



Department of
Education

Educator Licensure

Educator Licensure & Preparation Operating Procedures

Tennessee Department of Education | June 2024

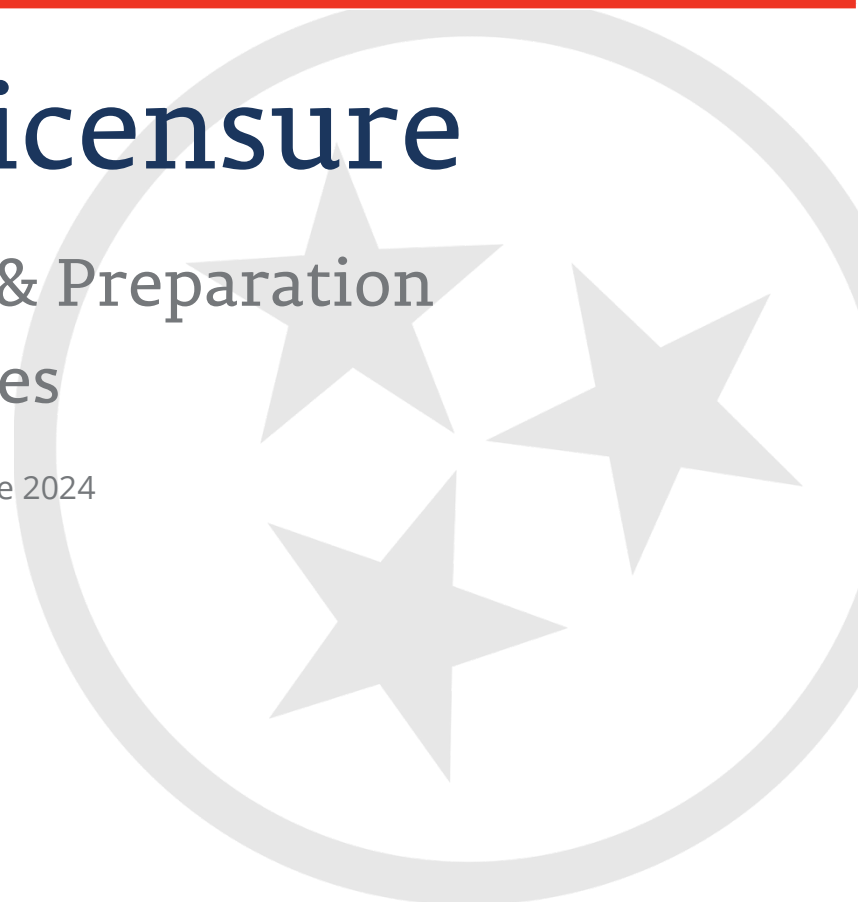


Table of Contents

ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPTS	4
OUT-OF-COUNTRY ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPT EVALUATION	4
UNOFFICIAL ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPTS	5
GENERAL INFORMATION	5
PEDAGOGICAL ASSESSMENTS (EDTPA, PLT)	5
<i>Candidates Completing an Educator Preparation Program in Tennessee</i>	5
<i>Out-of-State Applicants</i>	5
SPECIALTY-AREA CONTENT ASSESSMENTS (PRAXIS, NES)	5
<i>Content Assessment Exemptions Based on Degrees</i>	5
<i>Educational Testing Service (ETS) Praxis Assessments</i>	6
<i>National Evaluation Series</i>	6
<i>Tennessee Language Center - Alta Language Services</i>	6
END-OF-COURSE EXAM COMPLIANCE	6
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	7
EMERGENCY CREDENTIALS	8
PERMIT AND WAIVER OVERVIEW	8
<i>Permit and Waiver Restrictions</i>	8
PERMITS TO TEACH	8
<i>Targeted Recruitment Strategy</i>	9
ENDORSEMENT EXEMPTIONS (WAIVERS)	9
<i>Short-term Strategies</i>	10
LONG-TERM STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES	10
<i>Forecasting</i>	10
<i>Recruitment</i>	10
PRIORITY PROCESSING	11
<i>Requests for Priority Processing</i>	11
POSTSECONDARY EDUCATOR (PSE) LICENSE	13
POSTSECONDARY EDUCATOR PATHWAY TO LICENSURE	13
<i>PSE Application Requirements</i>	15
PROVISIONAL SPECIAL EDUCATION ENDORSEMENTS	16
MATHEMATICS 6-10 ENDORSEMENT	17
<i>Initial In-State Licensure</i>	17
<i>Out-of-State Licensure</i>	17
<i>Additional Endorsements</i>	18
<i>Reactivation</i>	18
SUBSTITUTE TEACHING AND UNFILLED VACANCIES	18
SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS: 20 DAYS	18

