



FAQs About Teacher Certification

According to the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), the purpose of licensing and certification for teachers is to identify high quality teachers. While LAPCS believes the true value of a teacher should be measured by his or her outcomes with students, certification can be a tangible representation of the efforts a teacher has put forth in order to better themselves and their practice.

Louisiana offers eight types of standard teaching authorizations:

- Professional Level 1, 2, and 3 certificates
- Practitioner 1, 2, and 3 licenses
- Out of State certificates (OS)
- World language certificates (WLC)
- Out of Field Authority to Teach (OFAT)
- Extended endorsement license (EEL)
- Standard certificates for teachers in non-public schools (Level 2*, Level 3*)
- Educational Leader certificates (EDL)

Our hope is that this memo will help you better understand these various authorizations and their requisites.

So, what's the difference between a practitioner license and certification?

Great question. A practitioner license (PL) is what you get while you're enrolled in an alternate certification program approved in Louisiana. Think of it as a learner's permit. There are *three* types of PLs, and they differ mostly by the kind of certification program the teacher is enrolled in.

Can you tell me what the different PLs are?

Sure. See below.

Practitioner Licenses

PLs may be issued for one school year. PL 1's and PL 2's can be renewed annually and held for a maximum of three years until the teacher completes their alternative certification program. Program requirements must be completed within the 3-year maximum that the license can be held. After 3 years, the teacher should meet the guidelines for a Level 1 (or higher) certificate. PL 3's can be renewed annually and held for a maximum of four years until the teacher completes their alternative certification program. After 4 years, the teacher should meet the guidelines for a Level 1 (or higher) certificate. For a listing of state-approved alternate certification programs, visit www.teachlouisiana.net and click on the "Preparation" tab at the top of the home page.

<u>PL Type</u>	<u>Requisites</u>	<u>Renewal Guidelines</u>	<u>Resources</u>
PL 1	Teacher must be admitted to and enrolled in a state-approved practitioner teacher program. The program provider must submit the PL 1 application on behalf of the teacher.	Teacher must complete at least 6 semester hours (or equivalent contact hours).	Practitioner Teacher Alternate Certification Program
PL 2	Teacher must be admitted to and enrolled in a state-approved non-master's alternate certification program. The school must submit the PL 2 application on behalf of the teacher.	Teacher must complete at least 9 semester hours (or equivalent contact hours).	Certification-Only Alternate Certification Program
PL 3	Teacher must be admitted to and enrolled in a state-approved master's degree alternate certification program. The school must submit the PL 3 application on behalf of the teacher.	Teacher must complete at least 9 semester hours (or equivalent contact hours).	Master's Degree Alternate Certification Program

How about teaching certification?

Once an individual has completed either a traditional or an alternate certification program and meets all other state requirements for certification, he or she is eligible for various teaching certificates. A teacher can move up the levels of certification by obtaining effective experience and additional education.

Professional Level Certificates

Once a professional certificate is issued, it is valid for an initial period of time and can then be renewed. Level 1 certificates are valid for 3 years, while Level 2 and Level 3 certificates are valid for 5 years.

Certificate Type	Requisites	Renewal Guidelines	Resources
Level 1	<p>Teacher must complete a state-approved teacher preparation program that includes student teaching or an internship (traditional or alternate) with at least a 2.5 GPA and pass all required PRAXIS exams for the area of certification. The program provider must recommend the teacher for the Level 1 certificate. Three years of teaching experience in the program area can be used in lieu of student teaching/internship for PL 2 alternate candidates only.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-OR-</p> <p>Teacher must meet the requirements of an out-of-state certified teacher.*</p>	<p>Can only be renewed for two one-year periods if requested by the LA employing authority. Candidates must successfully meet the standards of effectiveness for the renewal of this certificate/issuance of a higher level certificate pursuant to Bulletin 130 and mandated by Act 54 of the Louisiana 2010 Legislative Session.</p>	Certification Update Packet
Level 2	<p>Level 1 teacher can move up to Level 2 by successfully teaching for 3 years in their area of certification and by meeting the standards of effectiveness for 3 years pursuant to Bulletin 130 and mandated by Act 54 of the Louisiana 2010 Legislative Session.</p>	<p>Valid for five years initially and may be renewed thereafter for a period of five years at the request of a Louisiana Employing Authority. For renewal of Level 2 certificates, candidates must successfully meet the standards of effectiveness for at least three years during the five-year initial or renewal period pursuant to Bulletin 130 and mandated by Act 54 of the Louisiana 2010 Legislative Session.</p>	Certification Update Packet
Level 3	<p>Level 1 and Level 2 teachers can move up to Level 3 by completing a Master's degree from a regionally-accredited university/college, teaching in their area of certification for 5</p>	<p>Valid for five years initially and may be renewed thereafter for a period of five years at the request of a</p>	Certification Update Packet

	years and by by meeting the standards of effectiveness for 3 out of 5 years pursuant to Bulletin 130 and mandated by Act 54 of the Louisiana 2010 Legislative Session.	Louisiana Employing Authority. For renewal of Level 3 certificates, candidates must successfully meet the standards of effectiveness for at least three years during the five-year initial or renewal period pursuant to Bulletin 130 and mandated by Act 54 of the Louisiana 2010 Legislative Session.	
*Out-of-State (OS)	Issued to a teacher who completed a teacher preparation program in another state with student teaching/internship or 3 years of experience in the certified area to waive student teaching and who holds standard certification in another state. The OS certificate is valid for 3 years, but then a teacher must meet the Praxis exam requirements or Praxis exclusion requirements to move to a Level 1, Level 2, or Level 3 certificate, because OS certificates are non-renewable.	Non-renewable/Non-extendable	Out-of-State Certification Application Packet

What about these A, B, and C certificates I sometimes hear about? Oh, and EELs and OFATs?

