

TEACHER CERTIFICATION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Teacher certification falls under the direction of the Professional Standards Section, Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE). The Professional Standards Section ensures that educators are properly credentialed. Certification application forms may be obtained from the OSDE Web site www.sde.state.ok.us. Look for [Certification/Professional Standards](#) on the site index located in the upper right corner of the home page.

TRADITIONAL LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION

1. What is required in order to obtain a traditional Oklahoma teaching credential?

The Oklahoma State Board of Education shall issue a **certificate** to teach to any person who:

- Has graduated from an accredited institution of higher education that has approval or accreditation for teacher education;
- Has successfully completed a higher education teacher education program approved by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation (OCTP);
- Has met all other requirements as may be established by the Oklahoma State Board of Education;
- Has made the necessary application and paid the competency examination fees in an amount and as prescribed by the OCTP;
- Has successfully completed the three competency examinations; and
- Has on file with the Oklahoma State Board of Education a current clear Oklahoma criminal history record search from the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation as well as a current clear national criminal history record search from the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

OR

- Holds an out-of-state certificate and meets standards set by the State Board of Education. Anything less than full certification will require review by Professional Standards.

OR

- Holds certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

Note: If you do not have a teacher education degree refer to [Oklahoma Teacher Certification Procedures](#).

GENERAL QUESTIONS

3. How do I obtain certification forms and applications?

Forms and applications are available online at www.sde.state.ok.us, or you may direct your questions to:

Oklahoma State Department of Education
Professional Standards Section
2500 North Lincoln Boulevard, #212
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105-4599
(405)521-3337

4. Do I have to be fingerprinted?

Oklahoma law requires applicants for **initial** teacher licensure/certification to have on file with the Oklahoma State Board of Education a current Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) fingerprint-based criminal history record search (70 O.S. 6-190). The law applies only to individuals applying for their **first** Oklahoma certificate. It does not apply to renewals. For additional information refer to [Fingerprint Information](#).

5. What is the cost for electronically scanning my fingerprints or fingerprint cards to receive a report from the OSBI and FBI?

The cost is \$58 for both the required OSBI and FBI criminal history record search. Submit fingerprint cards and the \$58 fee for a criminal history record search or, for faster and more accurate results, you may have your fingerprints laser-scanned at the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), Room 212, 2500 North Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, for a \$58 processing fee. Fingerprints are scanned at the OSDE between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. For additional information refer to [Fingerprint Information](#).

6. What teacher tests are required for Oklahoma certification?

The *Teacher Reform Act of 1980* (HB 1706) required all teacher candidates, who completed a higher education teacher preparation program, to pass a subject area test in the subject area for which an applicant was seeking certification. The first subject area test was administered in January 1982. In 1995, House Bill 1549 required a competency-based teacher assessment system. The [Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation](#) (OCTP), a separate agency of state government, was authorized by law to develop and administer the competency-based teacher test. Three tests were developed and are currently required for Oklahoma teacher certification. The three tests are:

- the Oklahoma General Education Test (OGET)
- the Oklahoma Subject Area Test(s) (OSAT)
- the Oklahoma Professional Teaching Examination (OPTE)

7. How do I register for a teacher competency test?

Inquiries regarding registration for teacher testing should be directed to the [Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation](#) (OCTP), the agency with statutory authority for administering the teacher tests. Contact the OCTP at:

Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation
3545 Northwest 58th Street, Suite 200
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73112
(405) 525-2612

8. What is the cost of an Oklahoma certificate?

Effective July 1, 2009

- Standard Certificate – valid for five years..... \$50
- Provisional – valid for five years..... \$50

9. What does it cost to renew an Oklahoma license/certificate?

Effective July 1, 2009

- Renewal of a Standard Certificate – valid for five years..... \$50
- Renewal of a License – valid for five years \$50

You may submit an [Online Renewal Application](#) to expedite the renewal process **or** if you prefer, submit the [Application for Renewal of Oklahoma Standard Certificate](#) form or [Application for Oklahoma School License](#) form by mail to the State Department of Education.

10. What does it cost for a retired teacher to renew a certificate?

Retired teachers pay the same renewal fees as any other teacher. See question above for renewal fees.

