<https://www.washingtonea.org/membership/weareblog/post/changes-to-teacher-certification-requirements/> 07/21/2017

**Changes to Teacher Certification Requirements**

Some important certification changes were made in the 2017 legislative session.

Governor Inslee signed these changes into law on July 7. On July 18, the [Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB)](http://salsa.wiredforchange.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=LVp0yQGmlaJTo4INcytWjqugP%2FfTfpP6) made a first round of emergency rule changes to enact [E2SHB 1341](http://salsa.wiredforchange.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=Q7PIaMBa3wbIIJ37xF7IFqugP%2FfTfpP6).

**What are the changes to certification requirements?**

Obtaining a professional certificate is now optional, though still possible through ProTeach or National Board Certification. ProTeach will only be available through the June 2019 submission date.

Teachers with residency certificates now have three certification options:

* **\*New\*** Teachers can now renew their residency certificates in five-year intervals by completing 100 clock hours or ten quarter credits. Teachers must have at least 1.5 years of experience over two years to access this option. Teachers with STEM endorsements must now also document completion of the STEM professional development requirement (15 clock hours) as part of the 100 required clock hours; OR
* Complete and pass ProTeach to earn a professional certificate. There are still 150 clock hours awarded for the successful completion of ProTeach. Teachers must have at least 1.5 years of experience over two years to access this option; OR
* Complete and pass National Board Certification to earn a professional certificate. The base and challenging schools bonuses continue to be funded for NBCTs. Teachers must have at least three years of experience to access this option. Ninety clock hours are still available for achieving National Board Certification: 45 upon submission of a complete portfolio, and 45 upon successful achievement.
  + The PESB voted to exempt all National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) from having to complete STEM-specific professional development to renew their professional or continuing certificate.

**What are the STEM renewal requirements?**

If you teach in a STEM-related endorsement, and are not an NBCT, effective Sept. 1, 2019, your renewal applications for residency, professional, and continuing teacher and CTE certificates must document completion of at least 15 clock hours, or at least one goal from an annual professional growth plan (PGP), with an emphasis on STEM integration to meet this renewal requirement.

To summarize recent changes and give more detailed information, the PESB has created this [Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B5DU9nC26yA3RExoZW95RmQwV3M/view)

**What are the implications for Residency Certificate holders?**

Residency certificate holders may follow any of the three options listed above. Here are some additional considerations:

People currently registered for the ProTeach Portfolio or National Board Certification components can choose to continue with those assessments. The Educational Testing Service (ETS) will continue to offer and score the ProTeach assessment through the end of its contract in 2019.

Individuals may withdraw from ProTeach or National Board and complete the 100 clock hour/10 credit option. However, they must follow the withdrawal processes with the respective assessment provider.

**What if my Residency Certificate has lapsed?**

People whose certificate lapsed may renew it by documenting 100 clock hours/10 quarter credits. Contact OSPI at 360-725-6400 to discuss the required procedures.  
  
**What other changes are there?**

PESB may make additional decisions on these and other related issues in upcoming meetings:

* Use of Professional Growth Plans (PGPs) for residency and professional certificate renewal
* Role of microcredentialing/badging for certificate renewal
* Relevance of residency renewal timelines for those pursuing professional certification
* Future of the ProTeach Portfolio and the teacher professional certificate
* Equity issues that may arise with other certificate types and renewal options.

WEA will encourage the PESB to examine the equity of the new residency certificate renewal requirement (100 clock hours/10 quarter credits) alongside the continuing/professional certificate renewal requirement (150 clock hours for those achieving a continuing or professional certificate before Sept. 1, 2014).

**Why were these changes made?**

WEA member frustration with teacher certification requirements has mounted in recent years, culminating in the passage of a new business item (NBI) at the 2016 WEA Representative Assembly. In response, WEA conducted a survey to understand member experiences with and perceptions about the ProTeach portfolio. Survey responses confirmed widespread dissatisfaction with the ProTeach, ts costs and perceived relevance to teaching practice.

Licenture issues are a matter of law, not policy, so changes to certification needed to be made by the legislature. Rep. Bergquist (LD 11) and Sen. Fain (LD 47) sponsored bills to address ProTeach concerns. Ultimately [E2SHB 1341](http://salsa.wiredforchange.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=TwvpI4rgPBqF8BOJmRT0M6ugP%2FfTfpP6) passed both chambers unanimously.  
  
**What were the previous certificate requirements?**

Since September 2000, teachers received a residency certificate and were required to eventually earn professional certification to continue employment. Since 2007, ProTeach and National Board certification were the two options for professional certification.

Prior to September 2000, teachers earned initial and then continuing certificates. These individuals are not affected by these policy changes.  
  
**Questions?** You can verify the status of your teaching certificate through [OSPI's eCert account](http://salsa.wiredforchange.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=OLM3%2Bxdy%2BwKOyrLN1mes%2FaugP%2FfTfpP6). For further questions about the implications of recent policy changes on your certificate, please contact OSPI's Certification Office at 360-725-6400 or by email at [cert@k12.wa.us](mailto:cert@k12.wa.us)

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