ESSA-REQUIRED 20-DAY PARENT NOTIFICATION	18
<i>Public LEAs</i>	18
<i>Charter/Strategic Waiver LEAs</i>	19
<i>Best Practices for 20-Day Parent Notification</i>	19
<i>Parent Notification Letter Template</i>	20
<i>Screening Licensed and Non-Licensed Applicants</i>	20
EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS	21
ALGEBRA I	21
GIFTED EDUCATION	21
PERSONAL FINANCE	22
ENDORSEMENTS	22
DISTRICT & SCHOOL ENDORSEMENT FLEXIBILITY	22
<i>Teaching One Course Out of Area of Endorsement</i>	22
<i>Flexibility – Grade Span of Endorsement/In School</i>	23
ADDITIONAL ENDORSEMENTS	23
<i>Additional Endorsements Added by Assessment Only</i>	24
EXPERIENCE AND STAFFING	32
EXPERIENCE VERIFICATION	32
STAFFING ASSIGNMENTS	32

Academic Transcripts

Academic transcripts are considered official, acceptable documentation for licensure transactions when received by the Department in the following circumstances:

- Uploaded directly to TNCompass by a TN State Board-approved EPP
- Submitted by the issuing institution through an electronic clearinghouse to Educator.Licensure@tn.gov
- Mailed in an envelope sealed by the issuing institution to the Office of Educator Licensure and Preparation, Andrew Johnson Tower, 9th Floor, 710 James Robertson Parkway, Nashville, TN 37243. Please allow additional time for mailed transcripts to be scanned and uploaded into TNCompass.

Out-of-Country Academic Transcript Evaluation

Educators submitting transcripts from institutions outside of the U.S. must submit original, course-by-course transcript evaluations of all degrees held, accompanied by copies of the transcripts evaluated. Tennessee recognizes evaluation services approved by the [National Association of Credential Evaluation Services](#) or [Association of International Credential Evaluators](#), which include the following:

- [A2Z Evaluations, LLC](#)
- [Academic Credentials Evaluation Institute, Inc.](#)
- [American Association of Collegiate Registrars & Admission Officers](#)
- [American Education Research Corporation](#)
- [Center for Applied Research, Evaluation and Education, Inc.](#)
- [Educational Credential Evaluators, Inc.](#)
- [Educational Perspectives, Inc.](#)
- [Educational Records Evaluation Service, Inc.](#)
- [Evaluation Services, Inc.](#)
- [Foreign Academic Credential Service, Inc.](#)
- [Foreign Credential Evaluations, Inc.](#)
- [Foreign Credentials Service of America](#)
- [Foreign Consultants, Inc.](#)
- [Foreign Credits, Inc.](#)
- [Foundation for International Service](#)
- [Global Credential Evaluators, Inc.](#)
- [Globe Language Services](#)
- [InCred](#)
- [Institute of Foreign Credential Services, Inc.](#)
- [International Academic Credential Evaluators, Inc.](#)
- [International Consultants of Delaware, Inc.](#)
- [International Education Evaluations, Inc.](#)
- [International Education Research Foundation](#)
- [Josef Silny & Associates, Inc.](#)
- [Scholaro](#)
- [SDR Educational Consultants](#)
- [SpanTran: The Evaluation Company](#)
- [Transcript Research](#)
- [Ucredo](#)
- [World Evaluation Services](#)

Unofficial Academic Transcripts

Transcripts that are uploaded to TNCompass by any individual outside of the Office of Educator Licensure or a TN State Board-approved EPP are considered unofficial and cannot be used for licensing purposes. However, unofficial transcripts are considered acceptable documentation when applying for professional development points (PDPs).