To renew online, you may submit an [Online Renewal Application](#) **or** if you prefer, submit the [Application for Renewal of Oklahoma Standard Certificate](#) form or [Application for Oklahoma School License](#) form by mail to the State Department of Education.

11. What certificate do you need to have as a first year special education teacher?

Special Education teachers new to the profession after December 3, 2004, are required to have a Special Education certificate **AND** an appropriate certificate in Early Childhood **OR** Elementary Education **OR** Middle or Secondary Education in Math **OR** Science **OR** Language Arts.

12. What do I have to submit in order to apply for a school nurse certificate?

If you have a Registered Nurse’s License and a **bachelor’s degree** in any subject, you may be issued a five-year standard certificate.

If you **do not have a bachelor’s degree**, but have an associate’s degree or diploma from a school of nursing (3 years), you may be issued a five-year provisional certificate. To renew the five-year provisional certificate, you must complete at least 24 semester hours toward bachelor’s degree requirements every 5 years. You will have 10 years from the initial issuance to complete a bachelor’s degree.

Please submit the following:

- [Application for Oklahoma School Certificate.](#)
- Copy of current Oklahoma Registered Nurse's License.
- Official transcripts of all college work. Transcript must denote degree earned and the date degree was conferred.
- \$50 processing fee (check, cashier's check, or money order) made payable to the Oklahoma State Department of Education.
- Submit fingerprint cards and a \$58 fee for a criminal history record search or, for faster and more accurate results, you may have your fingerprints laser-scanned at the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), Room 212, 2500 North Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, for a \$58 processing fee. Fingerprints are scanned at the OSDE between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. For additional information refer to [Fingerprint Information.](#)

13. What is meant by the term Specialist Certification?

Specialist certification (library-media specialist, school counselor, school psychometrist, school psychologist, speech-language pathologist, and reading specialist) requires a graduate degree program meeting the professional education association standards specific to the profession. Application for certification in the specialist area listed above should be initiated through the director of teacher education at the recommending higher education institution. For additional information refer to [Specialist Certification.](#)

14. I completed a teacher education program in an Oklahoma institution of higher education but never applied for a certificate. How do I apply?

Contact the higher education certification office at your university for a verification of completion or a recommendation for certification. Refer to [Higher Education Teacher Certification Office Contact List.](#)

15. If my college/university is recommending me for specific subject area(s), but I have tested in some other subject area(s), will the other subject area(s) done by testing be automatically added to my certificate?

Yes, if the university recommendation form is mailed to the Professional Standards Section. If the university recommendation is done online and is complete, you will be prompted to the area(s) tested, at no additional charge.

16. I hold an out-of-state credential. How do I get a certificate in Oklahoma?

If you hold a full teaching credential in any state, you are eligible for Oklahoma certification in equivalent subject areas with the possibility of having to take Oklahoma tests.

Please submit the following materials to the Professional Standards Section of the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

[Application for Oklahoma School Certificate](#) if you completed a teacher education program prior to February 1, 1982, or if you completed a teacher education program after that date and have at least one year of teaching experience.

- Official copies of all college transcripts. Transcript must denote degree earned and the date degree was conferred. (no photocopies)
- [Proof of Teaching](#) form and copy of teaching certificate valid during dates of experience listed, if applicable.
- Copy of all teaching certificates. (Copy the back if it holds any valid information.)
- A \$50 processing fee (check, cashier's check, or money order) payable to the Oklahoma State Department of Education.
- Submit fingerprint cards and a \$58 fee for a criminal history record search or, for faster and more accurate results, you may have your fingerprints laser-scanned at the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), Room 212, 2500 North Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, for a \$58 processing fee. Fingerprints are scanned at the OSDE between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. For additional information refer to [Fingerprint Information](#).

You will be issued a five year provisional certificate in order to complete the Oklahoma testing requirements (general education, subject area, and professional education competency examination).

If you have passed teacher test(s) in another state, you may request a review of these test(s) for comparability to Oklahoma test(s) by the [Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation](#) (OCTP). They will determine if any of the out-of-state tests are comparable and inform the Professional Standards Section which test(s) are acceptable. For more information you may contact the OCTP at <http://www.ok.gov/octp> and search for Teacher Certification.

