

Getting Your Teaching Certificate & Keeping It Current

Jointly developed by: Michigan Education Association Professional Development/Human Rights Department and the Michigan Department of Education Office of Professional Preparation Services.

What is a teaching certificate?

Your certificate is a license to teach in the state of Michigan. It affirms to parents, students, taxpayers and your co-workers that you have met all requirements to work as a teaching professional in Michigan schools. Certificates are issued by the Michigan Department of Education after you have completed an approved professional preparation program covering curriculum and instruction, student developmental needs, and your teaching subject area(s). Under Michigan law, all teachers employed in the public schools must hold a teaching certificate, permit or vocational authorization valid for the position to which they are assigned.

Are all certificates the same?

Michigan teaching certificates come in several different varieties. As a new teacher graduating from an approved Michigan teacher preparation institution, you will receive a Provisional (initial) Certificate valid for up to six years. Your certificate will list the endorsement(s) authorizing you to teach certain subjects or grade levels.

How do I obtain my first certificate?

Candidates who have completed a teacher preparation program at a Michigan institution can apply for the Provisional Certificate through the teacher certification officer normally associated with the department or college of education at that college/university.

Before you can be employed as a teacher, you must apply for and receive a certificate. In most instances, the Provisional Certificate is the initial Michigan license. You obtain an application for certification from the certification office at your Michigan approved teacher preparation college or university. The application asks for information about you, your education, and about what type of certificate and endorsement you wish to receive. You must answer some questions about any possible criminal history.

You must also take the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC). Passing the MTTC basic skills exam (reading, writing and math) is a prerequisite to student teaching. Taking and passing the appropriate subject exams must occur prior to certification. Information about the exam is available from either your college/university or the Michigan Department of Education or www.michigan.gov/teachercert.

Criteria for an initial Michigan Provisional Certificate:

- Be at least 18 years old.
- Hold a bachelor's degree from an approved college or university.
- Have completed an approved teacher preparation program in a specific area.

Candidates who can document completion of an approved teacher preparation program through an out-of-state institution, apply directly to the Michigan Department of Education for the Provisional Certificate or the Professional Education Certificate.

The initial Provisional Certificate is valid for up to six years during which time the teacher is expected to acquire at least three years of successful teaching experience and complete at least 18 semester hours in a concentrated area of study (planned program) or a master's or higher degree, including an additional 3 semester credit course on the diagnosis and remediation of reading difficulties. If this does not happen, the Provisional Certificate can be renewed at least twice and possibly a third time. A renewal is valid for three years.

For the **first** three-year renewal, you must complete the first 9 semester hours of the 18 semester hour "planned program," which is required for the Professional Education Certificate.

For the **second** three-year renewal, you must complete the entire 18 semester hour planned program.

**An additional three-year renewal of the Provisional Certificate may be available if the holder has met all academic requirements, but has not completed the required teaching experience for the Professional Education Certificate. Additional three-year renewals are available through the Michigan Department of Education only.*

A TWO-YEAR extended Provisional Certificate may be granted if semester hour credits for certificate renewal or the advanced (Professional Education Certificate) have not been completed. This two-year extension requires sponsorship by the employing district or public school academy accompanied by a plan of work for completion of the 18 semester hour credit requirement needed for the Professional Education Certificate.* All requirements for the Professional Education Certificate must be met by the end of the two-year period for which the extension is granted and no additional renewals will be issued.

**Under this provision, a sponsoring school district or public school academy may apply on the candidate's behalf to the Michigan Department of Education for the two year extension within ten years after the expiration date of the person's initial Provisional Teaching Certificate.*

What comes after the provisional certificate?

Holders of the provisional certificate are expected to advance to the Professional Education Certificate.

The Professional Education Certificate is valid for approximately five years and must be renewed.

The requirements for the Professional Education Certificate include:

- Possession of a current or expired Michigan Provisional Certificate.
- Having taught successfully for the equivalent of three years following the issuance of the Michigan Provisional Certificate and within the subject area endorsements and grade level on the certificate.
- Having earned at least 18 semester hours **after the issuance of the initial Michigan Provisional Certificate** in a “planned program” (or have a master’s or higher degree, earned at any time) or have been awarded National Board Certification.
- Evidence of having completed a minimum of six semester hours of reading methodology if she/he holds an Elementary Certificate or three semester hours for Secondary Certificate holders.
- As of July 1, 2009, present evidence of the satisfactory completion of the additional state required 3 credit course of study in reading.

Candidates apply for the Professional Education Certificate through the certification officer of the approved Michigan teacher education institution from which the candidate earned the 18 semester hour “planned program” or master’s or higher degree, including an additional 3 semester credit course on the diagnosis and remediation of reading difficulties.

Candidates who complete credit in an out-of-state master’s or higher degree program apply directly to the Michigan Department of Education Office of Professional Preparation Services.