Professional Assessments

General Information

Official reports for qualifying scores on professional assessments may be required in order to obtain, renew, advance, or reactivate a license. To count towards licensure requirements, qualifying scores must be earned on the *current* assessments and test codes established by the [Tennessee State Board of Education](#). Score reports must be sent directly from the assessment administrator and will not be accepted from an educator, institution of higher education, or local or state education agency.

For additional information, please visit the State Board's [Professional Assessment Policy](#) and the Department's [Assessment Guidance Document](#).

Pedagogical Assessments (edTPA, PLT)

Candidates Completing an Educator Preparation Program in Tennessee

Candidates seeking licensure based on EPP completion and assessments are required to submit qualifying scores on the appropriate [edTPA](#) performance-based, subject-specific assessment prior to licensure. Candidates who obtain a 1st issuance practitioner license based on enrollment in a State Board-approved EPP with *job-embedded clinical practice* are no longer required to take the edTPA to renew or advance their license. However, job-embedded educators who fail to renew or advance their license are still required to pass the appropriate edTPA assessment to qualify for reactivation of their expired license.

Out-of-State Applicants

Beginning January 1, 2019, candidates applying for Tennessee educator licensure based on out-of-state EPP completion and assessments may submit qualifying scores on the appropriate [edTPA](#) performance-based subject-specific assessment or one of the [ETS Principles of Learning and Teaching assessments](#). Tennessee does not accept other states' assessment scores in place of assessments required by the TN State Board of Education. Please note that candidates applying for Tennessee educator licensure based on possession of an *active* out-of-state license are not required to submit pedagogical assessments for initial licensure, renewal, or advancement.

Specialty-Area Content Assessments (Praxis, NES)

Content Assessment Exemptions Based on Degrees

Beginning June 1st, 2023, specialty area content assessments are no longer required for initial licensure, renewal, or

advancement for educators who hold a degree in a qualifying endorsement area and either complete a State Board-approved EPP or enroll in a State Board-approved job-embedded program. This exemption does not apply to the 5205 Teaching Reading: Elementary or 5024 Education of Young Children Praxis assessments. For additional information, please visit the State Board's [Professional Assessment Policy](#) and the Department's [Assessment Guidance Document](#).

Educational Testing Service (ETS) Praxis Assessments

For information about Praxis requirements, please visit the State Board's [Professional Assessment Policy](#). Additional information about Praxis assessments, including registration details, can be found by visiting <https://www.ets.org/praxis/tn/test-takers/plan-your-test/licensure-requirements.html>.

For details related to sending official Praxis score reports, please visit www.ets.org/praxis/scores/send. Be certain to specify Tennessee's code (8190) and provide the full social security number when registering for assessments or requesting scores be sent. Without the social security number, the score will not post to TNCompass and the report must be resent by the testing agency, which may involve an additional fee. Please allow at least two weeks from the date of request for scores to be imported to [TNCompass](#).

Please note that Praxis Core assessments are only used for admission to educator preparation programs and are not required for licensure.

National Evaluation Series

Educators pursuing the Mathematics 6-10 endorsement must take the [National Evaluation Series](#) Mathematics (105 Middle and Early Secondary Grades 6-10) assessment.

Individuals seeking an endorsement in Mathematics 6-8 or Mathematics 6-12 may submit qualifying scores on either the appropriate [Praxis Series](#) Mathematics assessment or the appropriate [National Evaluation Series](#) assessment (NES 105 for Mathematics 6-8, NES 304 for Mathematics 6-12).

Tennessee Language Center - Alta Language Services

Individuals seeking any World Languages pre-K-12 or 6-12 endorsement may submit qualifying scores on either the appropriate [Praxis](#) assessment or the appropriate [Alta Language Services Speaking and Listening Assessment](#) administered by the Tennessee Language Center. For individuals seeking an endorsement in World Languages for which there is not an applicable Praxis Series assessment, submission of a qualifying score on the appropriate Alta Language Services Speaking and Listening Assessment is required.