You will not be issued a five year standard until all tests have been completed.

For more information refer to the brochure entitled [Out of State Applicants](#).

17. If I hold National Board Certification from out of state, can I become certified in Oklahoma?

A standard certificate in the subject of the out of state certificate, not the National Board Subject, may be issued if you hold a current certificate issued by the **National Board for Professional Teaching Standards**. (70 O. S. 6-190). You may still be subject to Oklahoma test requirements.

18. Does Oklahoma have certification agreements with any other states?

Yes. A list of participating states/jurisdictions is available at <http://www.NASDTEC.org/>. Refer to the Status Report of States/Jurisdictions that have signed certification contracts with Oklahoma. The terms of these agreements are limited to educator preparation program requirements. Please contact individual states regarding ancillary requirements (minimum grade point average, standardized testing, mentoring experience, or graduation from an accredited institution).

Also, if you hold a full credential in any state, you are eligible for Oklahoma certification in equivalent subject areas. You must meet Oklahoma testing requirements. For specific information regarding Oklahoma certification based on an out-of-state certificate, refer to [Out-of-State Applicants](#).

19. How do I obtain an Oklahoma certificate if I graduated from an out-of-country university or if I am not a citizen of the United States?

To apply for an Oklahoma certificate if you graduated out-of -country or are not a United States citizen, submit the following documents:

- Official copy of your college transcript and foreign credential evaluation. Transcript must denote degree earned and the date degree was conferred. Transcripts and credentials from outside the United States must be analyzed by one of the state-approved educational credential evaluation services. For a list of evaluating service agencies, refer to [Evaluation of Foreign Credentials](#). (The credential evaluation service will submit their evaluation directly to the State Department of Education.)
- Copy of Social Security card.
- Current employment authorization document.
- An [Application for Oklahoma School Certificate](#) .
- If you are not a United States citizen but graduated from an accredited United States university, submit an [Application for Oklahoma School Certificate](#).
- Submit fingerprint cards and the \$58 fee for a criminal history record search or, for faster and more accurate results, you may have your fingerprints laser-scanned at the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), Room 212, 2500 North Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, for a \$58 processing fee. Fingerprints are scanned at the OSDE between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.
- Submit all documents together.

Note: The expiration date of your teaching certificate will not exceed the expiration date of your employment authorization document.

20. If I pass an additional teacher competency test, will the new subject area automatically be added to my certificate?

When you pass a new subject area test (other than an area listed below) go to your teacher account or create a teacher account and enter the test you passed. ([Click here to create an account or log on to your existing account](#).) To order a certificate with the added area, submit an [Application for Adding Areas to Certificate by Testing](#) and a \$25 processing fee (check, cashier's check, or money order) payable to the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

Exception: By law, **Effective November 1, 2009**, the areas of Early Childhood, Elementary Education, and Special Education may not be added by only testing. The applicant must complete a full university program and pass the appropriate test or see [HB 2747 Red Banner Letter](#).

Exception: Specialist certification (library-media specialist, school counselor, school psychometrist, school psychologist, speech-language pathologist, and reading specialist) may not be added by only testing. The applicant must complete a full university program and pass the appropriate test.

21. If I want to become an administrator, how do I add principal or superintendent to my Oklahoma credential?

Oklahoma has two options for obtaining certification as a principal or superintendent. Option one is Traditional Administrator Certification, and option two is Alternative Administrator Certification. To view a flow-chart explaining each program, refer to [Administrator Certification Requirement Chart](#).

22. How do I add an advanced degree to my certificate?

Submit a [Request Form](#) or send a written request and an official transcript to the Oklahoma State Department of Education. Transcript must denote degree earned and the date degree was conferred. If you want a new printed certificate with the reflected degree change, submit a \$25 processing fee (check, cashier's check, or money order) made payable to the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

23. How do I request that my certificate reflect a name change or an address change?

Submit a [Request Form](#) or mail a written request with the name/address change and a copy of your Social Security Card with the correct name. If you want a new printed certificate with the reflected name change, submit a \$25 processing fee (check, cashier's check, or money order) made payable to the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

24. How do I obtain a duplicate of my Oklahoma teaching credential?

Submit a [Request Form](#) or mail a written request and a \$25 processing fee (check, cashier's check, or money order) made payable to the Oklahoma State Department of Education. You can also request a duplicate by clicking [Create or Log into your account](#).

