

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Making Illinois Schools *Second to None*

QUESTIONS **&** **A**NSWERS
ON REQUIREMENTS FOR

CERTIFICATE **R**ENEWAL

Each teacher who holds an Illinois Standard or Master teaching certificate and teaches in a public or state-operated elementary or secondary school, in a joint agreement or cooperative, or in a charter school is subject to new requirements for continuing professional development. These teachers must maintain their new certificates as valid and active and must complete continuing professional development in order to renew them. (Individuals who are not required to maintain their certificates as valid and active may keep them as valid and exempt simply by paying the registration fee.)

This brochure answers many of the questions teachers have asked about the new process. More details about certificate renewal and forms for use by teachers, the committees and providers of professional development is posted on our website www.isbe.net under "Certificate Renewal." If you have any questions, please call our Illinois toll-free number: 1-866/CEU-CPDU (1-866/238-2738). You may also participate in the Discussion Group on our website or call the Division of Certificate Renewal at 217/557-8393.

CERTIFICATE RENEWAL

1 What will occur when teachers next register their certificates?

Teachers will pay a \$25 fee for a new five-year Standard certificate (or \$50 for a new ten-year Master certificate). Fees will be paid to the regional superintendents of schools. The State Board of Education will send the new certificates to the regional superintendents, who will distribute them to teachers.

Teachers will pay one fee for all certificates held and may keep their old certificates. (Note, however, that Type 39 substitute certificates must be registered in each region where teaching is done, and a fee will be collected in each.)

2 What will happen when a teacher registers a special (Type 10) certificate?

The teacher will have the option of receiving **EITHER** a new Standard special certificate with the endorsement(s) previously held **OR both** a Standard elementary certificate **and** a Standard secondary certificate, each with the endorsement(s) previously held. Certificate holders will be able to teach only in the subject area(s) of endorsement and not in self-contained general education classrooms. Endorsements can be added to the new elementary and secondary certificates but not to the new special certificate. Special education endorsements will be valid for preschool through age twenty-one.

3 Can I renew my certificate early and start on my Certificate Renewal Plan?

Yes, teachers may choose to exchange their certificates before they are due for renewal in 2001 or 2002 for comparable Standard certificates (and apply for

Master certificates if they qualify for them). They will then be able to begin to earn credit under the special accommodations that are in effect until January 1, 2001, and submit their plans within 120 days after that date. The deadline for this accelerated exchange is December 31, 2000. If they do renew early, they will forfeit the fees paid for their old certificates.

CERTIFICATE RENEWAL PLAN

4 Is a plan required?

Yes, except during the interim period that extends until January 1, 2001.

5 Can teachers earn credit before they turn in their Plans?

Generally no, except that special accommodations apply to the period between July 1, 2000, and January 1, 2001. During this interim period, teachers may earn credit for activities completed even if they do not have their plans approved or pending. Also, until January 1, 2001, approval of providers is not required in order for activities to earn credit. However, any activity from this interim period must be covered in the plan that is eventually approved for the certificate holder.

6 How will the system be different beginning on January 1, 2001?

Teachers will be required to submit their proposed plans for continuing professional development to their respective Local Professional Development Committees (LPDCs) within 120 days after January 1, and a teacher will only be able to accrue credit for activities he or she begins after January 1 if he or she has a plan pending or approved. As before, an activity must be covered in the plan that is eventually approved for the teacher in order to count. For activities that have providers and begin on or after January 1, credit will be available only if those providers have been approved by the State Board of Education and the State Teacher Certification Board.

7 Where can teachers get Certificate Renewal forms?

Forms will be available from school districts and can also be downloaded from the State Board's website at www.isbe.net.

8**How does a teacher know which LPDC to report to?**

School districts will publish the number of LPDCs, their areas of responsibility, the name of each chairperson, directions for contacting the LPDCs, and an address for submitting materials to each one.

9**If my Plan is to accrue eight semester hours of credit, must all the hours be in my current teaching area?**

No. At least two semester hours must advance your knowledge and skills in your area(s) of certification, endorsement, or teaching assignment.

10**Does an administrator have to submit a Plan to keep his/her teaching certificates valid?**

No. A full-time administrator may maintain his/her teaching certificates as valid and exempt. (The administrator may, however, voluntarily choose to keep them active.) A person who is employed as a part-time administrator and part-time teacher must complete 50 percent of the requirements for any period during which that is the case.

11**Do teachers who plan to retire before the end of the validity of their certificates have to complete Certificate Renewal Plans?**

Teachers should submit Certificate Renewal Plans and complete the proportion of activities required for the number of years they will teach (ten percent per semester). When they retire, their certificates will be maintained as valid and exempt for their remaining years of validity. The certificates can then be renewed. (See next question.)

