R277. Education, Administration.
R277-502. Educator Licensing and Data Retention.
R277-502-1. Definitions.

A. "Accredited" means a Board-approved educator preparation program accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) or the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).

B. "Accredited school" for purposes of this rule, means a public or private school that meets standards essential for the operation of a quality school program and has received formal approval through a regional accrediting association.

C. "Authorized staff" for purposes of this rule means an individual designated by the USOE or an LEA and approved by the USOE and who has completed CACTUS training.

D. "Board" means the Utah State Board of Education.

E. "Comprehensive Administration of Credentials for Teachers in Utah Schools (CACTUS)" means the electronic file maintained on all licensed Utah educators. The file includes information such as:

(1) personal directory information;

(2) educational background;

(3) endorsements;

(4) employment history; and

(5) a record of disciplinary action taken against the educator.

F. "ESEA subject" means English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

G. "LEA" means a local education agency, including local school boards/public school districts, charter schools, and, for purposes of this rule, the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

H. "Letter of Authorization" means a designation given to an individual for one year, such as an out-of-state candidate or individual pursuing an alternative license, who has not completed the requirements for a Level 1, 2, or 3 license or who has not completed necessary endorsement requirements and who is employed by an LEA.

I. "Level 1 license" means a Utah professional educator license issued upon completion of a Board-approved educator preparation program or an alternative preparation program, or to an applicant that holds an educator license issued by another state or country that has met all ancillary requirements established by law or rule.

J. "Level 2 license" means a Utah professional educator license issued after satisfaction of all requirements for a Level 1 license and:

(1) satisfaction of requirements under R277-522 for teachers whose employment as a Level 1 licensed educator began after January 1, 2003 in a Utah public LEA or accredited private school;

(2) at least three years of successful education experience in a Utah public LEA or accredited private school or one year of successful education experience in a Utah public LEA or accredited private school and at least three years of successful education

experience in a public LEA or accredited private school outside of Utah;

(3) additional requirements established by law or rule.

K. "Level 3 license" means a Utah professional educator license issued to an educator who holds a current Utah Level 2 license and has also received National Board Certification or a doctorate in education or in a field related to a content area in a unit of the public education system or an accredited private school, or holds a Speech-Language Pathology area of concentration and has obtained American Speech-Language hearing Association (ASHA) certification.

L. "License areas of concentration" means designations to licenses obtained by completing a Board-approved educator preparation program or an alternative preparation program in a specific area of educational studies to include the following: Early Childhood (K-3), Elementary (K-6), Elementary (1-8), Middle (still valid, but not issued after 1988, 5-9), Secondary (6-12), Administrative/Supervisory (K-12), Career and Technical Education, School Counselor, School Psychologist, School Social Worker, Special Education (K-12), Preschool Special Education (Birth-Age 5), Communication Disorders, Speech-Language Pathologist, Speech-Language Technician. License areas of concentration may also bear endorsements relating to subjects or specific assignments.

M. "License endorsement (endorsement)" means a specialty field or area earned through completing required course work established by the USOE or through demonstrated competency approved by the USOE; the endorsement shall be listed on the professional educator license indicating the specific qualification(s) of the holder.

N. "Professional learning plan" means a plan developed by an educator in collaboration with the educator's supervisor consistent with R277-500 detailing appropriate professional learning activities for the purpose of renewing the educator's license.

O. "Renewal" means reissuing or extending the length of a license consistent with R277-500.

P. "State Approved Endorsement Program (SAEP)" means a plan in place developed between the USOE and a licensed educator to direct the completion of endorsement requirements by the educator consistent with R277-520-11.

Q. "USOE" means the Utah State Office of Education.

R277-502-2. Authority and Purpose.

A. This rule is authorized by Utah Constitution Article X, Section 3 which vests general control and supervision of the public school system under the Board, by Section 53A-6-104 which gives the Board power to issue licenses, and Section 53A-1-401(3) which allows the Board to adopt rules in accordance with its responsibilities.

B. This rule specifies the types of license levels and license areas of concentration available and procedures for obtaining a license, required for employment as a licensed educator in the public schools of Utah. The rule provides a process and criteria for educators whose licenses have lapsed and

return to the teaching profession. All licensed educators employed in the Utah public schools shall be licensed consistent with this rule in order for the district to receive full funding under Section 53A-17a-107(2).

R277-502-3. Program Approval and Requirements.