25. Do I have to be in compliance with Oklahoma state income tax laws to renew my Oklahoma teaching credential?

Yes. In order to renew an Oklahoma credential, Oklahoma law requires the educator to be in compliance with the Oklahoma tax laws. The Oklahoma Tax Commission will notify the Oklahoma State Department of Education of noncompliance with Oklahoma income tax laws. (68 O. S. 6-190)

The effective date of the renewed credential will be the date the Oklahoma Tax Commission notifies the Oklahoma State Department of Education of your compliance.

The Oklahoma Tax Commission can be reached at 405-522-6800.

OKLAHOMA ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENT PROGRAM

26. What is the Oklahoma Alternative Placement Program, and who is eligible to participate in this alternative route to certification?

The Oklahoma Alternative Placement Program provides an opportunity for individuals with non-teaching degrees to teach in Oklahoma accredited schools. The eligibility requirements are:

- Have a minimum of a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college/university.
- Have a major in a field of study that corresponds to an area of Oklahoma certification for a Secondary Certificate, Elementary/Secondary Certificate, or a Career and Technology Education Certificate.
- Have at least a 2.5 Grade Point Average (GPA).
- Document two years of work experience in the area that corresponds with your degree or post baccalaureate course work.

For more information refer to [Alternative Placement Information Packet](#).

27. What must I do to be admitted to the program?

To determine if you meet the eligibility requirements for the Oklahoma Alternative Placement Program submit the following:

- An [Alternative Placement Application](#) with a \$50 processing fee (check, cashier's check, or money order) made payable to the Oklahoma Alternative Placement Program.
- Official copies of all college transcripts. Transcript must denote degree earned and the date degree was conferred. (no photocopies)
- A current resume.

For more information, refer to [Alternative Placement Information Packet](#).

Results: You will receive a letter stating you are approved to seek an alternative certificate.

28. What must I do after being approved to seek an alternative certificate?

Once you receive approval to seek an alternative certificate, complete the following:

- * The Oklahoma General Education Test (OGET).
- *The Oklahoma Subject Area Test (OSAT)

29. What do I submit after passing the OGET and the OSAT(s)?

After you have passed the above tests, submit the following:

- Fingerprint cards and the \$58 fee for a criminal history record search or, for faster and more accurate results, you may have your fingerprints laser-scanned at the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), Room 212, 2500 North Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, for a \$58 processing fee. Fingerprints are scanned at the OSDE between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. For additional information refer to [Fingerprint Information](#).
- A [Request for Teacher Competency Review Panel Assessment](#) and a \$100 application fee (check, cashier's check, or money order) made payable to the Oklahoma Alternative Placement Program.
- Written explanation of why you want to become a teacher.

Result: You will receive a scheduled date to appear before the Teacher Competency Review Panel.

- Appear before the Teacher Competency Review Panel and, if approved, receive a recommendation from the panel to the Oklahoma State Board of Education.

Result: After receiving written approval from the State Board of Education, an alternative certificate will be issued.

For more information refer to [Alternative Placement Information Packet](#).

30. What must I complete after I get my initial alternative certificate to receive an alternative standard certificate?

To receive an alternative standard certificate, you must complete the following:

- Complete the professional education component.
- Pass the Oklahoma Professional Education Test (OPTE).
- After completing the above requirements, submit an [Alternative Placement Renewal Application](#) with a \$50 processing fee (check, cashier's check, or money order) made payable to the Oklahoma Alternative Placement Program.

For more information, refer to [Alternative Placement Information Packet](#).

NOTE: For general questions and answers about fingerprints, income tax compliance, specialist certification, adding areas to credential, out-of-country graduates, name change or address change, and how to request a duplicate copy of your credential, see questions and answers above.

31. Can I renew an alternative license or an alternative certificate?

Yes. You may submit an [Online Renewal Application](#) or, if you prefer, submit an [Alternative Placement Renewal Application](#) with a \$50 processing fee (check, cashier's check, or money order) made payable to the Oklahoma Alternative Placement Program.

