

## Requirements for Professional Certification

Revised September 2018

*Please note that only the Office of Teaching Initiatives in the NYS Education Department can officially determine an applicant's eligibility. This requires the submission of an application, an application fee and a full review of all of the applicant's credentials.*

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**There are two\* crucial components to receiving professional certification:  
An appropriate Master's Degree and;  
Three years of teaching experience in the area of certification<sup>2</sup>**

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\* There is a third requirement of one year of mentoring *only* for teachers who spent their first year of teaching in a NYS traditional public district school

### Part 1 - Master's Degree Requirements for the Professional Teaching Certificate

**There are four ways to fulfill the master's degree requirement**

#### **1. Master's In the Initial Certificate Content or a Related Area**

Master's degrees that focus on grades PreK-12 in Special Education, Curriculum and Instruction, Instructional Technology, Literacy, Bilingual Education, and Teaching English as a Second Language are also considered to be related to ALL content areas. While degrees in these subjects do not need to lead to a teaching certificate, they must be completed at an institution with an approved teacher preparation program.

In the case of any of the "Generalist" certificates (Early Childhood Education Birth- Grade 2, Childhood Education Grades 1-6, Generalist in Middle Childhood Education Grades 5-9, Students with Disabilities Birth-Grade 2, Students with Disabilities Grades 1-6 and Students with Disabilities Generalist Grades 7-12) the master's degree may be in any of the Liberal Arts & Sciences.

For detailed information and the Chart for Related Master's degrees, go to:

<http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/relatedmasters.html>

#### **2. Master's from a Graduate Teacher Education Programs Leading to a Certificate**

The degree is acceptable if it is based upon completing any teacher Certification program leading to any certificate, whether in New York State or another jurisdiction. The Master's degree may be completed toward a classroom teaching, pupil personnel, or a supervisory/administrative certificate.

This master's degree can be used to fulfill the master's degree requirement for any additional classroom teaching service certificate titles.

### **3. Master's accepted previously to satisfy requirements for an earlier Permanent or Professional classroom teaching certificate**

A master's that was accepted to satisfy NYS Permanent or Professional certificate requirements, will satisfy the master's degree requirement and the requirement for 12 graduate semester hours in the content core for professional Certification for any **subsequent** certificate.

### **4. An Unrelated Master's Degree**

A master's degree in an unrelated area will require the teacher to complete 12 graduate credits in the content area of the certificate OR the methods of teaching content in the subject matter for which the professional certificate is sought. For example, a teacher whose Initial certificate is in Biology, grades 7-12 has completed a master's degree in finance. The master's degree requirement will be met for the Professional certificate in Biology, grades 7-12, however this individual would be required to complete 12 credits in biology or in the teaching of biology.

## **Part 2 – Three years of teaching experience in the subject of the Initial Certificate**

***FOR CANDIDATES WHO HAD THEIR FIRST INITIAL CERTIFICATE ISSUED ON OR AFTER 2/1/14***

### **There are three ways to reach the required three years of teaching experience in the subject/area of the Initial certificate**

A minimum of 180 days of full-time, continuous school experience teaching the subject/area of the Initial certificate within a 12-month period (July 1 – June 30) , or:

A minimum of 180 days of full-time, continuous school experience in the subject/area of the Initial certificate in periods of no less than 90 days each within a 12-month period (July 1 – June 30) or:

A minimum of 360 days of part-time continuous school experience consisting of an average of 2.5 days per week in the subject/area of the Initial certificate and completed in periods of no less than 90 days within a 12-year period **OR**

A minimum of 360 days of part-time continuous school experience, which shall include at least 45 days of part-time continuous school experience within a 12-year period in the subject/area of the Initial certificate, consisting of at least ONE class period each day with the same group of students during such time period. For example:

#### **Teacher A**

- **Certified in math, grades 7-12**
- **NYS certificate was issued on 9/1/14 expiring on 8/31/19.**
- **S/he taught 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade math from 2014-2016 and taught 7<sup>th</sup> grade social studies from 2016-2018.**
- **At this point, s/he would only be credited with 2 years of teaching math and would be deficient one year towards the 3-year requirement.**

- To satisfy this deficiency before 8/31/19, s/he can teach math for ONE full year to 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders OR can teach math one period a day to these students for a year.
- S/he must provide the “Verification of Paid Experience for Professional Classroom Teaching Certificates” form to the administrator in each school in which she was employed for the administrator to complete and submit directly to the SED.
- ALTERNATIVE – Apply for and pay the fee for the 3-year Initial certificate time extension within 7 months of the expiration date of the Initial certificate. Thus, the teacher would now have an additional 3 years to gain that ONE year of teaching experience in Math grades 7-12.

#### Teacher B

- certified in Childhood Ed, grades 1-6 effective on 2/1/15.
- S/he taught grades 2-5 for two years in another state (9/1/13 – 8/31/15) prior to getting his/her Initial certificate in NY.
- S/he then taught 1<sup>st</sup> grade from 9/1/15 through 8/31/16 and then taught kindergarten from 9/1/16 through 8/31/18.
- Although her Initial certificate does not expire until 1/31/20, she has already received her master’s degree and applied for the Professional certificate.
- S/he should be credited for all three years of teaching grades 1-6 which includes her 2 years in another state and her 1 year in NYS teaching 1<sup>st</sup> grade between 9/1/15 – 8/31/16. .
- S/he must provide the “Verification of Paid Experience for Professional Classroom Teaching Certificates” form to the administrator in each school in which she was employed for the administrator to complete and submit directly to the SED.

