



What is educator certification?

Educator certification is a system of educational, pedagogical, and character-related qualifications for judging the fitness of individuals seeking employment as educators in Florida’s public schools.¹ Each person in a public school who is employed as a school supervisor, school principal, teacher, library media specialist, school counselor, or athletic coach or in another instructional capacity must be certified.² The purpose of certification is to require school-based personnel to “posses the credentials, knowledge, and skills necessary to allow the opportunity for a high-quality education in the public schools.”³

The Department of Education (DOE) issues three types of educator certificates:

- ❖ **Professional Certificate.** The professional certificate is Florida’s highest type of full-time educator certification.⁴ It is valid for five years and is renewable.⁵
- ❖ **Temporary Certificate.** The temporary certificate covers employment in full-time positions for which educator certification is required.⁶ It is valid for three years and is nonrenewable.⁷
- ❖ **Athletic Coaching Certificate.** The athletic coaching certificate covers full-time and part-time employment as a public school’s athletic coach.⁸ Department of Education (DOE) issues two types of athletic coaching certificates – one is valid for five years and is renewable and the other is valid for three years and is nonrenewable.⁹

¹ Subpart D., Part III, ch. 1012, F.S. Certification is required for educators serving in traditional public schools, charter schools, virtual schools, and other publicly operated schools. Sections 1002.33(12)(f) and 1012.55(1), F.S.

² Sections 1002.33(12)(f) (charter school teachers) and 1012.55(1), F.S. District school boards and charter school governing boards are authorized to hire noncertificated individuals who possess expertise in a given field to serve in an instructional capacity. Rule 6A-1.0502(1), F.A.C.; ss. 1002.33(10)(f) and 1012.55(1), F.S. State-licensed school nurses and physicians, occupational therapists, physical therapists, audiologists, and speech therapists are not required to be certified educators. Rule 6A-1.0502(10) and (11), F.A.C.; s. 1012.55(3), F.S.

³ Section 1012.54, F.S.; rule 6A-4.001(1), F.A.C.

⁴ Rule 6A-4.004(2), F.A.C.; see *infra* text accompanying notes 28-32.

⁵ Section 1012.56(7)(a), F.S.; see rule 6A-4.0051(3)(c), F.A.C. (validity period is expressed as 5 years from July 1 of the school fiscal year). DOE also issues a nonrenewable 2-year temporary certificate and a nonrenewable 5-year professional certificate that allows an applicant with a bachelor’s degree in the area of speech-language impairment to complete a master’s degree in speech-language impairment. Section 1012.56(7)(c), F.S.; rule 6A-4.004(3), F.A.C.

⁶ See rule 6A-4.004(1)(a)2., F.A.C.; see also *infra* text accompanying notes 20-27.

⁷ Section 1012.56(7), F.S. (flush-left provisions at end of subsection; validity period is expressed in school fiscal years); rule 6A-4.004(1)(a), F.A.C. DOE also issues a nonrenewable temporary certificate, which is valid for 2 years, in the area of speech-language impairment. Section 1012.56(7)(c), F.S.; see *supra* note 5.

⁸ Section 1012.55(2), F.S.; see *infra* text accompanying notes 89-97.

⁹ See rule 6A-4.004(4), F.A.C. (validity periods expressed in school fiscal years).

In addition, school districts are authorized to issue adjunct teaching certificates to part-time teachers who have expertise in the subject area to be taught. An adjunct teaching certificate is valid for five years and is renewable.¹⁰

What are the basic eligibility requirements for an educator certificate?

An applicant seeking a professional certificate, temporary certificate, or adjunct teaching certificate must meet the following basic eligibility requirements:¹¹

- ❖ Be at least 18 years of age;¹²
- ❖ Sign an affidavit attesting that the applicant will uphold the U.S. and State Constitutions;¹³
- ❖ Earn a bachelor's or higher degree from an accredited institution of higher learning¹⁴ or from a nonaccredited institution identified by DOE as having a quality program resulting in a bachelor's or higher degree;¹⁵
- ❖ Submit to fingerprinting and background screening and not have a criminal history that requires the applicant's disqualification from certification or employment;¹⁶
- ❖ Be of good moral character;¹⁷ and
- ❖ Be competent and capable of performing the duties, functions, and responsibilities of a teacher.¹⁸

In addition, each applicant must submit to DOE an application and the required fee.¹⁹

What are the specific eligibility requirements for a temporary certificate?

An applicant seeking a temporary certificate must:

- ❖ Meet the basic eligibility requirements for certification;²⁰

¹⁰ Section 1012.57(1), F.S.

¹¹ Sections 1012.56(7)(a)-(b) and 1012.57, F.S.

¹² Section 1012.56(2)(a), F.S.

