

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

NC PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR'S LICENSURE FAQ

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NEW ONLINE SYSTEM

Beginning August 1, 2015 new and existing professional educators will be able to apply for and update their North Carolina licenses online. Instructions and more information are available within the online licensure system. Go to the new [NCDPI Online Licensure System](#)

GENERAL PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR'S LICENSURE

Who needs a professional educator's license in North Carolina?

All professional employees of public schools must hold a professional educator's license for the subject or grade level they teach or for the professional education assignment that they hold. [Steps to obtaining a professional educator's license in North Carolina.](#)

In what areas are professional educator's licenses issued?

Professional educator's licenses are issued in administrative, supervisory, student service and teaching areas. These areas encompass birth through kindergarten, elementary (K-6), middle grades (6-9), secondary grades (9-12), special subjects (K-12), exceptional children (K-12) and career and technical education.

How do I qualify for a North Carolina professional educator's license?

The standard basis for professional educator's licensure is the completion of a state approved education program at a [regionally accredited](#) college or university or the completion of another state's approved alternative route to professional educator's licensure, met the federal requirements to be designated as "Highly Qualified" and earned a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college.

- **Standard Professional 1 (SP1) Professional Educator's Licenses** are intended for teachers with 0-2 years of teaching experience, and are valid for three years. To be issued a SP1 Professional Educator's License, an individual must have:
 - completed a state approved teacher education program from a regionally accredited college or university, or
 - completed another state's approved alternative route to licensure, met the federal requirements to be designated as "Highly Qualified," and earned a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college.
 - a. [Praxis II Testing](#) - for middle grades (6-9), secondary (9-12), K-12 (except Exceptional Children: General Curriculum) license areas.
 - b. [Pearson Test for North Carolina: Foundations of Reading and General Curriculum](#) (effective October 1, 2014) - for Elementary Education and Exceptional Children: General Curriculum licenses only.
- **Standard Professional 2 (SP2) Professional Educator's Licenses** are intended for teachers with 3 or more years of teaching experience, and are valid for five years. Teachers who are fully licensed and "Highly Qualified" in another state who have three or more years of teaching experience in another state AND who meet NC State Board of Education approved licensure exam requirements OR have National Board Certification are issued the SP2 Professional Educator's license.
- **Lateral Entry Teachers in North Carolina**
([pdf, 28kb](#)) [UPDATED 8/25/14](#)

Is there a list of steps that I must take to apply for a professional educator's license?

Yes. [Steps to obtaining a professional educator's license in North Carolina.](#)

How much does it cost to apply for a professional educator's license?

There is a fee of \$55.00 for in-state applicants and \$85.00 for out-of-state applicants. You may pay by personal check, money order, or certified check made payable to the Department of Public Instruction. You may also pay by Visa or MasterCard.

Will my professional educator's license ever need to be renewed?

Yes. [Updating or Renewing Your License](#).

Where can I find courses for renewing my professional educator's license?

Courses for renewal can be taken at community colleges, universities and workshops.

What steps do I need to take to reinstate an expired North Carolina professional educator's license?

To renew an expired professional educator's license, you must earn 15 units of renewal credits within the most recent five-year period or complete 10 semester hours. If you become employed with a NC school system, a validation of an expired professional educator's license can be requested. [Renewing Your License](#).

How do I add an area to my professional educator's license?

If you hold a clear teaching license with no restrictions, you can add an area to your license by taking and passing the State Board of Education adopted Praxis II Test or Pearson Test for North Carolina: Foundations of Reading and General Curriculum (effective October 1, 2014) for that area (**not all tests are recognized by North Carolina**), by completing a state approved teacher education program that leads to licensure, or by completing 24 hours in the subject area with a grade of C or better. If you hold a professional educator's student services license you must complete the teacher education program to add a teaching area to your license. [Update or Renew Your License](#).

How do I get a copy of my current professional educator's license?

[Copy of license](#).

Are copies of transcripts acceptable?

No. Originals are required. Grade reports and computer-generated copies are not acceptable.

What does "Highly Qualified" mean?

