



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MOLLY M. SPEARMAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Superintendents
District Personnel Administrators
District Instructional Leaders
Principals

FROM: Mary Hipp
Director, Office of Educator Services

DATE: August 16, 2022

RE: Initial Certificate Guidelines for Classroom Teaching Fields

On Tuesday, August 9, 2022, the South Carolina State Board of Education approved Initial Certificate Guidelines for Classroom Teaching Fields pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. §59-26-30 and Regulation 43-53, Credential Classification.

These guidelines establish two options for issuance of an Initial certificate to an individual who has successfully completed a teacher preparation program at the undergraduate- or graduate-level, including student teaching.

Option One: South Carolina Certification Assessment Program–Standard Plan

The candidate qualifying for certification under the *South Carolina Certification Assessment Program–Standard Plan* must meet all eligibility requirements and earn a passing score on the subject area and pedagogy assessments as adopted for the specific certification field by the SBE. This teacher candidate will be issued a customary Initial certificate. To advance to a renewable Professional certificate, an educator issued an Initial certificate must complete the induction and summative evaluation requirements of the state's Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Professional Teaching (ADEPT) system.

Option Two: South Carolina Certification Assessment Program–Alternate Plan

As a pilot program, the second option establishes a pathway to certification for a traditional teacher preparation program completer who has met all requirements for issuance of an Initial certificate with the exception of testing requirements. The candidate seeking certification under

the *South Carolina Certification Assessment Program—Alternate Plan* must meet all eligibility requirements and earn a score that is within minus two (-2) standard errors of measurement (SEMs) of the passing score on the subject area and pedagogy assessments as adopted by the SBE for the specific certification field. At the request of an employing school district, this teacher candidate will be issued a one-year Provisional Initial certificate that may be extended for a second and third year with continued employment and documentation of progress toward certificate advancement. As part of the annual request for certificate issuance, the hiring district must submit assurances that it will provide additional mentored support, coaching, and assistance to the educator and will carefully monitor the educator's progress.

The guidelines establish limitations for the issuance of the Provisional Initial certificate and requirements for the educator to advance to a renewable Professional certificate. These criteria require demonstrating three years of effective teaching as part of the state's ADEPT system, including induction requirements and successful summative evaluation at the annual contract level, as well as demonstrating content competency in the subject area and knowledge of pedagogy.

The attached guidelines document provides additional details on the limitations and requirements related to the Provisional Initial certificate for classroom teaching fields. Consistent with requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), this option is not available for Special Education certification fields.

Implementation Timeline

The Provisional Initial certificate option will be available for the 2022-23 school year. Prior to implementation and district's being able to submit requests for issuance, the Office of Educator Services will publish detailed guidance and procedures and provide training for district personnel administrators within the coming weeks.

The SCDE Office of Educator Services will review data on Provisional Initial certificates annually and conduct a comprehensive evaluation after three years to determine the effectiveness of the option and to make recommendations for changes to or continuation of the Provisional Initial certificate.