¹³ Section 1012.56(2)(b), F.S.

¹⁴ Section 1012.56(2)(c), F.S.; rule 6A-4.003(1), F.A.C. (approved accrediting agencies); *see also* 34 C.F.R. ss. 602.1-602.50; U.S. Department of Education, *Nationally Recognized Accrediting Agencies*, http://www.ed.gov/admns/finaid/accred/accreditation_pg6.html#NationallyRecognized (last visited Sept. 1, 2010)(list of accrediting agencies approved by the U.S. Department of Education).

¹⁵ Section 1012.56(2)(c), F.S.; rule 6A-4.003(2), F.A.C. (criteria for approval of nonaccredited institutions of higher learning). For initial certification, an applicant must attain at least a 2.5 overall grade point average on a 4.0 scale in the applicant's major field of study. Section 1012.56(2)(c), F.S.

¹⁶ Sections 1012.315, 1012.32(1)-(2) and 1012.56(2)(d) and (10)(a), F.S.; *see* Educator Ethics Fact Sheet.

¹⁷ Section 1012.56(2)(e) and (7)(b), F.S.

¹⁸ Section 1012.56(2)(f) and (7)(b), F.S.

¹⁹ Section 1012.56(1), F.S.; *see s.* 1012.59, F.S. The fee for initial certification is \$75 per subject area. Rule 6A-4.0012(1)(a)1. and 2., F.A.C.; Florida Department of Education, *Certification Application Fee Schedule Effective January 1, 2008*, <http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/fee.asp> (last visited Sept. 1, 2010) [hereinafter *Certification Fee Schedule*].

²⁰ Section 1012.56(2)(a)-(f) and (7)(b), F.S.; *see supra* text accompanying notes 11-19.

- ❖ Obtain full-time employment in a position that requires a Florida educator certificate by a school district or private school that has a DOE-approved professional education competence demonstration program;²¹ and
- ❖ Do one of the following:
 - ◆ Demonstrate mastery of subject area knowledge (*e.g.*, passage of the appropriate subject area test);²² or
 - ◆ Complete the required degree or content courses specified in State Board of Education rule for subject area specialization²³ and attain at least a 2.5 grade point average on a 4.0 scale in the subject area courses.²⁴

An educator who is employed under a temporary certificate must demonstrate mastery of general knowledge within one calendar year after employment in order to remain employed in a position that requires a certificate.²⁵ If the educator is employed under contract, the calendar year deadline for demonstrating mastery of general knowledge may be extended through the end of the school year.²⁶

A temporary certificate is valid for three years and is nonrenewable.²⁷

What are the specific eligibility requirements for a professional certificate?

An applicant seeking a professional certificate must:

- ❖ Meet the basic eligibility requirements for certification;²⁸
- ❖ Demonstrate mastery of general knowledge;²⁹
- ❖ Demonstrate mastery of subject area knowledge;³⁰ and
- ❖ Demonstrate mastery of professional preparation and education competence.³¹

²¹ Section 1012.56(1)(b), F.S.; rule 6A-4.004(1)(a)2., F.A.C.; *see infra* note 51 (description of professional education competence demonstration programs); *see also* Alternative Teacher Certification Fact Sheet.

²² Section 1012.56(7)(b), F.S.; Florida Department of Education, *Subject Area Knowledge*, http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/mast_sub.asp (last visited Sept. 1, 2010) [hereinafter *Subject Area Knowledge*]; *see also infra* text accompanying notes 39-45 (acceptable means of demonstrating subject area knowledge).

²³ Section 1012.56(7)(b), F.S. The degree and content requirements are established in ch. 6A-4, F.A.C.

²⁴ Section 1012.56(2)(c), F.S.; *see* Florida Department of Education, *Certificate Types and Requirements*, http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/cert_types.asp (last visited Sept. 1, 2010); *see also supra* note 15.

²⁵ Section 1012.56(7), F.S. (flush-left provisions at end of subsection); *see also infra* text accompanying notes 33-38 (acceptable means of demonstrating mastery of general knowledge).

²⁶ *Id.*

²⁷ *Id.*

²⁸ Section 1012.56(2)(a)-(f), F.S.; *see supra* text accompanying notes 11-19.

²⁹ Section 1012.56(2)(g) and (3), F.S.; Florida Department of Education, *General Knowledge*, http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/mast_gen.asp (last visited Sept. 1, 2010) [hereinafter *General Knowledge*]; *see also infra* text accompanying notes 33-38 (acceptable means of demonstrating mastery of general knowledge).

³⁰ Section 1012.56(2)(h) and (5), F.S.; *see Subject Area Knowledge, supra* note 22; *see also infra* text accompanying notes 39-45 (acceptable means of demonstrating subject area knowledge).