#### Teacher C:

- certified in Childhood Ed, grades 1-6 effective 9/1/15.
- S/he has taught kindergarten only between 9/1/15 and 6/30/18.
- Since the certificate expires on 8/31/20, s/he can teach grades 1-6 from 9/1/18 through 6/30/20 and be credited for 2 years of teaching in the subject and level of her certificate.
- Within 7 months of the Initial certificate’s expiration date, s/he should apply for and pay the fee for the 3-year Initial certificate time extension and would only need one more year of teaching students in grades 1-6 between 9/1/20 and 8/31/22 to satisfy the teaching experience criteria.
- S/he must provide the “Verification of Paid Experience for Professional Classroom Teaching Certificates” form to the administrator in each school in which she was employed for the administrator to complete and submit directly to the SED.

### **Part 3\* – Mentoring is required in the first year of teaching ONLY if the first year of teaching was in a New York State traditional public school.**

Holders of the Initial and Conditional Initial certificate must receive mentoring in **their first year of teaching service in a NYS public school district (includes the NYC traditional district schools).**

Certificate holders who have at least two years of teaching **prior to** receiving the NYS Initial or Conditional Initial certificate **MAY** be exempted from this requirement.

**Certificate holders whose first year of teaching service was in a NYC or NYS public charter school MAY be exempted from this requirement (as per Section 100.2(dd) iv).**

Certificate holders whose first year of teaching was in a NYS or NYC traditional public district school but are now teaching in a NYS or NYC public charter school **ARE** required to provide documentation of their mentored experience in the NYS or NYC traditional public district school. The School Employer may use the TEACH system to report the verification of the mentored experience. Those teachers whose first year of teaching was in a NYC traditional district school should email the NYC DOE at [MTSsupport@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:MTSsupport@schools.nyc.gov). They should include their full name, their DOE file number and request that the DOE submit online proof of their DOE mentored experience to the NYS Education Department via TEACH.

Trans B and Trans C certificate holders must receive mentoring during the entire period of their teaching contract (2-3 years).

***Although mentoring IS **NOT** required for teachers in charter schools whose first year of employment under their Initial certificate was in a NYS charter school, charter boards of trustees are encouraged to provide support for their novice teachers which most, if not all, of the NYC charter schools provide. Charter school teachers will be considered to have met the mentoring requirement as long as they their first year of employment under the Initial certificate was in a charter school.***

For more information, go to <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/faqmentoring.html#1>

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## Important Update from the Board of Regents Regarding Time Extensions to Expired/Expiring Certificates!

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EFFECTIVE MARCH 14, 2017, the Board of Regents voted to increase the extension of an expired certificate in Provisional Pupil Personnel Service, Provisional Renewal Pupil Personnel Service, and Initial or Transitional certificate to THREE YEARS **IF** the applicant meets one of the allowable conditions.

**NOTE:** Currently, a \$50 non-refundable fee is required for each request. A time extension application will not be evaluated until the fee is paid and a TEACH online application is completed.

The applicant must maintain all supporting documentation for his/her files as time extension applications may be audited.

**Applications for time extensions will **not** be accepted prior to seven months before the expiration date of the certificate.**

For details regarding the criteria to apply for a 3-year time extension to an Initial certificate, go to: <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/timeext.html>

**How this time extension regulation affects charter school teachers:**

Charter schools in NYC/NYS have statutory flexibility to assign teachers who are NYS certified in one subject and level to a different subject/level. (“certified by definition”).

**But the regulation regarding the three years of full-time teaching in the subject area of the Initial certificate to satisfy the experience requirement for the Professional certificate application applies to ALL teachers in traditional district and non-traditional charter NYS schools as well as certified teachers in private, independent and parochial schools and BOCES.**

Please note that a teacher who does NOT have three years of experience in the subject of the Initial certificate MAY apply and pay the application fee for the 3-year time extension in order to meet one or a combination of the options for the three years of teaching in the subject of the Initial certificate.

Each school in which the teacher has served must complete the [Verification of Experience form](#) and the school administrator must submit it directly to the SED via email (preferred) or postal mail.

**Another option (but less popular) for all teachers (charter and district) who do not have the three years of teaching experience (or its equivalent) in the subject of the Initial certificate is to apply for and pay the application fee for the Re-Issuance of an expired Initial certificate.**

An Initial certificate can only be reissued once for a period of five years if:

- The Initial certificate has already expired; and
- The teacher has completed 75 hours of acceptable professional development (PD) or 50 hours of acceptable Continuing Teacher and Leadership Education (CTLE) **within the year prior to or subsequent to the application date** for the Re-Issuance; and;

- The teacher has re-taken and passed the CST(s) needed for the Initial certificate within one year AFTER s/he has applied for Re-Issuance of the Initial certificate. Please note that the Initial certificate will not be issued until the passing CST(s) scores have been posted on TEACH.

**For details regarding the criteria to apply for the 5-year Reissuance of an expired Initial certificate, go to: <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/reissue.html>**

**REMINDER –Initial certificates issued on or after 2/1/14 do NOT expire until 1/31/19 or thereafter**

For more information about Professional certification, go to [Topics A-Z](#) on the TEACH website.

**This information is accurate as of 9/12/18.** We suggest that you look for periodic updates on TEACH inasmuch as certification in NYS can be subject to changes.

We hope that you find this guide helpful. Additional guides are being updated and will be soon be available at [www.nyccharterschools.org/certification](http://www.nyccharterschools.org/certification).