

1**Who will be subject to the requirements for certificate renewal?**

Individuals who now hold teaching certificates and are employed in a position which legally requires certification must comply with the new professional development requirements for certificate renewal.

New Certificates Will Be Issued

When an individual's current teaching certificate is due for renewal on or after July 1, 2000, the individual will receive a new Standard or Master Certificate. The only types of certificates that will be affected are the following:

Early Childhood Certificates: 02 Early Childhood; 04 Early Childhood; 06 Kindergarten-Primary; and 45 Life Kindergarten.

Elementary Certificates: 03 Standard Elementary; 42 Life Elementary.

High School Certificates: 09 Standard High School; 11 Vocational; 14 Junior College; 47 Life High School; 49 Life Junior College.

Special Certificates: 10 Standard Special; 17 Special Exceptional Children; 48 Life Special; 50 Life School Librarian.

Individuals who have received certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) will be granted Master Certificates.

Certificate Renewal Process

Teachers who hold new Standard or Master Certificates and are employed in a position that legally requires certification must maintain their certificate status as "Valid and Active" by completing the required Certificate Renewal Process during the life of the certificate (five years for Standard and 10 years for Master).

Teachers who hold certificates but are not legally required to do so (such as those in nonpublic schools) can voluntarily meet the renewal requirements, too.

2**Who will not be subject to the renewal requirements?**

A teacher who holds only a substitute certificate is *not* subject to these requirements. Individuals who substitute-teach on Standard Certificates for 90 school days or fewer in any one school year are also not subject to these requirements.

Anyone who is *not* now teaching will still need to exchange his or her certificate for a comparable Standard Certificate when it is due to expire. Standard (and Master) Certificates can then be maintained as "Valid and Exempt" just by paying the renewal fee when it is due. The person is exempt from the requirements for continuing professional development as long as he or she is not teaching in a position for which a certificate is legally required.

If a person returns to certificated employment, he or she will have to "activate" the needed certificate by submitting a Certificate Renewal Plan. The amount of activity required will be proportionately reduced to reflect the amount of time the person spends teaching during the total period of validity. The State Board's rules will describe the process by which the reduction is calculated and applied.

3**When will new certificates be issued?**

The new certification system goes into effect February 15, 2000. However, a teacher who currently holds valid certificates (as listed in Question 1) will not actually receive a new Standard or Master Certificate until any one of his or her certificates is due for renewal. The soonest that will occur is on or after July 1, 2000.

4**What will the renewal requirements mean?**

A teacher must participate in the new Certificate Renewal Process once he or she has received a new Standard or Master Certificate and

if he or she is also employed in a position that legally requires certification. The Certificate Renewal Process requires a teacher to prepare and implement his or her own Certificate Renewal Plan. Each plan will be based on at least three personal goals and will contain activities directed at several purposes specified in the law (see Question 12). The teacher will submit the plan for approval by a Local Professional Development Committee (LPDC explained in Question 9). Once a teacher has an approved plan in place, he or she will be required to complete activities according to that plan. This will be required during each five-year (or ten-year) period of a certificate's validity in order to have the certificate renewed at the end of that time.

5**How can a teacher tell what will "count"?**

Different forms of "credit" can be accumulated and combined in any one of a number of ways to reach the required total. The law allows for semester hours of college coursework, continuing education units, and continuing professional development units as ways of measuring credit for activities completed. It also lists a large number of allowable types of activities (see Question 14).

Many more details remain to be decided, including how many of which units will be credited for various types of allowable activities, more precise descriptions of the activities, and how the providers of training events will be approved. These details will all have to be included in administrative rules developed jointly by the State Board of Education and the State Teacher Certification Board. Teachers' representatives are working directly with the State Board to recommend the maximum amount of credit that should be available for each category of continuing professional development activity.

6**When should teachers start engaging in professional development activities so they will "count"?**

Teachers should not expect to be able to count activities they complete before receiving their new certificates in the exchange. It may turn out that teachers will be able to count activities that are *finished* during the period of validity, even if the activities began *before* that period started (such as a college-level course that starts in June and ends in August).