The federal definition of a "Highly Qualified" teacher is one who is fully certified and/or licensed by the state, holds at least a bachelor's degree from a four-year institution and demonstrates competence in core academic areas. Further information on "Highly Qualified" teachers can be found beginning on page 19 of the [NCLB Toolkit for Teachers](#).

How do I become National Board Certified Teacher?

See [National Board Certification](#). North Carolina ranks as the #1 State in the nation for the overall number of National Board Certified Teachers!

If I have a Masters degree but my professional educator's license is not issued at the Master's level, can I still be paid for my master's degree?

Yes, if it meets the following: Licensed professional educators who do not have a graduate degree in teacher education may qualify for graduate salary if they hold a graduate degree from a [regionally accredited institution](#) in an education or subject area directly related to their existing class A professional educator's license. Salary can be authorized at the graduate level only when the teacher's assignment for the majority of the day (fifty percent or more) is in the area to which the graduate degree applies.

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NC TESTING REQUIREMENTS

What tests do I need to obtain a North Carolina professional educator's license?

NC State Board of Education approved licensure exam requirements:

- a. [Praxis II Testing](#)
- b. [Pearson Test for North Carolina: Foundations of Reading and General Curriculum](#) (effective October 1, 2014)

Can other tests be substituted for the NC State Board of Education approved licensure exams?

No. However, exemptions may be allowed for out-of-state new hires who meet NCLB licensure and "Highly Qualified" requirements.

Can I apply for a professional educator's license if I have not met the testing requirement?

Yes, if applying from out of state, you will be given a one year **conditional** permit. You would be required to meet testing requirements during that time period. **This does not apply to individuals seeking a license to teach elementary grades (K-6) and exceptional children (K-12).** State Board of Education testing requirements must be met prior to being licensed to teach elementary grades and exceptional children.

How do I get a copy of my test scores?

[Copy of test scores](#).

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OUT OF STATE TEACHERS

I have a license from another state and I would like to teach in North Carolina. What should I do?

[Out of State Teachers](#). Please complete the [Steps to obtaining a professional educator's license in North Carolina](#).

I am from out-of state and have previous teaching experience. Will this experience be credited to my NC professional educator's license?

Yes, if properly verified, your K-12 teaching experience will be credited. Please complete the [Steps to obtaining a professional educator's license in North Carolina](#) including Form E - Verification of K-12 Teaching Experience ([pdf, 27kb](#) or [doc, 69kb](#)).

How do I transfer my license from another state to North Carolina?

[Out of State Teachers](#).

How does reciprocity work?

North Carolina does NOT have 100% reciprocity with any state. You MUST complete the [Steps to obtaining a professional educator's license in North Carolina](#).

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INTERNATIONAL TEACHERS

Can I get a NC professional educator's license if my degree was earned in another country?

Yes. If you have earned a degree from another country you must provide an evaluation from an international education evaluation service with a copy of a current work authorization visa, permanent resident card or US passport. [International Teachers](#).

Who can officially translate my papers into English?

For degrees earned abroad, the transcripts must be translated into English by an evaluating agency. NC DPI will not accept translations done by the applicant. There are many evaluating agencies. One example is [International Education Evaluations](#).

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LATERAL ENTRY TEACHERS

What is a Lateral entry teacher?

Lateral entry is an "alternate" route to teaching for qualified individuals outside of the public education system. [Lateral Entry Teachers](#).

What are "alternate" routes to becoming a teacher in North Carolina?

[Lateral Entry Teachers](#).

What are the lateral entry professional educator's licensure requirements in North Carolina?

Qualifying for Lateral Entry ([pdf, 28kb](#)) and [Steps for a Lateral Entry License](#).

What tests are required for lateral entry professional educator's licensing in North Carolina?

NC State Board of Education approved licensure exam requirements:

- a. [Praxis II Testing](#)
- b. [Pearson Test for North Carolina: Foundations of Reading and General Curriculum](#) (effective October 1, 2014)

What is a Regional Alternative Licensing Center? (RALC)

An RALC is a regional office established by the North Carolina State Board of Education that is authorized to evaluate and prescribe professional educator's licensure plans of study to help lateral entry teachers in North Carolina achieve full professional educator's licensure. [RALC Home Page](#).

Who is eligible to be evaluated by an RALC?

