

CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS AND PATHWAYS FOR PARAPROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS

Background

Every SREB state requires teachers and principals to hold professional licenses. Fewer states require the same for paraprofessional educators. As states and districts encounter teacher recruitment challenges, leaders could develop strategies to induct paraprofessionals into the teaching profession. One strategy involves inviting paraprofessionals to enter certification programs to become teachers.

This briefing features two certification pathways programs created in Louisiana and Oklahoma. The second section focuses on state policies that require certification for paraprofessionals. States with paraprofessional certification policies could create an additional set of criteria that, once completed, would allow current certificate holders to receive a professional license.

Legislative Request

Will SREB share examples of state policies that address how paraprofessional become certified teachers? Could you provide examples of state policies that require certification for paraprofessionals?

States Providing Certification Pathways for Paraprofessionals

Louisiana

The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education offers an alternative pathway to certification called the Practitioner Teacher License. The license combines intensive coursework and full-time teaching. Applicants must possess a non-education baccalaureate degree, meet GPA requirements, pass the general assessment requirements for initial licensure and demonstrate subject-area competency whenever required. At the end of the academic year, educator undergo a performance review from their principal, the program provider and any instructional mentors provided by the school or district. Completion of the Practitioner Teacher program results in issuance of a professional teaching license.

Regulatory Citation: [Bulletin 746 – Louisiana Standards for State Certification of School Personnel](#)

Oklahoma

The Oklahoma State Department of Education issues standard teaching certificates to paraprofessionals, if they complete 12 hours of professional education coursework from a higher education institution. The Career Development Program Path requires paraprofessionals to have at least one year of classroom experience in their expected area of certification before pursuing the college coursework requirement.

Regulatory Citation: [OAR 210:20-9-102](#)

States Requiring Certification for Paraprofessionals

Delaware

The Delaware Department of Education issues three types of paraprofessional permits. Title I and Instructional Paraeducator permits require applicants to demonstrate one of the following: complete at least two years of study in general studies or education at a higher education institution, hold at least an associate degree or present a qualifying score on the Para Pro assessment along with a high school diploma. The permit is valid for five years, and is renewable upon completion of professional development.

Regulatory Citation: [14 DAC 1517](#)

Georgia

The Georgia Professional Standards Commission issues the Paraprofessional License to applicants employed by a local education agency who hold an associate degree or higher and have passed the Georgia Assessment for the Certification of Educators (GACE) Paraprofessional Assessment. The certificate is valid for five years and is renewable pursuant to [GaPSC rule 505-2-.36](#).

Regulatory Citation: [GaPSC 505-2-.18](#)

Oklahoma

The Oklahoma State Department of Education issues the Paraprofessional Credential to applicants who possess a high school diploma or a GED diploma, have competed a career development program approved by the State Board of Education and have undergone a criminal background check.

Regulatory Citation: [OAR 210:20-9-102](#)

For More Information

SREB is here to serve you! If you have any more questions related to teachers and principals, please contact the Educator Effectiveness team.

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