacher Certificate: NBPTS.	
Kentucky	Professional Certificate: Teaching internship.	None	
Louisiana	Level 2 Certificate: Local district administered evaluation.	Level 3 Certificate: Master's degree and five years teaching.	Highlighted in narrative.
Maine	Standard Certificate: Must provide one positive recommendation from the certification support system following a minimum of one observation.	None	
Maryland	Standard Certificate: • Six semester hours of credit and • Professional development plan.	Advanced Certificate: Additional 36 semester hours of credit or a master's degree.	
Massachusetts	 Standard Certificate: One year of induction/mentoring and 50 hours of mentoring beyond the initial induction. And one of the following: District approved program of credits, Approved coursework program for professional licensure or a Master's degree, If holding a Master's degree-2 graduate level credits, or NBPTS). 	None	

STATE	Requirements for Standard Certificate All states require years of teaching experience. These range from 1–6 years.	Requirements for Advanced Certificate	Notes
Michigan	Professional Certificate: • 18 general credits, and • 6 credits of reading instruction, or • Master's degree.	None	
Mississippi	Standard Certificate: Master's degree in the endorsement area or Master of Education degree.	None	
Missouri	 Professional Certificate: Professional development plan on file, Completed two years of mentoring program, Completed induction program, Completed 30 hours of professional development, and Participation in yearly performance-based teacher evaluation. 	 99-year certification: Completion of 2 of the following: Advanced degree (Master's or doctorate), 10 years of teaching, or National certification from "recognized body" either NBPTS or ABCTE. 	Highlighted in narrative.
Montana	Standard Certificate: Master's degree in professional education or an endorsable teaching area(s).	None	
Nebraska	Master's degree in Education: Curriculum and Instruction.	None	
Nevada	Master's degree.	None	
New Hampshire	Experienced Educator Certificate: Experience only (3 years).	None	

STATE	Requirements for Standard Certificate All states require years of teaching experience. These range from 1–6 years.	Requirements for Advanced Certificate	Notes
New Jersey	Standard Certificate: • 30 weeks of mentoring and • Three supervisor evaluations within one year.	None	
New Mexico	 Level 2 Certificate: Professional development plan (dossier) based on teacher competencies including a student achievement component, and Mentoring. 	Level 3 Certificate: • Professional development plan (dossier) based on teacher competencies including a student achievement component or • Master's degree or NBPTS.	Highlighted in narrative.
New York	Standard Certificate: • Master's degree and • Passing score on the New York State teaching competency exam.	None	
North Carolina	Standard Certificate: Ten to fifteen credits of coursework.	None	
North Dakota	Standard Certificate: Unspecified undergraduate or graduate credits in teaching subject or education.	None	

STATE	Requirements for Standard Certificate All states require years of teaching experience. These range from 1–6 years.	Requirements for Advanced Certificate	Notes
Ohio	 Standard Certificate: Mentoring in first year, Satisfactory completion of the Praxis III performance assessment, and Signed statement of satisfactory completion of one year of teaching from a school district. 	None	
Oklahoma	Standard Certificate: Complete a "Residency program" during the first year of teaching with a residency committee of a mentor teacher, an administrator, and a faculty member from an institution of higher education.	None	
Oregon	Initial Renewal-45 credits Continuing Certificate: • Master's degree and completion of the Continuing Teaching License program, or • NBPTS, or • Doctoral degree.	None	
Pennsylvania	Standard Certificate: • 24 supplemental post baccalaureate credits, • Level II assessment, and • Induction program.	None	

STATE	Requirements for Standard Certificate All states require years of teaching experience. These range from 1–6 years.	Requirements for Advanced Certificate	Notes
Rhode Island	 Standard Certificate: Have on file a five- year professional development plan (I- Plan). 	None	Highlighted in narrative.
South Carolina	Standard Certificate: Successful completion of an ADEPT program that includes induction/mentoring and formal evaluation.	Ten-Year Certification: Advanced degree (master's, specialist, doctorate) or NBPTS.	Highlighted in narrative.
South Dakota	Standard Certificate: • Advanced degree (master's or doctorate) and • NBPTS.	None	
Tennessee	Standard Certificate: One positive teacher evaluation from a Tennessee public school.	None	
Texas	Standard Certificate: The first (initial) certificate in Texas with no level 2 certificate listed. There is a requirement for 150 clock hours every five years for renewal.	Master teacher status is granted only in reading and mathematics and is certified through additional course of study and a practicum in specializing in reading or mathematics. Applicants must also pass a subject area exam.	

STATE	Requirements for Standard Certificate All states require years of teaching experience. These range from 1–6 years.	Requirements for Advanced Certificate	Notes
Utah	 Successfully complete the Utah Entry Years Enhancement (3-year program), Complete a professional portfolio, Receive two professional evaluations per year for three years in a Utah public or accredited private school with a satisfactory final evaluation, Achieve a score of 160 or better on the Praxis II, Work with a trained mentor for three years, Complete any additional district/school requirements, and Document subject area competence. 	Level 3 Teaching License: • Hold a current Utah Level 2 license, and • Have a doctorate or NBPTS.	
Vermont	Standard Certificate: Experience (3 years) with documented success signed by supervisor.	None	
Virginia	Standard Certificate: Any one of the following:	None	

STATE	Requirements for Standard Certificate All states require years of teaching experience. These range from 1–6 years.	Requirements for Advanced Certificate	Notes
Washington	Professional Certificate: Portfolio submission http://www.waproteach.org/ .	None	Highlighted in narrative.
West Virginia	Standard Certificate: Master's degree.	None	
Wisconsin	Standard Certificate: Professional development plan.	None	Highlighted in narrative.
Wyoming	Standard Certificate: Additional undergraduate and/or professional development credits.	None	

Note. All information for this report was taken from state department of education websites, which were accessed through http://education.uky.edu/AcadServ/content/50-states-certification-requirements.