³¹ Section 1012.56(2)(i) and (6), F.S.; Florida Department of Education, *Professional Preparation and Education Competence*, http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/mast_prof.asp (last visited Sept. 1, 2010) [hereinafter *Professional*

A professional certificate is valid for five years and is renewable.³²

How may an applicant demonstrate mastery of general knowledge?

Mastery of general knowledge may be demonstrated through any of the following methods:

- ❖ Achieving a passing score on the General Knowledge Test (basic skills examination required by State Board of Education rule);³³
- ❖ Achieving a passing score on the College-Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST) taken before July 1, 2002;³⁴
- ❖ Having a valid professional standard teaching certificate issued by another U.S. state or territory,³⁵ by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS),³⁶ or by the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE) (certification issued by a state board-approved national educator credentialing board);³⁷ or
- ❖ Completing two semesters of full-time college teaching experience at an accredited community college, state university, or private college or university that awards associate's or higher degrees or at a nonaccredited institution of higher education identified by DOE as having a quality program.³⁸

Preparation and Education Competence]; see also *infra* text accompanying notes 46-55 (acceptable means of demonstrating professional preparation and education competence).

³² Sections 1012.56(7)(a) and 1012.585, F.S.; rule 6A-4.0051(1), F.A.C.; see also *supra* note 5.

³³ Section 1012.56(3)(a), F.S. The General Knowledge Test is part of the Florida Teacher Certification Examinations and is administered as four subtests: Reading, English Skills, English Essay, and Mathematics. Rule 6A-4.0021(7), F.A.C.; see also Florida Department of Education, *Competencies and Skills Required for Teacher Certification in Florida*, s. 82 (14th ed., May 19, 2009), available at <http://www.fldoe.org/asp/ftce/pdf/complete-edition.pdf> (competencies and skills measured by General Knowledge Test) [hereinafter *Competencies and Skills*].

³⁴ Section 1012.56(3)(b), F.S.; see rules 6A-4.0021(10), 6A-10.0311, and 6A-10.0312, F.A.C.; Florida Department of Education, *College-Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST)*, <http://www.fldoe.org/asp/clast> (last visited Sept. 1, 2010).

³⁵ Section 1012.56(3)(c), F.S.; see rules 6A-4.002(1)(i)1.-2. and 6A-4.003, F.A.C. (flush-left provisions following rule 6A-4.003(2)(e), F.A.C.). Section 1012.56(3)(c), F.S., specifies that a valid professional standard teaching certificate issued by *another state* is an acceptable means of demonstrating mastery of general knowledge. A certificate issued by a U.S. territory is also acceptable. *General Knowledge*, *supra* note 29.

³⁶ Section 1012.56(3)(d), F.S.; see rule 6A-4.002(1)(j), F.A.C.; see also National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, <http://www.nbpts.org> (last visited Sept. 1, 2010).

³⁷ Section 1012.56(3)(d), F.S.; see rule 6A-4.002(1)(j), F.A.C. On June 15, 2004, the State Board of Education authorized certificates issued by ABCTE to satisfy all requirements for a professional certificate, except the professional education competence demonstration requirement. Memorandum from Chief of the Bureau of Educator Certification, Florida Department of Education, to School District Superintendents, *et al.*, at 7 (June 25, 2004), available at <http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-2182/01.pdf>; see Florida Department of Education, *Minutes of State Board of Education*, at 5 (June 15, 2004), available at http://www.fldoe.org/board/meetings/2004_08_16/Minutes_2004_06_15.pdf; see also American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence, <http://www.abcte.org> (last visited Sept. 1, 2010).

³⁸ Section 1012.56(3)(e), F.S.; see also *supra* notes 14 and 15 (approval of accredited and nonaccredited institutions of higher learning). College teaching experience must be full-time. *General Knowledge*, *supra* note 29.

How may an applicant demonstrate mastery of subject area knowledge?

Mastery of subject area knowledge may be demonstrated through any of the following methods:

- ❖ **Bachelor's Degree Level** (for certification in a subject area for which State Board of Education rule requires a bachelor's or higher degree):
 - ◆ Achieving a passing score on the appropriate subject area test required by state board rule;³⁹
 - ◆ For certification in a foreign language for which there is no Florida subject area test (i.e., Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Greek, Haitian Creole, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, and Russian):⁴⁰ Completing a bachelor's or higher degree and attaining oral and written proficiency scores above the intermediate level on tests administered by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages;⁴¹ or
 - ◆ For certification in any other subject area for which there is no Florida subject area test (e.g., Dance): Completing the required bachelor's or higher degree and content courses specified in state board rule⁴² and verification of subject area competence by the district school superintendent or, for a state-supported or private school, the school's chief administrative officer.⁴³
- ❖ **Master's Degree Level** (for certification in a subject area for which state board rule requires a master's or higher degree): Completing the required master's or higher degree and content courses specified in state board rule and achieving a passing score on the corresponding subject area test.⁴⁴
- ❖ **Out-of-State Certification:** Having a valid professional standard teaching certificate issued for a subject area by another U.S. state or territory, by NBPTS, or by ABCTE