7**What will be required of teachers holding more than one certificate?**

Each teacher will prepare and complete a Certificate Renewal Plan that is relevant to the certificate(s) required for his or her *current* teaching position. As long as he or she is fulfilling the requirements of that plan, all the other certificates he or she holds will also be considered "Valid and Active." In other words, completion of one set of requirements will keep all certificates current.

If a teacher changes assignments or districts, his or her plan will be reviewed and revised if necessary to reflect the new position. However, everything that has already been completed will count.

8**What about people teaching only part time?**

The law provides for a 50 percent reduction in the amount of professional development required during the period of time that a certificate holder teaches part time (defined as less than 50% of the school day or school term). Again the State Board's rules will describe the process by which the reduction is calculated and applied.

9**What will local professional development committees do, and who will be on them?**

In each district, there will be one or more Local Professional Development Committees (LPDCs). Each committee will include three classroom teachers (appointed by the exclusive representative if there is one; otherwise selected by teachers), the district superintendent or a designee, and one other person. This fifth member may be a parent, business or community leader, or school administrator. The size of a committee may be increased as long as the majority remains teachers.

These committees will have three major functions: reviewing teachers' Certificate Renewal Plans; reviewing and awarding credit for the activities they complete; and recommending whether their certificates should be renewed.

After reviewing a teacher's proposed Certificate Renewal Plan, an LPDC may approve or reject it, based on whether it contains a sufficient quantity of activities distributed in such a way as to meet the law's requirements. (The teacher will be able to appeal a plan's rejection to the Regional Professional Development Review Committee, which will have the final authority to approve or disapprove the plan.) A teacher may need to revise his or her proposed plan before it will be approved.

Once the plan is approved, the teacher can go ahead with the activities outlined in it. We assume it will work best for teachers to be able to "claim" their completed activities whenever they wish to, so they will know how far along they are in their plans and have a clear chance to see what they still need to accomplish. There will be some form of required "evidence of completion" for the various activities. A teacher will turn in copies of this evidence to the LPDC, which will then inform the teacher how the claimed activity was credited and keep that information on file with the teacher's approved plan. The rules will include some means of appealing any dispute that might arise.

When it is time for a teacher to apply for renewal of his or her certificate(s), the application will go first to the LPDC, which will make a recommendation to the regional superintendent for renewal or nonrenewal of the certificate(s). This recommendation will be based on whether the teacher has completed professional development in a way that conforms with the law's requirements. There will be an appeal avenue involving the Regional Professional Development Review Committee and the State Teacher Certification Board if necessary.

10**Will teachers who work in nonpublic schools have LPDCs?**

Regional superintendents of schools will serve as the LPDCs for nonpublic school teachers who elect to be subject to these requirements, as well as for teachers in state-operated schools and any teachers who are not teaching at all but wish to maintain their certificates as Valid and Active.

11**Why have these new requirements been adopted?**

There is widespread recognition that teachers are one of the most critical factors in determining student achievement. It is therefore essential that teachers continue to grow as professionals, remaining current in their teaching fields and expanding their knowledge in areas that are considered important for every teacher (the state priorities listed in Question 12). Although many districts have established continuing professional development requirements for their own faculties and although many, if not most, teachers have pursued continuing professional development on their own, Illinois has had no standards for renewal of teacher certification. The new requirements establish a common floor of expectations, ensuring that, throughout their careers, all teachers will meet *at least* the requirements that have been adopted by the State.

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What should be in each Certificate Renewal Plan?

Each teacher's plan must include at least three individual improvement goals that reflect purposes A, B, and C below and may reflect D.

A. Advance both the certificate holder's knowledge and skills as a teacher consistent with the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards and the Illinois Content Area Standards in the areas of certification, endorsement, or teaching assignment in order to keep the certificate holder current in those areas.

B. Develop the certificate holder's knowledge and skills in areas determined to be critical for all Illinois teachers, as defined by the State Board of Education, known as "State Priorities." For the first five-year certification renewal cycle, the State Board has identified the following State Priorities:

1. Reading,
2. Integrating technology into teaching and learning, and
3. Standards/Assessment/ISAT.

C. Address the knowledge, skills and goals of the certificate holder's local school improvement plan (if the teacher is employed in a school that is required to have a school improvement plan).