End-of-Course Exam Compliance

[T.C.A.](#) § 49-6-6006 specifies that an educator **may not** teach a course required for graduation in which an end-of-course (EOC) examination is given unless the educator has a content-specific endorsement for that subject or the educator has demonstrated sufficient content knowledge in the course material by providing passing scores on a standardized or criterion-referenced test for the content area.

To comply with this law, all teachers of record for courses in which there is a state-level EOC exam must meet one of the following requirements:

- a. Hold the subject-specific endorsement to teach the course; **or**
- b. Pass the relevant content assessment(s) identified in the table below indicating sufficient content knowledge; **or**
- c. Hold a permit to allow an unlicensed educator to cover this assignment for the remainder of the current school year. For additional information, see [Emergency Credentials](#).

Course with an EOC	Content Assessment Requirements
Algebra I*, Integrated Math I*, Algebra II, Geometry, Integrated Math II, Integrated Math III	Praxis 5165 – Mathematics: Content Knowledge (159 qualifying score) or Praxis 5161 (<i>accepted through 8/31/25 if taken by 8/31/22</i>) – Mathematics: Content Knowledge (160 qualifying score) or National Evaluation Series 304 – Mathematics (220 qualifying score) *A licensed educator can also teach Algebra I and Integrated Math I by obtaining the Algebra I employment standard. For additional details, see Algebra I .
Biology	Praxis 5236 – Biology: Content Knowledge (154 qualifying score) or Praxis 5235 (<i>accepted through 12/31/26 if taken by 12/31/23</i>) – Biology: Content Knowledge (148 qualifying score)
English I & II	Praxis 5038 – English Language Arts: Content Knowledge (167 qualifying score)
U.S. History and Geography	Praxis 5941 – World and U.S. History: Content Knowledge (157 qualifying score) or Praxis 5921 – Geography (149 qualifying score)

Additional Resources

- Additional endorsement guidance for currently licensed Tennessee educators is available [here](#).
- Algebra I and Integrated Math I Employment Standards questions should be directed to Scott.Eddins@tn.gov.
- CLEP Exam information and registration are available on the College Board website [\(here\)](#).
- ETS Praxis assessments, qualifying scores, and registration for current Tennessee assessments are available [here](#).
- General educator licensure questions should be directed to Educator.Licensure@tn.gov.
- National Evaluation Series assessments, qualifying scores, and registration for current Tennessee assessments are available [here](#).

Emergency Credentials

Permit and Waiver Overview

Permits and waivers are emergency credentials issued on a yearly basis from July 1—June 30, enabling districts to fill critical vacancies for which an appropriately licensed and endorsed educator could not be recruited. Waivers enable placement of a *licensed* educator in courses outside of their current area(s) of endorsement, whereas permits enable placement of an unlicensed individual in a high-need teaching role.

Emergency credential applications for state-identified shortage areas may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. In reviewing a permit or waiver request, the commissioner may consider individuals' previous work experience, postsecondary coursework, degrees held, and relevant experience in the subject area for which the emergency credential is requested.

For the most current information regarding permit and waiver eligibility, including the occupational and clinical practice permit, please consult the State Board of Education's [Educator Licensure Rule](#) and the Department's [Emergency Credential Guidance Document](#).

Permit and Waiver Restrictions

When the position requires a separate license, not just endorsement (e.g., the Instructional Leadership License or School Services Personnel License), the commissioner may not waive licensure requirements ([T.C.A. § 49-1-201](#)).

In accordance with [Every Student Succeeds Act](#) guidelines, beginning with the 2017-18 school year, states may no longer issue emergency credentials to educators who will teach courses that require a special education endorsement. Effective Sept. 1, 2017, all special education teachers must hold a full, valid license with the appropriate endorsement to cover their assignment.