³⁹ Section 1012.56(5)(a), F.S. The Florida Teacher Certification Examinations include 45 subject area tests. Florida Department of Education, *Florida Teacher Certification Examinations*, <https://app1.fldoe.org/ftce/Portal/FtceTests.aspx> (last visited Sept. 1, 2010) [hereinafter *FTCE Subject Area Tests*]; *Competencies and Skills*, *supra* note 33, at ss. 1-63; see also rule 6A-4.0021(9), F.A.C. (scoring of subject area tests).

⁴⁰ The State Board of Education has approved certification subject areas in Latin and 14 world languages. Rule 6A-4.0243, F.A.C. The state board has specific authority to develop subject area tests for each of the 14 world languages. Section 1012.56(5)(a), F.S. The DOE has developed subject area tests for French, German, Latin, and Spanish.; *FTCE Subject Area Tests*, *supra* note 39; *Competencies and Skills*, *supra* note 33, at ss. 15, 17, 24, and 39.

⁴¹ Section 1012.56(5)(b), F.S.; rule 6A-4.0243(1)(e), F.A.C.; see American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, *Certified Proficiency Testing Programs*, <http://www.actfl.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3642> (last visited Sept. 1, 2010); Language Testing International (ACTFL Language Testing Office), *ACTFL Certified Proficiency Testing Program: Oral And Writing Proficiency Testing for State of Florida Prospective Teachers*, http://www.languageTesting.com/acad_fl.cfm (last visited Sept. 1, 2010).

⁴² See, e.g., rule 6A-4.0123, F.A.C. (specialization requirements for certification in dance); see also Florida Department of Education, *Florida Certification Coverages*, <http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/subilist.asp> (last visited Sept. 1, 2010) [hereinafter *Certification Coverages*].

⁴³ Section 1012.56(5)(c), F.S.; rule 6A-4.004(2), F.A.C.

⁴⁴ Section 1012.56(5)(d), F.S.; see *Certification Coverages*, *supra* note 42.

(certification issued by a state board-approved national educator credentialing board), if the certificate is comparable to the Florida certificate issued for the same subject area.⁴⁵

How may an applicant demonstrate mastery of professional preparation and education competence?

Mastery of professional preparation and education competence may be demonstrated through any of the following methods:

- ❖ Completing an approved teacher preparation program at a postsecondary educational institution in Florida, or a teacher preparation program from an out-of-state accredited or DOE-approved institution, and achieving a passing score on the Professional Education Test required by state board rule;⁴⁶
- ❖ Completing an alternative certification program offered by a school district or Educator Preparation Institute and achieving a passing score on the Professional Education Test;⁴⁷
- ❖ Completing 15 semester hours in professional preparation courses specified in state board rule⁴⁸ or completing the Professional Training Option for Content Majors;⁴⁹ completing requirements for practical experience in teaching;⁵⁰ completing an approved professional education competence demonstration program,⁵¹ and achieving a passing score on the Professional Education Test;⁵²
- ❖ Having a valid professional standard teaching certificate issued by another U.S. state or territory or by NBPTS;⁵³

⁴⁵ Section 1012.56(5)(e) and (f), F.S.; rule 6A-4.002(1)(i)-(j), F.A.C.; Florida Department of Education, *NBPTS Certificate Subjects and Corresponding Subjects in Florida*, <http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/nbpts-chart.asp> (last visited Sept. 1, 2010)[hereinafter *NBPTS Certification Subject Areas*]; see *supra* note 35 (certificate from U.S. territory is also acceptable).

⁴⁶ Section 1012.56(6)(a) and (b), F.S.; see s. 1004.04, F.S.; rule 6A-4.003(1) and (4), F.A.C. (accreditation of teacher education programs). The Professional Education Test is part of the Florida Teacher Certification Examinations. Rule 6A-4.0021(8), F.S.; *Competencies and Skills*, *supra* note 33, at s. 00.

⁴⁷ Section 1012.56(6)(g)-(h), F.S.; see ss. 1004.85 and 1012.56(8), F.S.; rule 6A-5.066(2)(b)1.d. and (c)1.d., F.A.C.; see also *Alternative Certification Fact Sheet*.

⁴⁸ Section 1012.56(6)(f), F.S.; rule 6A-4.006(2)(a), F.A.C. Separate professional preparation course requirements are established for certification in Agriculture (grades 6-12). Rule 6A-4.006(3)(a), F.A.C.