What comes after the initial issuance of the Professional Education Certificate?

The Professional Education Certificate is valid for approximately five years and must be renewed by the completion of the six semester hours of appropriate credit from an accredited Michigan higher education institution (including accredited community colleges) or an out-of-state college or university, with a state approved teacher preparation program or the equivalent in State Board-Continuing Education Units (SB-CEUs) or a combination of the two. The SB-CEU equivalent to six semester hours is 18 SB-CEUs or three SB-CEUs are equivalent to one semester credit hour.

What am I responsible for under my certificate?

You are responsible for obtaining your certificate and keeping it up-to-date. Most certificates expire on June 30 of a given year. **You will not be notified by the Michigan Department of Education.** Make sure you know the validity period of your certificate and meet the necessary renewal requirements before the expiration date. The dates of issuance and expiration are on the lower left corner of the certificate. **If you let your certificate lapse, you may lose your job and tenure.**

While working as a certified teacher, you must obey Michigan laws regarding your conduct as a school employee. Your certificate can be revoked by the State of Michigan for certain kinds of fraud, criminal behavior with children and any felony. Notification of certificate revocation and suspension are reported to other states through a clearinghouse.

Where can I get help?

- The certification officer at your Michigan teacher preparation college/university.
- The certification officer at your college/university should always be the first contact regarding certification requirements, applications, renewals, or general questions.
- The Michigan Department of Education Office of Professional Preparation Services 517/373-3310 or www.michigan.gov/teachercert.
- Pearson Evaluation System, Amherst, MA (Michigan Test for Teacher Certification) 413/256-2876
- For Michigan Education Association members: the MEA Professional Development/Human Rights Department 517/332-6551 or 800/292-1934, extension 6213.

NOTE: The content of this brochure is limited to very basic information. Questions regarding other types of certificates and information not addressed in the brochure should be directed to your certification officer, the Michigan Department of Education Office of Professional Preparation Services or the Michigan Education Association.

A current list of Certification Officers at the various Michigan colleges and universities is on the next page or available at: www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/TPI_Certification_Personnel_284724_7.doc

CERTIFICATION OFFICERS

Adrian College - Adrian, MI 49221	517/264-3923
Albion College - Albion, MI 49224	517/629-0228
Alma College - Alma, MI 48801	989/463-7348
Andrews University - Berrien Springs, MI 49103	269/471-3465
Aquinas College - Grand Rapids, MI 49506	616/632-2436
Calvin College - Grand Rapids, MI 49546	616/526-6208
Central Michigan University – Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859	989/774-3309
Concordia University – Ann Arbor, MI 48105	734/995-7478
Cornerstone University – Grand Rapids, MI 49505	616/222-1432
Eastern Michigan University – Ypsilanti, MI 48197	734/487-1416
Ferris State University – Big Rapids, MI 49307	231/591-5375
Grand Valley State University – Allendale, MI 49401	616/331-6211
Hillsdale College – Hillsdale, MI 49242	517/607-2360
Hope College – Holland, MI 49423	616/395-7740
Kalamazoo College – Kalamazoo, MI 49007	269/337-7391
Lake Superior State University – Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783-1626	906/635-2012
Madonna University – Livonia, MI 48150	734/432-5647
Marygrove College – Detroit, MI 48221	313/927-1457
Michigan State University – East Lansing, MI 48824-1034	517/353-5146
Michigan Technological University – Houghton, MI 48824-1034	906/487-2460
Northern Michigan University – Marquette, MI 49855	906/227-2258
Oakland University – Rochester, MI 48309-4401	248/370-3095
Olivet College – Olivet, MI 49076	269/749-6612
Rochester College – Rochester Hills, MI 48307	248/218-2092
Saginaw Valley State University – University Center, MI 48710	989/964-4179
Siena Heights University – Adrian, MI 49221-1796	517/264-7892
Spring Arbor University – Spring Arbor, MI 49283	517/750-6414
University of Detroit Mercy – Detroit, MI 48221	313/878-0365
University of Michigan – Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1259	734/615-3835
University of Michigan-Dearborn - Dearborn, MI 48128-1491	313/593-5090
University of Michigan-Flint – Flint, MI 48502-2186	810/762-3260
*University of Phoenix – Phoenix, AZ	248-675-3732
*University of Phoenix –Western Mich. Campuses	616/647-5100 ext. 117
*Walden University – Minneapolis, MN 55401	612-312-1282
Wayne State University – Detroit, MI 48202	313/577-1788
Western Michigan University – Kalamazoo, MI 49008	269/387-3473

*Approved to recommend candidates in certain program areas for certificate renewal or advancement.

NOTE: The names of the certification officers may change. By calling the listed telephone number, you will be connected with the current certification officer.

*Provided as a service of the Professional Development/Human Rights Department of the Michigan Education Association.
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