

NOTICE OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO TEACHER CERTIFICATION
IN THE REGULATIONS OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT

BRIEF DESCRIPTION: The proposed amendments would adopt changes regarding the qualification and certification of Alaska educators.

The State Board of Education and Early Development proposes to adopt regulation changes in Title 4 of the Alaska Administrative Code dealing with the qualification and certification of Alaska educators under 4 AAC 12, including the repeal of 4 AAC 12.335 Requirements for teachers of gifted children, and the amendment of 4 AAC 04.220 Paraprofessional standards, 4 AAC 12.300 Certification of teachers, 4 AAC.12.305 Teacher certificate (initial, professional, master), 4 AAC 12.307 Acceptance of educator preparation programs, 4 AAC 12.308 Approval of in-state educator preparation programs, 4 AAC 12.330 Endorsement requirements for teachers providing special education, 4 AAC 12.340 Special education alternative program certificate, 4 AAC 12.345 Administrative certificate (Type B); provisional certificate (provisional Type B), 4 AAC 12.347 Special education administrator certificate (Type F); provisional certificate (provisional Type F); 4 AAC 12.355 Special services certificate (Type C); provisional certificate (provisional Type C); 4 AAC 12.375 Instructional assistant limited certificate; 4 AAC 12.388 World language expert limited teacher certificate; 4 AAC 12.395 Teaching endorsements; 4 AAC 12.396 Addition and removal of endorsements; 4 AAC 12.401 Emergency certificate; 4 AAC 12.405 Renewal of certificates; 4 AAC 12.410 General provisions; 4 AAC 12.415 Current address; and 4 AAC 12.900 Definitions.

The goal of the proposed regulation changes is to expand certification pathways, simplify qualification requirements, and streamline the certification process.

Specifically, the proposed changes expand certification pathways by:

- Providing an additional path for teachers to qualify for a Master teacher certificate that utilizes a combination of teacher evaluations and a professional portfolio;
- Allowing individuals holding at least a bachelor's degree to qualify for a special education teacher and special services alternative program certification;
- Allowing for credits and degrees offered by nationally accredited institutions of higher education to meet certification requirements;
- Expanding certification renewal and additional endorsement options to include micro-credentials;
- Allowing all paraprofessionals with two years of experience to qualify for the Instructional Assistant Type I limited certificate that provide a pathway to full teacher certification;
- Allowing for the addition of elementary education endorsement with two years of teaching experience and passing scores on an elementary content area exam; and
- Allowing micro-credentials approved by the department to be qualify for an additional teaching endorsement.

Specifically, the proposed changes simplify qualification requirements by:

- Increases the testing options available to paraprofessionals to achieve qualified status;
- Removes additional coursework requirements for special education teachers providing service to preschoolers and teachers of gifted children;
- Removes the recency credit requirements for the regular administrative (Type B) and special services (Type C) certificates;
- Allows advanced Type C certificates to be issued to individuals holding a license issued by the Alaska Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing;

- Removes the mathematics basic competency subtest requirement for individuals applying for the World Language Limited Certificate; and
- Allows all endorsements earned in another state and awarded on an Initial out-of-state certificate be placed on subsequent certificates without further review.

Specifically, the proposed changes streamline the certification process by:

- Requires a copy of a government issued identification instead of notarization;
- Requires all certificate types to complete the mandatory trainings;
- Awards at no cost qualified military spouses who qualify for their first Alaska certificate and teachers who qualify for a Master certificate;
- Allows for eligible Initial teaching certificates to be valid for up to five years and renewable;
- Allows for limited certificates to be transferred from one district to another district;
- Extends the amount of time that a background check conducted for a student teacher authorization can be used when applying for an Initial teacher certificate; and
- Makes a technical correction to the qualifications for the school psychologist endorsement.

A copy of the proposed regulation changes are available on the Alaska Online Public Notice System, at <https://education.alaska.gov/regs/comment.cfm>, and by contacting Sondra Meredith at (907) 465-2800 or at deed.commissioner@alaska.gov.

The Department of Education and Early Development invites the public to submit written comments during the written comment period, which begins with the date of this notice and ends on January 26, 2022, at 4:30 p.m. The written comment period closes in advance of the meeting of the State Board of Education and Early Development at which the board will consider the adoption of the proposed regulation change. This allows the Department of Education and Early Development an opportunity to prepare changes based on written comment and to distribute any proposed changes to the board for its consideration prior to the meeting.

You may comment in writing on the proposed regulation changes, including the potential costs to private persons of complying with the proposed changes, by submitting written comments to the Commissioner's Office, Department of Education and Early Development, Attn: Regulations Review, 801 West Tenth Street, Suite 200, PO Box 110500, Juneau, Alaska 99811-0500. You also may submit written comments by facsimile at (907) 465-4156; by electronic mail to deed.commissioner@alaska.gov and online at the website of the Department of Education and Early Development at <https://education.alaska.gov/regs/comment.cfm>. Written comments also may be submitted through the Alaska Online Public Notice System by accessing this notice on the system and using the comment link.

All written comments must be received not later than 4:30 p.m. on January 26, 2022.

After the written comment period has ended, you may submit oral comments to the State Board of Education and Early Development at a hearing to be held by the board on March 1, 2022 at 9:00 a.m., by Zoom virtual platform. The teleconferencing facilities will be operated from the Department of Education and Early Development, Andrew P. Kashevaroff (APK) Building, 395 Whittier Street, Juneau, AK 99801. The public comment period will be held from 9:10 a.m. to 10:10 a.m. but may be extended. You may join the online Zoom meeting at <https://zoom.us/j/99391482721> or by calling 1-253-215-8782 and selecting *9 on your phone's keypad. To mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus, in-person attendance will not be permitted. When public comment is over, the meeting will continue to be broadcast at the above website.

You may submit written questions relevant to the proposed action to Sondra Meredith at deed.commissioner@alaska.gov or the Department of Education and Early Development, Attn: Regulations Review, PO Box 110500, Juneau, Alaska 99811-0500. If a question is relevant to the proposed change in the regulations and the question is received by January 16, 2022, which is ten days before the end of the public comment period, the department will make a good faith effort to answer the question before the end of the public comment period. The Department of Education and Early Development will aggregate its response to substantially similar questions and make the questions and responses available on the Alaska Online Public Notice System and on the website of the Department of Education and Early Development at <https://education.alaska.gov/regs/comment.cfm>. The Department of Education and Early Development may, but is not required to, answer written questions received after the ten-day cut-off date and before the end of the comment period.

If you are a person with a disability who needs a special accommodation in order to participate in this process, please contact Sondra Meredith at (907) 465-2800 or deed.commissioner@alaska.gov not later than February 18, 2022, to ensure that any necessary accommodation can be provided.

After the public comment period ends, the Department of Education and Early Development will either adopt the proposed regulation changes or other provisions dealing with the same subject, without further notice, or decide to take no action. The language of the final regulation may be different from that of the proposed regulation. You should comment during the time allowed if your interests could be affected. Written comments received are public records and are subject to public inspection.

Statutory authority: AS 14.07.010, AS 14.07.020, AS 14.07.060

Statutes being implemented, interpreted, or made specific: AS 14.50.080, AS 14.20.020, AS 14.20.030, AS 14.20.010, AS 14.20.022, AS 14.20.620, AS 14.20.630, AS 14.20.017, AS 14.20.025, AS 14.20.015, AS 14.30.250, AS 14.30.255, AS 14.20.025

Fiscal information: The proposed regulation change is not expected to require an increased appropriation.

Date: 12/23/2021



Heidi Teshner, Acting Deputy Commissioner