⁴⁹ The Professional Training Option for Content Majors authorizes an approved teacher preparation program at a postsecondary institution in Florida to allow students who do not major in education but do major or minor in a content area (e.g., English major) to satisfy professional preparation course requirements. Rule 6A-5.066(3), F.A.C.

⁵⁰ *Professional Preparation and Education Competence*, *supra* note 31; see rules 6A-4.002(5) and 6A-4.006(2)(b), F.A.C.

⁵¹ Section 1012.56(6)(f), F.S. Each school district must, and a state-supported public or private school may, establish a professional education competence demonstration program that allows the district's or school's instructional staff to demonstrate mastery of professional education competence through a performance evaluation plan, which documents the staff's classroom application and instructional performance. Section 1012.56(8)(b), F.S.

⁵² Section 1012.56(6)(f), F.S.

⁵³ Section 1012.56(6)(c)-(d), F.S.; see rules 6A-4.002(1)(i)-(j), F.A.C.; see *supra* note 35 (certificate from U.S. territory is also acceptable); *Professional Preparation and Education Competence*, *supra* note 31.

- ❖ Having a valid professional standard teaching certificate issued by ABCTE (certification issued by a state board-approved national educator credentialing board) and completing an approved professional education competence demonstration program;⁵⁴ or
- ❖ Completing two semesters of full-time college teaching experience at an accredited community college, state university, or private college or university that awards associate's or higher degrees or at a nonaccredited institution of higher education identified by DOE as having a quality program.⁵⁵

Does Florida grant reciprocity to educators who are certified by another state?

Yes. Full reciprocity is granted to educators who hold a valid professional standard teaching certificate for a subject area issued by another state or the NBPTS.⁵⁶ These individuals are deemed to have met the requirements for Florida professional certification, including mastery of general knowledge, subject area knowledge, and professional preparation and education competence.⁵⁷ Partial reciprocity is granted to educators who hold ABCTE certification. ABCTE certification satisfies all requirements for a professional certificate, except the professional education competence demonstration requirement. Individuals who hold this certification must complete a professional education competence demonstration program.⁵⁸

Individuals who hold an out-of-state, NBPTS, or ABCTE certificate must apply for a Florida professional certificate. In each case, the certificate must be comparable to, and require the same or higher level of training as, the Florida subject area certification.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Section 1012.56(6)(d), F.S.; rule 6A-4.002(1)(j), F.A.C.; *Professional Preparation and Education Competence*, *supra* note 31; *see supra* notes 37 (American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence certificate satisfies all requirements for a professional certificate, except the professional education competence demonstration requirement) and 51 (description of professional education competence demonstration program).

⁵⁵ Section 1012.56(6)(e), F.S.; *see also supra* notes 14 and 15 (approval of accredited and nonaccredited institutions of higher learning). College teaching experience must be full time. *Professional Preparation and Education Competence*, *supra* note 31. A non-accredited institution of higher learning is approved as having a quality program if the institution meets one of the following criteria: is accepted for certification purposes by the state department of education where the institution is located; holds a certificate of exemption pursuant to s. 1005.06, F.S.; is a newly created Florida public college or university that offers a bachelor's or higher degree program; is located outside the U.S. and awards a degree that is the equivalent to a bachelor's or higher degree awarded by an accredited or approved institution the U.S.; or the degree from the institution was accepted by an accredited or approved institution either in transfer or as a basis for admission into the graduate program which resulted in the conferral of a higher degree. Rule 6A-4.003, F.A.C. No list of approved nonaccredited institutions is published or provided online; however, DOE maintains a list internally to expedite the review process. Telephone conference, Bureau Chief, DOE, Educator Recruitment, Development, and Retention, Sept. 16, 2010.

⁵⁶ Section 1012.56(5)(e)-(f), F.S.; *see rules* 6A-4.002(1)(i)-(j) and 6A-4.003(2), F.A.C. (flush-left provisions following paragraph (2)(e)); Florida Department of Education, *Reciprocity for Out-of-State Teachers and Administrators*, <http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/level1.asp> (last visited Sept. 1, 2010). According to the DOE, 31 NBPTS certification subject area coverages currently align with Florida coverages. *NBPTS Certification Subject Areas*, *supra* note 45.

⁵⁷ Section 1012.56(3)(c)-(d), (5)(e)-(f), and (6)(c)-(d), F.S.; rule 6A-4.002(1)(i)1. and (j), F.A.C.

⁵⁸ Section 1012.56(5)(f), F.S.; *Professional Preparation and Education Competence*, *supra* note 31; *see supra* note 37 and accompanying text.