You may be evaluated by an RALC if you are currently holding a lateral entry professional educator's license or meet the qualifying criteria ([pdf, 28kb](#)) for a lateral entry professional educator's license but are not yet employed.

How do I request an evaluation by an RALC?

If employed, requests are made through the Personnel/Human Resource Director in your school system of hire. Otherwise, you may contact the RALC that serves the county in which you reside. [RALC Contacts](#).

Am I required to use the services of an RALC?

No. The RALC is one of several choices that you have for completing your professional educator's licensing program. You can also obtain professional educator's licensure through a college or university.

Is there a fee to use the services of an RALC?

RALCs do not charge school systems or individuals for services provided.

If I choose to follow the professional educator's licensure plan outlined by an RALC, which college/university will I attend?

You may attend the college or university of your choice that is regionally accredited. Because you are not tied to an individual college or university professional educator's licensure program to fulfill the required coursework, you could attend multiple four-year colleges and/or universities. You may also choose to fulfill the required coursework using on-line educational opportunities.

Which RALC will process my evaluation?

The regional office responsible for the county where your school system of hire is located, or, if not employed, the county where you reside, will be responsible for processing your evaluation.

When using an RALC, whom do I contact if I have questions about my transcript evaluation?

Your first point of contact should be the Personnel/Human Resource Administrator at your school system. Your school system will contact the RALC for further clarification and explanation. If you are not employed, contact the RALC that did your evaluation.

When using an RALC, what do I do when I have finished all professional educator's licensure plan requirements?

The Personnel/Human Resource office at your school system will submit documentation to the RALC upon your completion of the professional educator's licensure plan. In turn, the RALC will submit professional educator's licensure documents to the NC Department of Public Instruction's Licensure Section, which will issue your professional educator's license. If you are not employed, submit documentation of your completed course work and testing to the RALC that did your evaluation. Upon employment as a teacher and successful completion of the Initial Professional Educator's Licensure Program, the RALC will be able to submit documentation to NC Department of Public Instruction's Licensure Section so your professional educator's license can be issued.

When using an RALC, what is required to meet the competencies listed on my professional educator's licensure plan?

You must take courses from a regionally-accredited four-year college or university, or participate in approved staff development through your school system.

Is there an expiration date on my professional educator's license plan?

Yes. You will be advised of the duration of the validity of the evaluation at the time the plan is issued by the RALC.

What are the grade requirements for my professional educator's licensure plan?

Only grades of "C" and higher are counted in the professional educator's licensure plan.

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GENERAL TEACHING QUESTIONS

What is North Carolina's salary scale?

[NC Public School Employee Salary & Benefits.](#)

What benefits do teachers receive in North Carolina?

[NC Public School Employee Salary & Benefits.](#)

What is the best way to find a job teaching in North Carolina and how can I apply for teaching positions?

There is not a single point of contact for all public school employment in North Carolina. We have 115 Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and more than 140 charter schools, and each is a different employer. The best place to start your search is the [Employment web page](#). Or you can contact a LEA or contact a Charter School directly to get their employment information. Visit the [Recruitment web page](#) to get information on Job Fairs, Beginning Teacher Support Resources, and more.

Another resource that is used by some LEAs is [Teachers-Teachers.com](#). Use this non-DPI site to create and post your application, view and apply for job postings, record an interview, and track your job search.

How do I find contact information for a LEA or Charter School?

LEA (school system) contact information, including Personnel Administrators & Principals can be found in [EDDIE](#). Use the **LEA Personnel Report** (located under the Reports Menu) to obtain contact information for all of the LEAs, or use the Search or Selection boxes to navigate to an individual LEA for their staff information, or to a school for their principal information. For help with LEA or school information, please go to the [EDDIE Information page](#).

Charter school contact information is also in EDDIE, or can be found on the Office of Charter Schools website:

[Charter School Contacts.](#)

Do I need a professional educator's license to substitute teach?

No state professional educator's license is required to substitute teach. Contact each LEA you would like to teach in, as they may have requirements for substitutes.

Will substitute teaching count towards experience?

Yes, if it meets the experience eligibility requirements and it is appropriately verified and recommended by a North Carolina employing school system.