D. Expand knowledge and skills in an additional teaching field or toward the acquisition of another teaching certificate, endorsement or relevant education degree.

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How do certificate holders earn credit?

Certificate holders may meet the professional development requirements in several ways.

1. Complete the requirements for certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).

2. Accumulate at least eight semester hours of coursework in an approved education-related program, of which at least two semester hours relate to the continuing professional development purpose labeled "A" above.

3. Accumulate at least 24 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) in various activities, of which at least 50% relate to purposes "A" and "B" above and at least some of the remaining units relate to purpose "C." Each CEU represents five contact hours (see Question 14).

4. Accumulate 120 Continuing Professional Development Units (CPDUs) in various activities, of which at least 50% relate to purposes A and B and at least some of the remaining units relate to purpose C. Based on recommendations from a task force consisting of IEA, IFT, and ISBE representatives, the State Board and State Teacher Certification Board will determine maximum values for each category of activities. That information will be included in the administrative rules and widely disseminated to teachers and their representatives. (Samples are identified in Question 14.)

5. Accumulate a combination of credits from categories 2 through 4 above. (For ease of calculation, each semester hour of credit will be translated to 15 CPDUs and each CEU will be translated to 5 CPDUs.) In this case also, fifty percent of the total number of units earned must relate to purposes A and B above, some of the remainder must relate to purpose C, and the rest may relate to any of the four purposes, at the certificate holder's discretion.

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What kinds of activities will earn credit?

Many activities will qualify, including:

- Participating on collaborative planning and professional improvement teams and committees
- Mentoring in a formal mentoring program
- Participating in business, school, or community partnerships directly related to student achievement or school improvement plans
- College or university coursework related to improving the teacher's knowledge and skills
- Attendance at conferences, workshops, institutes, seminars, and symposiums related to improving the teacher's knowledge and skills
- Participating in action research and inquiry
- Participating in study groups
- Professional leadership experiences related to improving the teacher's knowledge and skills
- Publishing educational articles or books ■

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Watch our web site
www.isbe.state.il.us
for the latest information about certificate renewal.

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TIMEFRAME FOR DEVELOPING RULES FOR CERTIFICATE RENEWAL

PHASE I: Oct. 1 - Nov. 14, 1999

- Designees from the State Board of Education (ISBE), State Teacher Certification Board (STCB), the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT), and the Illinois Education Association (IEA) wrote draft rules.
- The Continuing Professional Development Activities Task Force, comprised of three representatives each from the IEA and the IFT and six ISBE staff members, met to recommend the maximum number of CPDUs to be awarded for each category of activities.

PHASE II: Nov. 15 - Dec. 31, 1999

Designees from education, business and civic organizations review and react to the draft rules and make recommendations for changes. The following organizations have already indicated they are participating in Phase II. For an updated list, go to the State Board website at www.isbe.state.il.us.

- Alliance for Illinois Education (AIE)
- Association of Illinois Middle Schools (AIMS)
- Chicago United (CU)
- Educational Research and Development (ED-RED)
- Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA)
- Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB)
- Illinois Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (IASCD)
- Illinois Association of Teacher Educators (IATE)
- Illinois Business Roundtable (IBRT)
- Illinois Manufacturers' Association (IMA)
- Illinois Principals Association (IPA)
- Intermediate Service Centers (ISCs)
- Large Unit District Association (LUDA)
- Legislative Education Network of DuPage (LEND)
- Partners in Education
- Regional Offices of Education (ROEs)
- South Cook Organization for Public Education (SCOPE)

PHASE III: Dec. 1999 -

- The (STCB) will discuss revised draft and recommend changes at its December 10, 1999, meeting.
- STCB will review new draft and recommend whether to accept it at a January 21, 2000 meeting.
- Final draft will be presented to ISBE at a February 16-17 meeting.
- Rules will be open for public comment for 45 days in March and April.
- Public hearings will be convened in mid-April.

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

QUESTIONS

& ANSWERS

ON REQUIREMENTS FOR

CERTIFICATE RENEWAL