A. The Board shall accept educator license recommendations from educator preparation programs that have applied for Board approval and have met the requirements described in this rule and the Standards for Program Approval established by the Board in R277-504, R277-505, or R277-506 as determined by USOE.

B. The Board, or its designee, shall establish deadlines and uniform forms and procedures for all aspects of licensing.

C. To be approved for license recommendation the educator preparation program shall:

(1) be accredited by NCATE or TEAC; or

(2) be accredited by CAEP using the CAEP Program Review with National Recognition or CAEP Program Review with feedback options; and

(3) have a physical location in Utah where students attend classes or if the program provides only online instruction:

(a) the program's primary headquarters shall be located in Utah and

(b) the program shall be licensed to do business in Utah through the Utah Department of Commerce;

(4) include coursework designed to ensure that the educator is able to meet the Utah Effective Teaching Standards and Educational Leadership Standards established in R277-530;

(5) in the case of content endorsements, include coursework that is, at minimum, equivalent to the course requirements for the endorsement as established by USOE;

(6) establish entry requirements designed to ensure that only high quality individuals enter the licensure program; requirements shall include the following minimum components, beginning August 1, 2014:

(a) a minimum high school/college GPA of 3.0; and

(b) a USOE-cleared fingerprint background check; and

(c) a passing score on a Board-approved basic skills test; or

(d) an ACT composite score of 21 with a verbal/English score no less than 20 and a mathematics/quantitative score of no less than 19; or

(e) a combined SAT score of 1000 with neither mathematics nor verbal below 450.

(7) include a student teaching or intern experience that meets the requirements detailed in R277-504, R277-505, and R277-506.

D. An institution may waive any of the entrance requirements provided in R277-502-3C(6) based on program established guidelines for no more than 10 percent of an entrance cohort.

E. USOE representatives shall be a part of the accrediting team for any Board-approved educator preparation program seeking to maintain or receive program approval. USOE representatives shall be responsible for:

(1) observing and monitoring the accreditation process;

(2) reviewing subject specific programs to determine if the

program meets state standards for licensure in specific areas;

(3) reviewing program procedures to ensure that Board requirements for licensure are followed;

(4) reviewing licensure candidate files to determine if Board requirements for licensure are followed by the program.

F. After completion of the accreditation site visit, a Board-approved educator preparation program, working with the USOE, shall prepare and submit a program approval request for consideration by the Board that includes:

(1) program summary;

(2) accreditation findings;

(3) program areas of distinction;

(4) program enrollment;

(5) program goals and direction.

G. If the program approval request is approved by the Board, the program shall be considered Board-approved until the next scheduled accreditation visit unless the program is placed on probation by the USOE and program approval is revoked by the Board under R277-502-3O.

H. New educator preparation programs that seek Board approval or previously Board-approved educator preparation programs that seek approval for additional license area preparation and endorsements shall submit applications to USOE including:

(1) information detailing the exact license areas of concentration and endorsements that the program intends to award;

(2) detailed course information, including required course lists, course descriptions, and course syllabi for all courses that will be required as part of a program;

(3) detailed information showing how the required coursework will ensure that the educator satisfies all standards in the Utah Effective Teaching Standards and Educational Leadership Standards established in R277-530 and Professional Educator Standards established in R277-515;

(4) information about program timelines and anticipated enrollment.

I. Applications for new educator preparation programs shall be approved by the Board.

J. Applications for previously Board-approved educator preparation programs desiring Board approval for additional license areas and endorsements:

(1) shall be reviewed and approved by USOE;

(2) may receive preliminary approval pending Utah State Board of Regents approval of the new program if the program is within a public institution.

K. An educator preparation program seeking accreditation may apply to the Board for probationary approval for a maximum of three years contingent on the completion of the accreditation process.

L. A previously Board-approved educator preparation program shall submit an annual report to the USOE by July 1 of each year. The report shall summarize the institution’s annual accreditation report and shall include the following:

(1) student enrollment counts designated by anticipated license area of concentration and endorsement and disaggregated by gender and ethnicity;

(2) information explaining any significant changes to course requirements or course content;

(3) the program's response to USOE-identified areas of concern or areas of focus;

(4) information regarding any program-determined areas of concern or areas of focus and the program's planned response;

(5) a summary explanation of students admitted under the waiver identified in R277-502-3D and an explanation of the waiver.

M. The USOE shall provide reporting criteria to Board-approved educator preparation programs regarding the annual report and USOE-designated areas of concern or focus by January 31 annually.

N. Educator preparation programs that submit inadequate or incomplete information to the USOE may be placed on a probationary status by USOE.