NATIONAL BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS (NBPTS)

32. What is the National Board for Professional Teaching Standard (NBPTS)?

The NBPTS was formed in 1987 to advance the quality of teaching and learning by developing professional standards for accomplished teaching and creating a voluntary system to certify teachers who meet those standards.

33. How do I apply to obtain NBPTS certification?

To learn more about the National Board Certification process, refer to the NBPTS Web site at www.nbpts.org.

34. Does Oklahoma offer any assistance with the cost of obtaining National Board Certification?

Contact [Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation](#).

35. I understand if you hold NBPTS certification and teach in Oklahoma, you are paid a bonus. Is that true?

If funding is available from the Oklahoma Legislature, yes. If you are new to Oklahoma, hold National Board Certification and are employed as a full time classroom teacher in Oklahoma, contact the Professional Development Section of the State Department of Education at (405) 521-4527. For this purpose, a full-time teacher is defined as a classroom teacher, librarian, or counselor employed as a 1.0 full-time equivalency on the School Personnel Report.

36. Are there any other subject areas in which you can hold national certification and receive the bonus?

No.

37. If I hold National Board Certification in an area other than my subject area(s) on my Oklahoma certificate, may I add my National Board Certification area to my Oklahoma certificate?

No. National Board Certification areas do not correspond to Oklahoma certification areas; therefore, you must hold an appropriate Oklahoma certificate to teach that subject.

Note: As a courtesy to you, your National Board Certification will be denoted on your Oklahoma certificate.

TEACH FOR AMERICA

38. What is Teach For America?

Teach for America is the national corps of outstanding recent college graduates and professionals of all academic majors and career interests who commit **two years** to teach in urban and rural public schools and become leaders in the effort to expand educational opportunity.

For more information refer to the Teach for America Web site <http://www.teachforamerica.org>.

39. How do I apply with Teach for America?

To apply with Teach for America, there are three steps:

- Applicants complete an online application to include a resume, letter of intent, and essay, as well as personal and academic information.
- Selected applicants participate in a phone interview with a Teach for America representative.
- The most promising applicants are invited to a full-day, in-person interview, which includes teaching a sample lesson, completing a problem-solving activity, participating in a group discussion, and interviewing one-on-one with a Teach For America representative.
- Testing is determined by the Teach For America program in Oklahoma.

For more information, refer to the Teach for America Web site <http://www.teachforamerica.org>.

40. Can I teach in Oklahoma as a participant in the Teach for America program?

Yes. Once you are accepted into the Teach For America program, you could be assigned to teach in Oklahoma as a part of the national program pursuing a collaborative effort with an Oklahoma accredited school. Presently, Teach for America teachers are assigned to Tulsa Oklahoma Public Schools.

Once assigned by the Teach for America program to teach in Oklahoma, you would need to:

- Have on file with the Oklahoma State Board of Education a current clear Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI) and a clear Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) fingerprint-based criminal history record search. Fee is \$58.
- Be issued an Oklahoma credential (valid for 2 years).

Course work and mentoring are provided by Teach for America. When course work and mentoring are completed, and after completing an application to the Oklahoma State Department of Education and paying the \$50 processing fee, an Oklahoma standard certificate will be issued (valid for 5 years).

AMERICAN BOARD FOR CERTIFICATION OF TEACHER EXCELLENCE (ABCTE)

41. What is American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE)?

Founded in 2001 via a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, ABCTE addresses the need for knowledgeable and dedicated teachers in every classroom. They offer a flexible and cost-effective certification program. ABCTE certification is a program designed to inspire career changers to enter the teaching field and give them a rigorous and efficient process to achieve their goals.

For more information refer to the ABCTE Web site <http://www.abcte.org>.

42. If I receive a teaching certificate through the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE), can I teach in Oklahoma?

Yes. Currently ten states accept ABCTE certified teachers. They are Florida, Idaho, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, **Oklahoma**, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Utah, Tennessee.

Six through 12th grade certification areas that are acceptable in the state of Oklahoma are: Biology, Chemistry, English Language Arts, General Science, Mathematics, Physics, United States History, and World History.