In addition to Special Education courses, permits cannot be issued for PreK. Actively licensed educators are eligible to teach most courses using an endorsement exemption (waiver) except for Special Education and courses with an end-of-course (EOC) examination required for graduation.

See [Provisional Special Education Endorsements](#).

Permits to Teach

Per State Board of Education [Educator Licensure Policy 5.502](#), if the LEA is unable to secure an appropriately licensed educator to fill a critical vacancy, they may apply for a permit to enable an unlicensed individual to teach through the remainder of the school year. To qualify, the candidate must hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution. Educators are only eligible to receive three permits in their lifetime.

Targeted Recruitment Strategy

When applying for permits, districts must submit documentation of a targeted recruitment strategy for the position or shortage area. Documentation of a recruitment strategy can include, but is not limited to:

- a. partnerships with educator preparation providers (EPPs) and/or recruitment at EPPs (e.g.; documentation of communication about the vacancy and/or shortage areas, participation at job fairs, advertisements at the EPP, etc. with dates of communication/engagements);
- b. advertisements with documented posting/publication dates (newspaper advertisements are no longer specifically required); **and**
- c. recruitment campaigns (with documentation of campaign dates)

See [District Recruitment Strategies](#).

Endorsement Exemptions (Waivers)

Per State Board of Education [Educator Licensure Policy 5.502](#), an educator with a valid teaching license may teach up to two (2) sections of one (1) course outside the educator's area of endorsement each school year without an emergency credential, with the exception of special education, elementary P.E., and courses in which a state-level end of course examination is required. In order for an educator to teach more than one (1) course or more than two (2) sections of one (1) course outside the educator's area of endorsement, the director of schools shall submit a request for an endorsement exemption (waiver) to the commissioner.

For additional information about the two-section option, see [District and School Endorsement Flexibility](#).

Districts applying for a first, second, or third year waiver must provide a signature from the superintendent or designee verifying the following:

- i. the waiver is requested to fill a vacant, high need, and mission-critical position
- ii. the recruitment effort was unsuccessful; **and**
- iii. the educator for whom the waiver is requested is the most qualified candidate for the position.

As a reminder, emergency credential applications for state-identified shortage areas may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. In reviewing a permit or waiver request, the commissioner may consider individuals' previous work experience, postsecondary coursework, degrees held, and relevant experience in the subject area for which the emergency credential is requested.

District Recruitment Strategies

Before applying for a permit or a waiver, the department recommends that districts consider the following recruitment strategies to address vacancies.¹

¹ Reference to any example resources, organizations, activities, products, or services does not constitute or imply endorsement by the

Short-term Strategies

1. Identify all endorsements which an educator may hold in order to be assigned to the vacant course(s) using the [Correlation of Course and Endorsement Codes](#) to inform the recruitment effort.
2. Determine if current district personnel are already eligible to teach in the area of need based on currently held endorsements, or if there are opportunities to develop current personnel to meet the staffing need.
 - a. Consider offering additional compensation to educators who are appropriately endorsed for teaching a heavier load for the short-term.
 - b. Review the [District & School Endorsement Flexibility](#) guidance, including the section on [teaching one course out of the area of endorsement](#), and evaluate currently available personnel to determine if any educators currently employed by the district may be eligible to cover the vacant course(s) based upon currently held endorsements.
 - c. Determine if any educators currently employed by the district may be eligible for an [Additional Endorsement Added by Content Assessments Only](#) in order to be appropriately endorsed in the area of the vacancy. Districts may consider providing financial support to cover the cost of registration for necessary content assessments to add an endorsement, which could help the district avoid a lengthy and potentially expensive recruitment process.
 - d. Identify paraprofessionals who hold a bachelor's degree and are currently employed by the district who may be interested in pursuing educator licensure. Educator licensure candidates may be eligible to enroll in an [educator preparation program](#) with job-embedded clinical practice.

