



Teacher Credential Regulation Revision

**Overview of Proposed Changes
March 14, 2016**

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Introduction

In the District of Columbia (DC), educator licensure signifies that an applicant meets the stipulated educational and experiential requirements for teaching a specified subject or course of study, serving in an instructional or school leadership capacity, or providing a range of other school-based, non-instructional services. State licensure applies a set of defined standards to determine whether applicants meet the minimum competencies required to be issued an educator license in DC.

The purpose of this document is to define the credentialing process that currently exists and outline proposed changes to existing regulations. The proposed revisions are intended to address current challenges and create additional pathways that will allow for DC to meet its goal of recruiting and retaining the most qualified workforce to ensure that every child succeeds.

For questions or comments about the information contained within this document, Please contact Mr. Orman Feres, Manager, Educator Quality and Effectiveness, Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), at orman.feres@dc.gov or (202) 741-5218.

Current Teacher Credential Structure

Existing Teacher Credentials

Within the current set of District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR) licensure regulations, three credential types exist: Regular I Credential, Regular II Credential, and Transitional Credential.

Regular I Credential

- The Regular I credential is a provisional teaching license that allows a teacher, enrolled in a state-approved teacher preparation program, time to complete their teacher preparation while serving as a teacher of record in a DC school. The Regular I credential has a term of only two years and is non-renewable.

Regular II Credential

- The Regular II credential is the District of Columbia's full teaching credential. This credential signifies that the holder of the credential has met all preparation coursework and testing requirements. The credential is valid for four years and is renewable at the end of its term of validity, based on the completion of 90 seat hours of professional development.

Transitional Credential

- The Transitional credential is a temporary or emergency license issued upon LEA request, for teachers new to DC who meet all licensure requirements except DC's state licensure examination requirements. The Transitional credential is valid for 1 year, is only available to applicants in their first year of teaching in a DC LEA, and is not renewable.

** As an additional note, the District of Columbia is a member of the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) interstate compact with 48 states and territories aimed at increasing the portability of state educator credentials. Through this interstate agreement, valid license holders from other states are eligible to receive a DC Regular II credential based on their possession of the license, with minimal additional requirements.