Once accepted by the ABCTE program, to teach in Oklahoma, you would need to:

- Pay the fee for online support system and online testing.
- Pass ABCTE desired middle level or secondary subject test and professional teacher test.
- Have on file with the Oklahoma State Board of Education a current Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI) and clear Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) fingerprint-based criminal history record search. Submit a \$58 processing fee.
- Be issued an Oklahoma credential (valid for 1 year). Processing fee is \$50.
- Participate in mentoring program for one year, provided by ABCTE.
- Receive an Oklahoma standard certificate (valid for 5 years) when the mentoring program is completed. Submit a \$50 processing fee.

For more information, refer to the ABCTE Web site <http://www.abcte.org>.

FOUR-YEAR-OLDS AND YOUNGER CERTIFICATE

43. I have taught in a Head Start Program and would like to teach in a public school. Is there a way I can do that?

Yes. If you have five years teaching experience in a Head Start Program, currently hold a Child Development Associate (CDA) – 120 clock hours, and you have obtained a bachelor's degree in any major, you may apply for a teaching certificate to teach in a public school's four-year-olds or younger program. This certificate is restricted to teach four-year-olds or younger children in a public school.

44. After I receive a bachelor's degree, what do I have to complete to be certified to teach?

To receive a certificate to teach four-year-olds and younger children, you will have to:

- Submit verification of at least five years of experience as an early childhood educator with the Head Start program.
- Submit a copy of your current Child Development Associate (CDA) credential.
- Submit an official copy of a college transcript. Transcript must denote degree earned and the date degree was conferred.
- Pass the Oklahoma General Education Test and the Early Childhood Education Subject Area Test.
- Submit fingerprint cards and the \$58 fee for a criminal history record search or, for faster and more accurate results, you may have your fingerprints laser-scanned at the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), Room 212, 2500 North Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, for a \$58 processing fee. Fingerprints are scanned at the OSDE between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. For additional information refer to [Fingerprint Information](#).
- Submit an [Application for Certificate to Teach Four-Year-Olds and Younger](#). Contact the Professional Standards Section of the State Department of Education at (405) 521-3337 to obtain an application.
- Submit a \$50 processing fee (check, cashier's check, or money order) made payable to the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

45. Can I add another subject area to my Four-Year-Olds or Younger credential by testing?

No. This credential is limited by Oklahoma Law.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS TO BECOME A CERTIFIED TEACHER

46. I am or have been a paraprofessional (teaching assistant) in an Oklahoma public school. How can I move forward to become a certified teacher?

If you have at least one year of experience as a paraprofessional in an Oklahoma public school, you may become a teacher by completing the following:

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited college/university. Submit an official copy of a college transcript. Transcript must denote degree earned and the date degree was conferred.
- Have at least one year of experience in a public school in the area for which a teaching license is being pursued.
- Pass the Oklahoma General Education Test (OGET), Oklahoma Professional Teaching Exam (OPTE), and pass at least one subject area test in Early Childhood Education, or Elementary Education, **OR** Special Education + Early Childhood or Elementary Education.
- Two certificate areas are required to be the Special Education teacher of record.
- Submit fingerprint cards and the \$58 fee for a criminal history record search or, for faster and more accurate results, you may have your fingerprints laser-scanned at the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), Room 212, 2500 North Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, for a \$58 processing fee. Fingerprints are scanned at the OSDE between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. For additional information refer to [Fingerprint Information](#).
- Submit Application for [Oklahoma Paraprofessional Teaching Credential](#) with a \$10 processing fee (check, cashier's, or money order) made payable to the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

Result: You will receive a teaching credential valid for one year, renewable for up to three years.

47. Once I receive a credential, what do I have to complete to move on to a standard certificate?

Within three years, complete 12 semester hours of professional education coursework from an accredited institution of higher education which has an accredited program related to the license sought. The 12 semester hours must include a minimum of 3 semester hours in reading instruction from a higher education program accredited by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation.

Result: You will receive a standard certificate.

For a flow chart of this career development program for paraprofessionals, refer to [Career Development Program for Paraprofessionals to Become a Certified Teacher](#).