⁵⁹ Rule 6A-4.002(1)(i) and (j), F.A.C. DOE staff verify comparability. Telephone conference, Bureau Chief, DOE, Educator Recruitment, Development, and Retention, Sept. 16, 2010.

In the 2009-10 academic year, approximately 20 percent of initial certificates issued in Florida were based upon reciprocity. This includes teachers with teaching certificates from out of state (2,313), teachers who completed an out-of-state teacher preparation program (663), and teachers with certificates issued by the NBPTS (6) and the ABCTE (22).⁶⁰

How is subject area coverage or an endorsement added to an educator certificate?

Subject area “coverage” is a designation on an educator certificate that indicates the field in which the educator has content knowledge (e.g., Mathematics, grades 6-12⁶¹).⁶² An “endorsement” is a rider shown on an educator certificate that signifies the educator has knowledge of instructional strategies that target particular levels, stages of development, or circumstances (e.g., Gifted Endorsement or Endorsement in English for Speakers of Other Languages⁶³).⁶⁴

To add subject area coverage or an endorsement to a professional certificate or temporary certificate, an educator must submit an application⁶⁵ and the required fee⁶⁶ and complete the following requirements:

- ❖ ***Add Subject Area Coverage to a Professional Certificate.*** To add subject area coverage to a professional certificate, an educator must demonstrate mastery of subject area knowledge (e.g., passage of the appropriate subject area test) for each subject to be added to the certificate.⁶⁷
- ❖ ***Add Subject Area Coverage to a Temporary Certificate.*** To add subject area coverage to a temporary certificate, an educator must do one of the following:
 - ◆ Demonstrate mastery of subject area knowledge;⁶⁸ or

⁶⁰ Email, Florida Department of Education, Legislative Affairs Director (Sept. 13, 2010).

⁶¹ See, e.g., rule 6A-4.0262, F.A.C.

⁶² Rule 6A-4.002(1)(d), F.A.C.

⁶³ See, e.g., rules 6A-4.01791 and 6A-4.0244, F.A.C.

⁶⁴ Rule 6A-4.002(1)(e), F.A.C.

⁶⁵ Rule 6A-4.004(5)(a) and (6)(a), F.A.C. Initial certification applications are generally submitted to DOE. Section 1012.56(1), F.S. District school boards issue certificates for school district employees for the addition of a bachelor’s degree level subject area specialization to a valid professional certificate based on passage of the subject area test or addition of an endorsement to a valid certificate based on completion of approved inservice core components or a district add-on endorsement program. Rule 6A-4.0012(5)(b) and (c), F.A.C.

⁶⁶ The fee to add a subject area or endorsement to a professional certificate is \$75. Rule 6A-4.0012(1)(a)3.; see *Certification Fee Schedule*, *supra* note 19.

⁶⁷ Rule 6A-4.004(5)(b), F.S.; see Florida Department of Education, *Adding a Subject Coverage to a Professional Certificate*, http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/add_subject_pro.asp (last visited Sept. 1, 2010); see also *supra* text accompanying notes 39-45 (acceptable means of demonstrating subject area knowledge). For subject areas that require college credit for the required content courses specified in state board rule, a certificated educator may, in lieu of college credit, complete the content course requirements through an add-on alternative teacher preparation program designed by a district school board and approved by DOE. Section 1012.575, F.S.; see Florida Department of Education, *Manual for Development of District Add-On Certification Programs* (2003), available at <http://www.fldoe.org/profdev/pdf/add-on-manual.pdf>.

⁶⁸ See *supra* text accompanying notes 39-45 (acceptable means of demonstrating subject area knowledge).

- ◆ Complete the required degree or content courses specified in state board rule for specialization in the subject area.⁶⁹
- ❖ **Add an Endorsement to a Certificate.** To add an endorsement to a professional certificate or temporary certificate, an educator must do one of the following:
 - ◆ Complete the required degree and content courses specified in state board rule for the endorsement;⁷⁰ or
 - ◆ Complete the content course requirements through an add-on alternative teacher preparation program designed by a district school board and approved by DOE.⁷¹

What are the requirements for renewing or reinstating a professional certificate?

A professional certificate must be renewed every five years.⁷² An educator must submit an application,⁷³ pay a fee,⁷⁴ and earn at least six college credits or 120 inservice points to renew professional certification.⁷⁵ At least three college credits or 60 inservice points must be earned in each subject area for which renewal is sought.⁷⁶ The renewal period may be extended to include two successive renewal periods up to 10 years to enable educators who are certified in three or more subject areas to earn the required credits or inservice points in each subject area.⁷⁷ In addition to those required in the subject area, credits or inservice points may be earned in courses in clinical educator training, literacy and computational skills acquisition, exceptional student

⁶⁹ See Florida Department of Education, *Adding a Subject Coverage to a Temporary Certificate*, http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/add_subject_temp.asp (last visited Sept. 1, 2010).

