

Important Certification Changes – July 2017

****This document contains key information about recent teacher certification policy changes. Specifically, these changes affect teachers with residency certificates (issued after September 2000 who have not yet earned a Professional Certificate) and National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs).****

Some important certification changes were made recently as the legislature wrapped up its third special session. Governor Inslee signed these changes into law on July 7. On July 18, the [Professional Educator Standards Board \(PESB\)](#) made a first round of emergency rule changes to enact [E2SHB 1341](#). WEA is providing you the most current information as one of the many benefits of your membership.

Background: 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 created a survey to understand member experiences with and perceptions about the ProTeach portfolio -- one of the options for achieving professional certification. Survey responses confirmed widespread dissatisfaction with the ProTeach portfolio, its costs and perceived relevance to teaching practice. Since the Pro-Teach assessment was required in RCW, not WAC, only the Legislature could resolve the issue. Rep. Bergquist (LD 11) and Sen. Fain (LD 47) sponsored bills to address ProTeach concerns. Ultimately [E2SHB 1341](#) passed both chambers unanimously.

Past Requirements: Since September 2000, teachers received a residency certificate and were required to eventually earn professional certification to continue employment. (Note: Prior to September 2000, teachers earned initial and then continuing certificates. These individuals are not affected by these policy changes.) Since 2007, the means for earning professional certification has been through successful completion of the ProTeach Portfolio or National Board Certification assessment.

Changes to Requirements: [E2SHB 1341](#) has far-reaching implications for educator certification. **As a result, obtaining a professional certificate is now optional.** Earning a professional certificate is 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:

1. ***New*** Renew the residency certificate in five-year intervals by completing 100 clock hours or ten quarter credits during the validity period of the certificate. Teachers must have at least 1.5 years of experience over 2 years to access this option. And teachers at the elementary and secondary levels in STEM-related subjects must now also document completion of the STEM professional development requirement (15 clock hours) as part of the 100 required clock hours; **OR**
2. 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 2 years to access this option; **OR**
3. 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.

Beyond making technical rule changes this week to enact [E2SHB 1341](#), 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.

Reminder: Beginning on Sept. 1, 2019, all non-NBCT 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 \(FAQ\)](#).

Implications for Residency Certificate Holders: Residency certificate holders may follow any of the three options listed in the "changes to requirements" section above. Here are some additional considerations:

- Individuals currently registered for the ProTeach Portfolio or National Board Certification components can choose to continue with those assessments; the Educational Testing Service (ETS), which administers ProTeach, will continue to offer and score the assessment through the end of its contract in 2019;
- Individuals who choose to withdraw from ProTeach or National Board can do so and complete the 100 clock hour/10 credit option; however, they must follow the withdrawal processes with the respective assessment provider.

Also, any past Residency Certificate holder whose certificate lapsed may renew their certificate by documenting 100 clock hours/10 quarter credits. If you know of any individuals in this situation, please have them reach out to OSPI at 360-725-6400 to discuss the required procedures.

Possible Upcoming Decisions: PESB may make further decisions at its September 2017 meeting and beyond on these and other related issues:

- 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.

Specifically, 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).

Further questions? You can verify the status of your teaching certificate through [OSPI's eCert account](#). 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