OKLAHOMA TITLE I PARAPROFESSIONAL TEACHING CREDENTIAL (TEACHING ASSISTANT)

48. What must a paraprofessional have in order to be a teaching assistant in an Oklahoma Title I school?

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* requires paraprofessionals (teaching assistants) who are employed in Title I schools to meet federal requirements. Those requirements are:

- Have a high school diploma or a General Educational Development (GED) diploma

PLUS

Option A: Hold an associate's (or higher) degree

OR

Option B: Completed at least two years (48 credit hours) of study at an institution of higher education

OR

Option C: Passed the Oklahoma General Education (OGET) Test. (The state agency with authority and responsibility for administering the OGET is the [Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation](#))

OR

Option D: Pass the Praxis ParaPro Assessment Test – Passing score is 455.

49. Are the requirements for a special education classroom paraprofessional different than the requirements for Title I classroom paraprofessionals?

Yes. In addition to the requirements listed in the question above, a special education paraprofessional has to meet the following:

- Complete Oklahoma Special Education Paraprofessional Training (9 modules).
- Complete and maintain training and skills in Cardiovascular Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid.
- Complete training in Universal Precautions/Bloodborne Pathogens Training.
- Complete an additional 6 hours of professional development and Universal Precautions/ Bloodborne Pathogens each school year thereafter.

For more information contact Special Education Services, Oklahoma State Department of Education, at (405)522-3248

50. May I apply for some kind of credential to show that I am a paraprofessional?

Oklahoma teaching assistants may apply to the Professional Standards Section, Oklahoma State Department of Education for a Title I Paraprofessional Credential by meeting the following requirements:

- Have on file with the Oklahoma State Board of Education a current clear Oklahoma criminal history record search from the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation, as well as a national fingerprint-based criminal history record search provided by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
- Submit fingerprint cards and the \$58 fee for a criminal history record search or, for faster and more accurate results, you may have your fingerprints laser-scanned at the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), Room 212, 2500 North Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, for a \$58 processing fee. Fingerprints are scanned at the OSDE between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. For additional information refer to [Fingerprint Information](#). (continued on next page)

- Submit proof of having met Option A, B, C, or D listed in question 49.
- Submit an [Application for Oklahoma Paraprofessional Teaching Credential](#).
- Submit a \$10 processing fee (check, cashier's check, or money order) made payable to the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

51. When does a Title I Paraprofessional Credential expire?

A Title I Paraprofessional Credential does not have an expiration date and is valid for life.

TROOPS TO TEACHERS

52. What is the Troops to Teachers program?

Troops to Teachers (TTT) was established in 1994 as a Department of Defense program. The National Defense Authorization Act for FY2000 transferred the responsibility for program oversight and funding to the U.S. Department of Education with continued operation by the Department of Defense. The purpose of Troops to Teachers as outlined in the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* is to help military personnel enter a second career as teachers in schools serving low-income families. The act focuses on attracting individuals who can teach subjects with critical shortages such as math and science. However, the overall need is great, and military individuals with other backgrounds are encouraged to consider a new career in public education. For more information, refer to the TTT Web site at www.ProudToServeAgain.Com.

53. Who qualifies for the Troops to Teachers program?

To qualify, a service member must meet one of the requirements below:

- Retired from active duty.
- Active duty member with approved date of retirement with one year or less remaining before retirement.
- Separated on or after January 8, 2002, for a physical disability. Must register within four years after separation. Please note, medical discharge is not the same as discharge due to physical disability.
- Retired from the Selected Reserve.
- Currently serving in the Selected Reserve with ten or more years of creditable service toward retirement and commit to serving an additional three years or until eligible for retirement.
- Selected Reserve personnel, separated due to a physical disability on or after January 8, 2002. Must register within four years after separation.
- On or after January 8, 2002, immediately before separation, having served six years on active duty and willing to commit to three years with the Selected Reserve.

54. Do I have to have a college degree?

Yes. A candidate for the Troops to Teachers program must have a baccalaureate or advanced degree from an accredited institution at the time of application.

55. What type of teaching certificate must I have to teach in Oklahoma?

All military personnel requesting certification through the Troops to Teachers program must seek certification through the Alternative Placement Program. For more information, refer to [Alternative Placement Information Packet](#).