The C, B, and A certification process led to lifetime certification. Those are no longer issued. As for EELs (Extended Endorsement License), those are given to certified teachers who are teaching outside of their certified area but are deemed highly qualified in that area. To receive the EEL, the teacher must pass the PRAXIS in the area of the EEL certificate and the district/school must provide a detailed list of the additional coursework or exams needed to complete certification. They must then submit an EEL application to the LDE on behalf of the teacher (must renew annually for maximum of 3 years).

The Out-of-Field-Authority to Teach (OFAT) is issued for one three-year period while the holder pursues endorsement (add-on) certification requirements per Bulletin 746. Districts must submit the application and provide an affidavit signed by the local superintendent verifying that good faith efforts for recruiting certified personnel have been made, including consulting the Teach Louisiana website; that "there is no regularly certified, competent, and suitable person available for the position;" and that the applicant is the best-qualified person for the position.

What are endorsements and how does a teacher get one?

Endorsements are certification authorizations that are added to an existing teacher certificate. An endorsement basically signals that a teacher has a specialty area in addition to his/her certification area. The teacher or the school must request endorsements from the LDE. For authorizations that require coursework, an official transcript from a regionally accredited institution must accompany the request.

Below is a list of the various endorsements available. For more information regarding how to earn each endorsement, see [Chapter 6 of Bulletin 746](#). Additional certification information can also be found at www.teachlouisiana.net. Click on the “Certification” tab at the top of the page and then scroll down to the **Add-On Endorsements** drop-down menu. Instructions for applying for an endorsement can be found in the [Certification Update Packet](#).

- Early Childhood (PK-3)
- Elementary (1-5)
- Middle School (4-8): English, Math, Science, or Social Studies
- Secondary (6-12): English, Math, Foreign Language, Science, Social Studies, Agriculture, Business, Computer Science, Family & Consumer Sciences, Journalism, Marketing, Speech, or Technology Education
- All Level (K-12): Art, Dance, Foreign Language, Health & Physical Education, or Music
- Academically Gifted
- Early Interventionist (Birth to 5 Years)
- Hearing Impaired (K-12)
- Mild/Moderate
- Significant Disabilities (1-12)
- Visual Impairments/Blind (K-12)
- Adapted Physical Education
- Adult Education Instructor
- Aerospace Education
- Algebra I
- Bilingual Specialist
- Child Search Coordinator
- Computer Literacy
- Cooperative Education
- Counselor (K-12)
- Driver and Traffic Safety Education
- Educational Diagnostician
- Educational Technology
- Elementary Math Specialist
- English as a Second Language
- Instructional Coaching
- Montessori Teacher Certification
- Reading Specialist
- School Librarian

Last question-What is an ancillary certificate, who is eligible to receive them, and how would a teacher obtain one?

Well, that’s actually three questions, but LAPCS loves assisting our members with questions! Ancillary Certificates are certificates that allow a qualified person who is not a certified teacher to provide specific services in a school, such as social worker or mental health counselor. There are many types of ancillary certifications.

Below is a list of some of the various ancillary certificates available. For more information regarding how to earn each ancillary certificate, see [Chapter 3 of Bulletin 746](#). Instructions for applying for an ancillary certificate can be found in the [Ancillary Certification Application Packet](#).

- Artist or Talented Certificate
- Nonpublic Montessori Teacher Certificate
- Family & Consumer Sciences
- Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps Instructor

- Math for Professionals Certificate
- Child Nutrition Program Supervisor
- Counselor (K-12)
- Educational Interpreter
- Educational Transliterator
- School Librarian
- Orientation & Mobility
- School Nurse
- Social Worker
- Mental Health Professional Counselor
- Special Education Examiners

Well, that's the end of the questions. Now, we'd like to share some additional notes and resources!

- When applying for certification or renewal, a fee is charged by the LDE. Be sure to check out the [LDE's Certification Processing Fees memo](#) to ensure that the correct amount is sent in. Fees are only accepted in the form of personal checks or money orders made payable to the Louisiana Department of Education.
- If you're unsure if a teacher is certified or what kind of certification they currently have, you can verify certificates [here](#).
- The LDE also has a [FAQs page](#) that can be helpful when trying to navigate the certification process.
- There is no receptionist available in the LDE's Certification Office to assist walk-in visitors. Walk-in visitors can, however, drop off certification applications in the **Certification Drop Box** located at the security desk of the Claiborne Building. Be sure to follow these [instructions](#).
- For questions about certification, you can either reach out to Regina Poole at regina.poole@la.gov or [Barbara Burke](#) or enter your question via the [LDE's Constituent Service Center](#).
- If you have questions about navigating the Teach Louisiana website, please reach out to [Joni Lacy](#).

As always, if you have further questions regarding policy issues, don't hesitate to reach out to our LAPCS Policy Director,

Veronica Brooks, at vbrooks@lacharterschools.org!

www.lacharterschools.org