12**What will happen if a teacher does not submit a plan or meet the requirements?**

If a teacher does not submit a plan or complete the proportion of activities required, his or her certificate will

expire. To secure a valid certificate, a teacher would then have to complete the remaining professional development needed for renewal and earn five semester hours of college credit within one fiscal year.

13**Does a teacher who changes school districts or teaching assignments have to submit a new or revised Certificate Renewal Plan?**

Yes. The plan must be reviewed by the teacher's new LPDC and may need to be modified to reflect the new work assignment or the new school's improvement plan. The credits already earned will transfer to the new assignment and count toward the total the teacher needs.

14**Do speech/language impaired teachers have to do Certificate Renewal Plans in addition to the requirements for their licenses?**

Yes, if teachers of speech/language-impaired students are employed in positions that legally require teaching certificates, they must submit Certificate Renewal Plans. They may be able to use the same professional development activities to meet both sets of requirements.

15**What happens if a teacher takes a leave of absence?**

Leaves of absence and other time away from teaching do not affect a certificate's period of validity. However, a teacher may apply for one or more periods of exemption to reduce the amount of professional development required by ten percent for each semester of exemption (five percent for holders of Master certificates).

16**Will holders of multiple certificates, be required to submit a separate Plan for each certificate?**

No. You will submit one plan related to the certificate(s) required for your current teaching assignment. Completion of one set of requirements will keep all certificates current.

CREDIT

17

What if I attend a workshop out of state?

You may receive credit, provided the workshop relates to your plan and you submit the required evidence of attendance.

18

Does attending ROE activities such as Institute Days or inservice training count?

Possibly. An activity will count if the ROE is an approved provider, and the activity is covered by your approved Certificate Renewal Plan.

19

How do I know if a provider of professional development has been approved?

After January 1, a list of approved providers and their areas of approval will be on Certificate Renewal's website at www.isbe.net. Until January 1, 2001, special accommodations allow teachers to attend and receive credit for workshops from any provider.

LPDCs

20

Can the \$1000 for administrative costs be used as stipends for LPDC members?

The legislative intent was that the \$1,000 grant to school districts, charter schools, cooperatives, and joint agreements not be used to pay stipends to teachers who serve on LPDCs. However, nothing in the law prohibits that use, and the interpretation of "administrative costs" will be determined at the local level.

21

Can the parent or community member appointed to the LPDC be a teacher?

The statutory intent was that it be someone other than a teacher in order to achieve broader representation

on the local committees. The at-large member cannot be a member of a Regional Professional Development Review Committee, the State Teacher Certification Board or the local school board due to a potential conflict of interest.

22

May a teacher be appointed as the designee for the superintendent to the LPDC?

That was not the statutory intent. The State Teacher Certification Board, the State Board of Education, and the State Superintendent of Education strongly recommend the appointment of an administrator as designee for the superintendent on the LPDC.

23

By what date should the LPDCs convene?

These committees may convene whenever they have been formed, but they cannot officially approve plans until they have read the Certificate Renewal Manual provided by the State Board of Education and the State Teacher Certification Board. The manual is posted on ISBE's website and LPDCs are expected to be ready to receive and review plans by November of 2000.

24

What are the responsibilities of school districts and other entities that employ staff who are subject to these requirements?

The responsibilities of these entities include the establishment and implementation of LPDCs, selection of certain members, and administration of grant funds provided to offset their costs.

25

Does the LPDC approve when teachers can participate in professional development activities (i.e., during school time)?

No, this is governed by school policy. It is a matter for local decision making to determine whether and/or when teachers will be released for purposes of attending professional development.

26**Do school districts have to pay for teachers' professional development?**

No. This is another matter that must be determined at the local level.

MASTER CERTIFICATES**27****Will renewing the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) Certificate renew the Master certificate?**

Renewal of Master certificates is not linked to renewal by the NBPTS at this time. Instead, the Master certificate is renewable every ten years upon completion of the professional development requirements.

SUBSTITUTES**28****Are substitute teachers required to submit a Plan?**

Substitute teachers using the Type 39 Substitute certificate are not subject to these requirements. Individuals substituting on a Standard or Master certificate for 90 school days or fewer may maintain their certificates as valid and active simply by paying the registration fee. If they accept full- or part-time employment, however, they must submit Certificate Renewal Plans to their respective LPDCs. They must complete ten percent (or five percent for a Master) of the total requirement for each semester of full-time teaching. If they teach for less than 50 percent of the school day or term, they must complete 50 percent of each semester's requirement.

Illinois State Board of Education

www.isbe.net

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