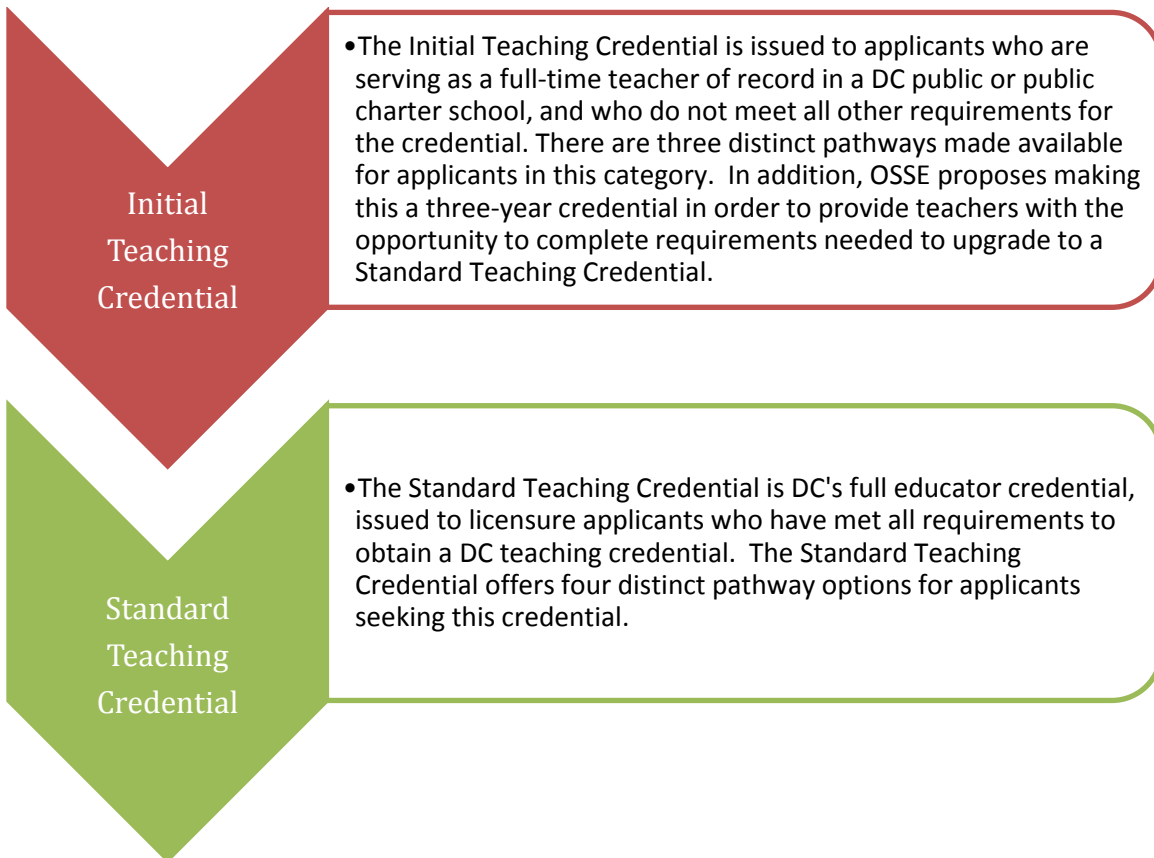
Proposed Educator Licensure Framework

Overall Theory of Action

OSSE is committed to ensuring that every child in the District of Columbia has access to a well-qualified and effective teacher. **If** the District of Columbia's statewide system of educator credential requirements are aligned to an educator's effectiveness and qualifications, and are designed to open pathways to certification, **then** they will empower LEAs to recruit and retain effective and well-qualified teachers, administrators, and other school personnel, ultimately leading to improved student outcomes. By creating a system of educator credential requirements that addresses these criteria, as well as challenges raised by internal and external stakeholders, OSSE will be successful in meeting this commitment.

Proposed Teaching Credentials

The following teaching credential options will be available under the proposed educator credentialing framework.



Initial Teaching Credential

Overview of Credential

The Initial teaching credential is a temporary, non-renewable, provisional teaching credential. Possession of the Initial Teaching Credential signifies that the credential holder meets basic requirements to practice as a teacher in the District of Columbia, but must meet additional requirements in order to be issued a full, renewable credential. The proposed Initial Teaching Credential includes three distinct eligibility pathways:

- Teachers enrolled in a state-approved teacher preparation program;
- Teachers from outside the District of Columbia who are licensed to teach, but have not completed a state-approved teacher preparation program; and
- First-time teachers who have been recruited by a DC LEA and have yet to demonstrate effectiveness within the LEA's evaluation system.



The existing Regular 1 Initial Teaching Credential only provides a pathway to licensure for teachers who are enrolled in a state-approved teacher preparation program. It does not, however, offer any pathway to licensure for current teachers who demonstrate the following circumstances:

- Teachers without prior teaching experience and who are not enrolled in a teacher preparation program, but were recruited by a DC LEA because they show exceptional promise to the LEA;
- Teachers who hold a valid license in another state but did not complete a state-approved program as a requirement for issuance of the license; and
- Teachers who hold a valid license in another state, but were not required to complete a teaching pedagogy assessment in order to be eligible to receive the other state's license

The proposed Initial Teaching credential expands the options for novice teachers and those from other states seeking a license to practice in the District. It also provides LEAs with substantial flexibility regarding recruitment, development, and retention of teachers.

Scenario-Based Demonstration of the Benefits of the Proposed Initial Teaching Credential

The following scenarios demonstrate significant challenges posed by the existing set of educator credential requirements and how they will be solved through the expansion of Initial Teaching credential pathways:

Scenario	Challenge Presented Under the Existing Requirements	Solution Presented Under the Proposed Requirements
An individual seeking to become a first-time biology teacher applies to DCPS and a charter LEA for a teaching position. Because of his strong background as a biologist and passion for biology, he comes highly recommended and will be an asset to DCPS students. The individual is hired by a charter LEA and goes on to receive ratings of highly effective during his tenure as a teacher with the LEA.	Because DC does not require public charter school teachers to hold a license issued by OSSE, that prospective teacher was not able to be hired by DCPS and the teacher missed an opportunity to have a choice of options. DCPS is currently at a disadvantage for hiring career switchers who bring valuable real-world expertise to classroom situations.	Under the proposed requirements, DCPS can request that this teacher be issued an Initial Teaching Credential.
An individual holding a valid teaching license from Michigan has applied for a DC teaching credential. She has never taught and did not complete a formal teacher preparation program and has not completed tests that are equivalent to those approved for use in DC, despite holding a valid teaching credential.	Under the current rules, the Michigan teaching license does not hold value in DC without the completion of a state-approved teacher preparation program and completion of DC's state licensure assessments, or equivalent assessments administered in another state.	Under the proposed requirements, this teacher may apply for an Initial Teaching Credential. During the three-year term of the credential, the teacher will have the opportunity to complete the required DC state credential assessments and demonstrate effectiveness, in order to upgrade to a Standard Teaching Credential.