56. How much financial assistance is provided to the Troops to Teachers member?

Financial assistance may be provided to qualified service members in the form of either a stipend of up to \$5000 for teacher certification expenses for which the individual must teach three years in a “high-needs” district; or in lieu of a stipend, individuals may receive a bonus of \$10,000 to teach three years in a school serving a high percentage of students from low-income families.

57. How can the Troops to Teachers member use the \$10,000 bonus?

There are no restrictions on how the member uses the bonus.

58. If I am employed in an Oklahoma school district through the Troops to Teachers program, is there a stipend paid to the local school district?

No. The stipend is paid directly to the qualified service member.

59. Once I receive my Oklahoma certificate, can I add a subject area(s) to my certificate?

Yes. But **effective November 1, 2009**, per state statute, you can no longer add Early Childhood, Elementary Education, or Special Education to a certificate by testing, per [HB 2747](#). For more information, refer to [How to Add Areas to Teaching Certificate](#) <<http://sde.state.ok.us/Teacher/ProfStand/default.html>>.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

60. I understand I have to be highly qualified to teach a core academic subject. Explain what is meant by highly qualified teacher.

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* states that a parent has the right to know that the teacher of their child has demonstrated they know something about the core academic subject area they are teaching; in other words, is highly qualified in their understanding of the core academic subject area content. This includes special education teachers who are the “teacher of record” for core academic subject areas.

In order for an administrator to be able to assure that a teacher is highly qualified, the teacher must:

- Hold at least a bachelor degree.
- Hold an appropriate teaching certificate in the subject taught.
- Demonstrate knowledge of subject content by passing a subject area test, or hold a degree or advanced degree in the specific subject area, or complete a High Objective Uniform State Standards of Evaluation (HOUSSE) form.

For more information, refer to the State Department of Education Web site www.sde.state.ok.us. At the site index, search for *Highly Qualified Teacher-No Child Left Behind*.

NOTE: Special Education teachers who are the teacher of record must also be highly qualified in the core academic subjects they teach. This Web site has information on highly qualified requirements for special education teachers. For questions contact (405) 521-3607.

61. How do I add “Registry Training” to my certificate?

For individuals who have completed 32 clock hours of registry training and hold an appropriate special education certificate, submit the [Application to Add Registry to an Oklahoma Special Education Certificate](#), certificate of completion, or printout of 32 hours of registry training, and \$25 processing fee (check, cashier’s check, money order) made payable to the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

62. Can I purchase a frame to display my Oklahoma certificate in my classroom?

Yes. A certificate frame is available to display your teacher/administrator certificate. The double-matted frame features a laser-engraved image of the state of Oklahoma and is available for the cost of production (not for profit). To order, refer to [Certificate Frame Order](#) form.

63. How can I expedite the process of getting my Oklahoma certificate?

If an Oklahoma school district newly employs a teacher and is in need of getting the certificate processed in order to start the school year, the Superintendent or Human Resources Representative may submit a [Request to Expedite Processing for New Hire](#) form. This form must be submitted with the application, fee, and any additional documentation (if not already submitted to the Professional Standards Section) required to receive the proper teaching credential.

64. Does Oklahoma have some form of written directive on the expected proper conduct of teachers?

In 1992, legislation was passed requiring the Oklahoma State Board of Education to promulgate standards of performance and conduct for teachers. A copy of such standards, any amendments to such standards, and any standards adopted by the local board of education of the school district shall be provided to each teacher on or before April 10 of each year (70 O.S. 6-101.21). The Standards for Performance and Conduct were approved by the State Board of Education in 1992 and revised in 2006 to reflect new legislation. For a copy, refer to [Standards of Performance and Conduct for Teachers](#).

65. What must I do to be an athletic coach in an Oklahoma accredited school?

All coaches and athletic directors shall be employed by the school district and hold a valid teaching certificate. Their names shall appear on the class schedule. In addition, all athletic coaches being assigned coaching duties shall have completed a course in the care and prevention of athletic injuries.

66. If I am renewing a certificate, do I have to send another official college transcript?

No. Unless you are changing career areas, adding a degree, or your certificate has been expired for five years or more.