O. Board-approved educator preparation programs on probationary status that continue to fail to meet requirements may have their license recommendation status revoked in full or in part by the Board with at least one year notice.

P. An individual that completes a Board-approved educator preparation program may be recommended for licensure within five years of program completion if the individual meets current licensing requirements.

Q. If five years have passed since an individual completed a Board-approved preparation program, the individual may be recommended for licensure following review by the individual program. The preparation program officials shall determine whether any content or pedagogy coursework previously completed meets current program standards and if additional coursework, hours or other activities are necessary. The individual shall complete all work required by the program officials before receiving a license recommendation.

R277-502-4. License Levels, Procedures, and Periods of Validity.

A. Level 1 License Requirements

(1) An initial license, the Level 1 license, is issued to an individual who is recommended by a Board-approved educator preparation program or approved alternative preparation program, or an educator with a professional educator license from another state.

(a) LEAs and Board-approved educator preparation programs shall cooperate in preparing candidates for the educator Level 1 license. The resources of both may be used to assist candidates in preparation for licensing.

(b) The recommendation indicates that the individual has satisfactorily completed the programs of study required for the preparation of educators and has met licensing standards in the license areas of concentration for which the individual is recommended.

(2) The Level 1 license is issued for three years.

(3) A Level 1 license holder shall satisfy all requirements of R277-522, Entry Years Enhancements (EYE) for Quality Teaching - Level 1 Utah Teachers.

(4) An educator qualified to teach any ESEA subject shall be considered Highly Qualified in at least one ESEA subject prior to

moving from Level 1 to Level 2.

(5) A license applicant who has received or completed license preparation activities or coursework inconsistent with this rule may present compelling information and documentation for review and approval by the USOE to satisfy the licensing requirements.

(6) If an educator has taught for three years in a K-12 public education system in Utah, a Level 1 license may only be renewed if:

(a) the employing LEA has requested a one year extension consistent with R277-522, Entry Years Enhancements (EYE) for Quality Teaching - Level 1 Utah Teachers; or

(b) the individual has continuous experience as a speech language pathologist in a clinical setting.

B. Level 2 License Requirements

(1) A Level 2 license may be issued by the Board to a Level 1 license holder upon satisfaction of all USOE requirements for the Level 2 license and upon the recommendation of the employing LEA.

(2) The recommendation shall be made following the completion of three years of successful, professional growth and educator experience, satisfaction of R277-522, Entry Years Enhancements (EYE) for Quality Teaching - Level 1 Utah Teachers, any additional requirements imposed by the employing LEA, and before the Level 1 license expires.

(3) A Level 2 license shall be issued for five years and shall be valid unless suspended or revoked for cause by the Board.

(4) The Level 2 license may be renewed for successive five year periods consistent with R277-500, Educator Licensing Renewal.

C. Level 3 License Requirements

(1) A Level 3 license may be issued by the Board to a Level 2 license holder who:

(a) has achieved National Board Certification; or

(b) has a doctorate in education in a field related to a content area in a unit of the public education system or an accredited private school; or

(c) holds a Speech-Language Pathology area of concentration and has obtained American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA) certification.

(2) A Level 3 license is valid for seven years unless suspended or revoked for cause by the Board.

(3) The Level 3 license may be renewed for successive seven year periods consistent with R277-500.

(4) A Level 3 license shall revert to a Level 2 license if the holder fails to maintain National Board Certification status or fails to maintain a current Certificate of Clinical Competence from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

D. License Renewal Timeline

Licenses expire on June 30 of the year of expiration recorded on CACTUS and may be renewed any time after January of the same year. Responsibility for license renewal rests solely with the holder.

R277-502-5. Professional Educator License Areas of Concentration, and Endorsements and Under-Qualified Employees.

A. Unless excepted under rules of the Board, to be employed in the public schools in a capacity covered by the following

license areas of concentration, a person shall hold a valid license issued by the Board in the respective license areas of concentration:

(1) Early Childhood (K-3);
(2) Elementary (1-8);
(3) Elementary (K-6);
(4) Middle (still valid, and issued before 1988, 5-9);
(5) Secondary (6-12);
(6) Administrative/Supervisory (K-12);
(7) Career and Technical Education;
(8) School Counselor;
(9) School Psychologist;
(10) School Social Worker;
(11) Special Education (K-12);
(12) Preschool Special Education (Birth-Age 5);
(13) Communication Disorders;
(14) Speech-Language Pathologist;
(15) Speech-Language Technician.