⁷⁰ The degree and content requirements are established in ch. 6A-4, F.A.C.

⁷¹ Rule 6A-4.004(6)(b), F.A.C.; see Florida Department of Education, *Adding an Endorsement to a Professional Certificate*, http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/add_endorse_pro.asp (last visited Sept. 1, 2010); Florida Department of Education, *Adding an Endorsement to a Temporary Certificate*, http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/add_endorse_temp.asp (last visited Sept. 1, 2010); see also *supra* note 67 (add-on alternative teacher preparation programs). Unlike certification in a subject area, an endorsement does not require renewal. An endorsement is a “rider” to a subject area certification, so if the subject area certification is not renewed, then the endorsement does not remain. Telephone conference, Bureau Chief, DOE, Educator Recruitment, Development, and Retention, Sept. 16, 2010.

⁷² Section 1012.585(2)(a), F.S.

⁷³ Rule 6A-4.0051(3)(b), F.A.C. The DOE processes certification renewals for individuals who are not employed by district school boards. Section 1012.585(1)(b), F.S. District school boards are responsible for processing certificate renewals for school district employees. Section 1012.585(1)(a), F.S.

⁷⁴ The fee for a certification renewal is \$75. Rules 6A-4.0012(1)(a)1. and 6A-4.0051(3)(b), F.A.C.

⁷⁵ Section 1012.585(3)(a), F.S. Applicants may combine college credits and inservice points to meet this requirement. One semester hour of college credit is equivalent to 20 inservice points. Rule 6A-4.0051(1)(a)2., F.A.C. College credits must be earned at an accredited or state board-approved institution. Inservice points must be earned through participation in state board-approved school district inservice activities. Rule 6A-4.0051(1)(a), F.A.C.; see rule 6A-4.003(1) and (2), F.A.C. (list of approved accrediting agencies and guidelines for nonaccredited approved institutions).

⁷⁶ Section 1012.585(3)(c), F.S.

⁷⁷ Section 1012.585(c), F.S.; rule 6A-4.0051, F.A.C. Out of 289,863 academic certificate holders, 101,513 are certified in one subject area, 98,786 are certified in two subject areas, and 89,564 are certified in three or more subject areas. Email, Florida Department of Education, Legislative Affairs Director (March 1, 2010).

education, child development, drug abuse, child abuse, limited English proficiency, dropout prevention, and other topics.⁷⁸

Certification in subject areas may also be renewed by earning a passing score on the corresponding subject area test.⁷⁹ NBPTS certification is deemed to meet certification renewal requirements for the life of the certificate, in the corresponding certification subject area.⁸⁰

An expired professional certificate may be reinstated if the applicant:

- ❖ Submits an application for reinstatement;
- ❖ Submits to fingerprinting and background screening; and
- ❖ In the five years immediately preceding the application for reinstatement, completes the college credit and inservice point requirements for renewal and passes the subject area test for each certification area to be reinstated.⁸¹

If the applicant cannot meet the requirements for reinstatement of an expired professional certificate, he or she may be issued, if qualified, a three-year nonrenewable temporary certificate.⁸²

What are the specific eligibility requirements for an adjunct certificate?

In order to supplement a school's instructional staff, reduce teacher shortages, and enable qualified professionals or subject area experts to teach part-time in the state's public schools, school districts must adopt rules for the issuance of adjunct teaching certificates to qualified applicants who:

- ❖ Meet the basic eligibility requirements for certification,⁸³ and
- ❖ Have expertise in the subject area to be taught. An applicant is considered to have subject area expertise if the applicant achieves a passing score on the appropriate subject area test.⁸⁴

⁷⁸ Section 1012.585(3)(a), F.S.

⁷⁹ Section 1012.585(3)(b), F.S. For the purposes of renewing a professional certificate, passage of a subject area examination is equivalent to three semester hours of college credit. Rule 6A-4.0051(1)(b), F.A.C.

⁸⁰ Section 1012.585(2)(b), F.S.; rule 6A-4.0051(1)(c), F.A.C.

⁸¹ Section 1012.585(5), F.S.; rule 6A-4.0051(3) and (6), F.A.C.

⁸² Rule 6A-4.004(7), F.A.C.

⁸³ Sections 1012.57(1), F.S; *see supra* text accompanying notes 11-19.