Standard Teaching Credential

Overview of Credential

The Standard Teaching Credential is the standard full, permanent teacher credential for the District of Columbia. Possession of the Standard Teaching Credential signifies that the credential holder meets all requirements to be issued a full, renewable credential. The proposed credential includes four distinct eligibility pathways:

- Teachers who have completed a state-approved teacher preparation program in DC or another state recognized by the District of Columbia through its interstate agreement;
- Teachers who have satisfied all requirements of an Initial Teaching Credential;

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- Experienced teachers from outside the District of Columbia who are licensed but have not completed a state-approved teacher preparation program; and
- Experienced teachers from within the District of Columbia, without formal teacher preparation, who have been recruited and validated as effective, by a DC LEA.



Under the existing licensure framework, a Regular 2 credential can only be obtained if the applicant has completed a state-approved teacher preparation program or a substantial amount of education coursework amounting to the equivalent of a state-approved teacher preparation program. This existing framework does not offer any flexibility or consideration for experienced teachers who were not prepared formally to teach, or those seeking alternative means of obtaining certification. The proposed licensure framework, however, allows an individual to obtain a teaching credential by either:

- demonstrating that they have completed a teaching course of study approved by the DC or a state recognized by DC; or
- providing evidence of a demonstrated track record of effective teaching.

The proposed Standard Teaching Credential expands the options for novice teachers and those from other states seeking a license to practice in the District. It also provides LEAs with substantial flexibility regarding recruitment, development, and retention of teachers.

Scenario-Based Demonstration of the Benefits of the Proposed Standard Credential Pathways

The following scenarios demonstrate significant challenges posed by the existing set of educator credential requirements and how they will be solved through the expansion of Standard Teaching Credential pathways:

Scenario	Pathway to Licensure Under the Existing Requirements	Pathways to Licensure Under the Proposed Requirements
An 8-year veteran of a PCS who has been rated effective or highly effective for the last 6 years has been recruited by DCPS to teach, but she has never completed a state-approved teacher preparation program.	The teacher must enroll in a state-approved teacher preparation program despite her years of demonstrated effectiveness.	The teacher may enroll in a state-approved teacher preparation program or apply for a Standard Teaching Credential based on her years of demonstrated effectiveness.
A teacher teaching in a DCPS school and receiving effective IMPACT ratings during the last two years. Despite his effective teaching practice, he has not completed a state-approved teaching program. The teacher received a letter indicating that his employment with DCPS will be terminated at the end of the school year because he does not possess a valid DC teaching credential.	The teacher must enroll in a state-approved teacher preparation program despite his years of demonstrated effectiveness.	The teacher may enroll in a state-approved teacher preparation program or apply for a Standard Teaching Credential based on his years of demonstrated effectiveness.
An applicant for a teaching credential possesses a teaching license from Louisiana and taught in that state for 3 years receiving satisfactory or effective teaching ratings. However, the license was issued to the teacher without him having ever completed a state-approved teacher preparation program or any significant amount of teacher training coursework.	The teacher must enroll in a state-approved teacher preparation program despite possessing a license issued in another state and despite his prior years of effective teaching experience.	The teacher may apply for a Standard Teaching Credential based on his Louisiana license and years of prior effective teaching experience.

Appendix: Summary of Proposed Teaching Credential Requirements

Credential Type	Initial			Standard			
Term	3 years			4 years			
Renewable	No			Yes			
Pathway Option	a	b	c	a	b	c	d
Requirements							
Baccalaureate degree	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Praxis I basic skills assessment or other state's equivalent test	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Praxis II subject matter test or other state's equivalent test(s)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching pedagogy test(s)				✓	✓	✓	✓
Verification of enrollment in a state approved teacher preparation program	✓						
Verification of employment at a DC LEA as a full-time teacher of record.	✓		✓				
Completion of a state approved teacher preparation program				✓			
Valid Regular 1 credential					✓		
Valid teaching credential issued by another state		✓				✓	
Written request from LEA for applicant to be issued a teaching credential			✓				✓
Evidence of 2 years of effective teaching practice in a DC LEA				✓			✓
Evidence of 2 years of effective teaching practice in a DC LEA on a Regular 1 credential					✓		
Evidence of 2 years of satisfactory teaching practice in another state		✓				✓	