B. Under-qualified educators:

(1) Educators who are licensed and hold the appropriate license area of concentration but who are working out of their endorsement area(s) shall request and prepare an SAEP to complete the requirements of an endorsement with a USOE education specialist; or

(2) LEAs may request Letters of Authorization from the Board for educators employed by LEAs if educators have not completed requirements for areas of concentration or endorsements.

(a) An approved Letter of Authorization is valid for one year.

(b) Educators may be approved for no more than three Letters of Authorization throughout their employment in Utah schools. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction or designee may grant exceptions to the three Letters of Authorization limitation on a case by case basis following specific approval of the request by the LEA governing board. Letters of Authorization approved prior to the 2000-2001 school year shall not be counted in this limit.

(c) If an education employee's Letter of Authorization expires before the individual is approved for licensing, the employee falls into under-qualified status.

C. License areas of concentration may be endorsed to indicate qualification in a subject or content area.

(1) LEAs shall recognize a STEM endorsement as a component of the LEA's salary scale. The USOE shall determine the mathematics-, engineering-, science-, and technology-related courses and experiences necessary for the endorsement.

(2) An endorsement is not valid for employment purposes without a current license and license area of concentration.

R277-502-6. Returning Educator Relicensure.

A. A previously licensed educator with an expired license may renew an expired license upon satisfaction of the following:

(1) Completion of criminal background check including review of any criminal offenses and clearance by the Utah Professional Practices Advisory Commission;

(2) Employment by an LEA;

(3) Completion of a one-year professional learning plan developed jointly by the school principal or charter school director and the returning educator consistent with R277-500 that also considers the following:

(a) previous successful public school teaching experience;

(b) formal educational preparation;

(c) period of time between last public teaching experience and the present;

(d) school goals for student achievement within the employing school and the educator's role in accomplishing those goals;

(e) returning educator's professional abilities, as determined by a formal discussion and observation process completed within the first 30 days of employment; and

(f) completion of additional necessary professional development for the educator, as determined jointly by the principal/school and educator.

(4) Filing of the professional development plan within 30 days of hire;

(5) Successful completion of required Board-approved exams for licensure;

(6) Satisfactory experience as determined by the LEA with a trained mentor; and

(7) Submission to the USOE of the completed and signed Return to Original License Level Application, available on the USOE website prior to June 30 of the school year in which the educator seeks to return.

B. The Professional Learning Plan is independent of the License Renewal Point requirements in R277-500-3C.

C. Returning educators who previously held a Level 2 or Level 3 license shall be issued a Level 1 license during the first year of employment. Upon completion of the requirements listed in R277-502-6A and a satisfactory LEA evaluation, the employing LEA may recommend the educator's return to Level 2 or Level 3 licensure.

D. Returning educators who taught less than three consecutive years in a public or accredited private school shall complete the Early Years Enhancement requirements before moving from Level 1 to Level 2 licensure.

R277-502-7. Professional Educator License Reciprocity.

A. Utah is a member of the Compact for Interstate Qualification of Educational Personnel under Section 53A-6-201.

B. A Level 1 license may be issued to an individual holding a professional educator license in another state who has completed preparation equivalent to Board-approved standards and who has completed Board-approved testing, as required by R277-503-3.

(1) If the applicant has three or more continuous years of previous educator experience in a public or accredited private school, a Level 2 license may be issued upon the recommendation of the employing Utah LEA after at least one year.

(2) If the applicant has less than three years of previous educator experience in a public or accredited private school, a Level 2 license may be issued following satisfaction of the requirements of R277-522, Entry Years Enhancements (EYE) for

Quality Teaching - Level 1 Utah Teachers.

R277-502-8. Professional Educator License Fees.

A. The Board shall establish a fee schedule for the issuance and renewal of licenses and endorsements consistent with 53A-6-105. All endorsements to which the applicant is entitled may be issued or renewed with the same expiration date for one licensing fee.

B. A fee may be charged for a valid license to be reprinted or for an endorsement to be added.

C. All costs for testing, evaluation, and course work shall be borne by the applicant unless other arrangements are agreed to in advance by the employing LEA.

D. Costs to review nonresident educator applications may exceed the cost to review resident applications due to the following:

(1) The review is necessary to ensure that nonresident applicants' training satisfies Utah's course and curriculum standards.

(2) The review of nonresident licensing applications is time consuming and potentially labor intensive.

E. Differentiated fees may be set consistent with the time and resources required to adequately review all applicants for educator licenses.

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