⁸⁴ Section 1012.57(1), F.S., requires a school district's rules to consider an applicant who passes the appropriate subject area test as having expertise in the subject area, but does not explicitly prohibit a school district from adopting additional options for evaluating an applicant's subject area expertise. Section 44, ch. 2003-391, L.O.F., deleted a provision from s. 1012.57(1), F.S., which had explicitly authorized district school board policy to be used in determining an applicant's subject area expertise. In a memorandum explaining legislative changes in ch. 2003-391, L.O.F., DOE concluded that deletion of this provision required passage of the subject area test as the only method for an applicant to show subject area expertise and removed the authority of school districts to adopt additional options. Memorandum from Chancellor of K-12 Public Schools, Florida Department of Education, to School District Superintendents, *et al.*, 3 (June 9, 2003), available at <http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-1229/June%202.pdf>.

An adjunct teaching certificate is valid only for part-time teaching positions.⁸⁵ Teachers who are certified and employed under adjunct teaching certificates have the same rights and protection of laws as teachers who hold a professional or temporary certificate.⁸⁶

Teachers holding adjunct teaching certificates must receive the following assistance:

- ❖ The district school board must provide the adjunct teacher with an orientation in classroom management before assigning the teacher to a school;
- ❖ The school district must allow an adjunct teacher to participate in the district's new teacher training program; and
- ❖ The school principal must assign an experienced peer mentor to assist the adjunct teacher during his or her first year of teaching.⁸⁷

An adjunct teaching certificate is valid for five years and is renewable if the applicant has received satisfactory performance evaluations during each year of teaching under the certificate.⁸⁸

What are the eligibility requirements for an athletic coaching certificate?

DOE issues an athletic coaching certificate to a person employed and rendering service, either part-time or full-time, as a public school athletic coach.⁸⁹ Certification is not required for an athletic coach who voluntarily renders service and who is not employed by any Florida school district.⁹⁰ DOE issues two types of athletic coaching certificates:

Renewable Five-Year Certificate. An applicant is eligible for an athletic coaching certificate, which is valid for five years and may be renewed,⁹¹ if the applicant:

- ❖ Submits to DOE an application and the required fee;⁹²
- ❖ Submits to fingerprinting and background screening and does not have a criminal history that requires the applicant's disqualification from certification or employment;⁹³ and
- ❖ Completes nine semester hours in the required content courses specified in state board rule for athletic coaching:
 - ◆ Three semester hours in the care and prevention of athletic injuries and the effects and dangers of drug use, including performance enhancing drugs;
 - ◆ Three semester hours in coaching theory; and

⁸⁵ Section 1012.57(1), F.S.

⁸⁶ Section 1012.57(2), F.S.

⁸⁷ Section 1012.57(1), F.S.

⁸⁸ *Id.* (validity period expressed in school years).

⁸⁹ Section 1012.55(2), F.S.

⁹⁰ *Id.*

⁹¹ See rule 6A-4.004(4)(b), F.A.C.; *cf.* s. 1012.57(1), F.S. (validity period expressed in school years).

⁹² Rules 6A-4.004(4)(b)1. and 6A-4.0012(1)(a), F.A.C.; see *Certification Fee Schedule*, *supra* note 19. The required fee is \$75. *Id.*

⁹³ Sections 1012.315 and 1012.32(1)-(2), F.S.; rule 6A-4.004(1)(a)3. and (4)(b)3., F.A.C.

- ◆ A course in the theory and practice of coaching a specific sport;⁹⁴ and
- ❖ Has a valid cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) course completion card or certificate issued by the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross or has an equivalent CPR course completion card or certificate issued by an entity approved by the Department of Health.⁹⁵

Nonrenewable Three-Year Certificate. If an applicant submits the required application and fee, submits to fingerprinting and background screening, and does not have a criminal history that disqualifies the applicant from certification or employment, the applicant is eligible for a nonrenewable athletic coaching certificate valid for three years.⁹⁶ To receive the renewable five-year athletic coaching certificate, the applicant must also complete the nine semester hours in the required content courses and obtain the CPR course completion card or certificate.⁹⁷

Where can I get additional information?

Florida Department of Education

Bureau of Educator Certification
(850) 245-5049
<http://www.fldoe.org/edcert>

Florida House of Representatives

Education Committee
(850) 488-7451
<http://www.myfloridahouse.gov>

Florida House of Representatives

Appropriations Committee
(850) 488-6204
<http://www.myfloridahouse.gov>

⁹⁴ Rules 6A-4.004(4)(b)2. and 6A-4.0282(2) F.A.C.

⁹⁵ Rules 6A-4.004(4)(b)2. and 6A-4.0282(3), F.A.C.; see rule 64E-2.038, F.A.C. (transferred to rule 64J-1.022, F.A.C., effective Oct. 10, 2008).

⁹⁶ Rule 6A-4.004(4)(a), F.A.C.; see also *supra* notes 92-93.

⁹⁷ See *supra* notes 94-95 and accompanying text.