Long-term Strategies and Resources

Forecasting

- Create a staffing plan based on data that helps forecast hiring needs as early as possible.
- Develop strong [partnerships with educator preparation providers](#) and establish two-way communication about expectations and needs. Share anticipated staffing demands with these providers as early as possible and frequently communicate to share information with them about the types of educators you struggle to find. In conversations with providers, consider recent graduates who may qualify for programs with job-embedded clinical practice based on their undergraduate major, or career-changers that may exist in the region or local community.
- Encourage early notification with financial incentives or days.

Recruitment

- Use [differentiated pay](#) to help with hard-to-staff subjects, grades, or schools.
- Utilize online options, such as [k12jobspot.com](#) to recruit potential educators as early as possible.

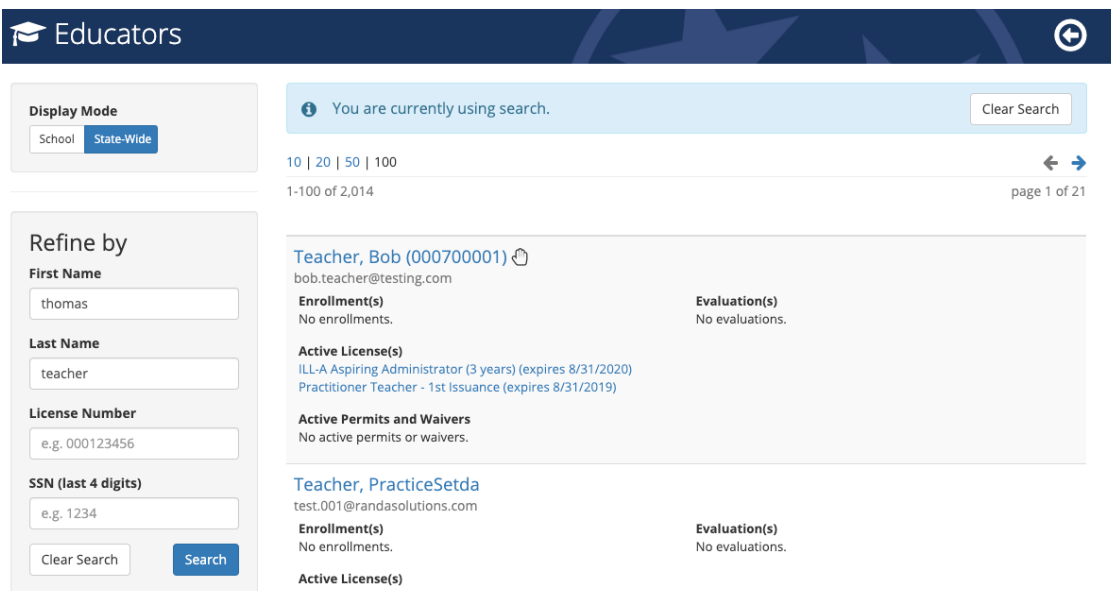
- Also, consider strategic placement of position announcements on the district website.
- Host or attend recruitment fairs.
 - Offer recruitment/retention bonuses.
 - Invest in a “grow your own” program
 - Offer [Teaching as a Profession](#), a program of study designed for students interested in becoming an educator. Course content covers the components of instruction, teaching strategies, types of assessments, student learning, special populations, educational technology, classroom management, lesson planning, professionalism, and more. Upon completion of this program of study, students will have participated in an internship placement and built a professional portfolio in preparation for advanced training as future educators at the postsecondary level.
 - Train human resources personnel and appropriate district decision makers on the [district value proposition](#).

Priority Processing

Directors of schools may request priority processing of transactions for initial in-state, out-of-state, and reactivation transactions. This request must be made in TNCompass following the steps below.

Requests for Priority Processing

Step 1: Search for the individual in TNCompass.



The screenshot shows the 'Educators' search page in TNCompass. The header includes a search bar and navigation icons. Below the header, there are filters for 'Display Mode' (School, State-Wide) and 'Refine by' (First Name, Last Name, License Number, SSN). The search results show two entries: 'Teacher, Bob (000700001)' and 'Teacher, PracticeSetda'. Each entry displays contact information, enrollment status, active licenses, and active permits.

Step 2: Navigate to the *Transactions* tab in the individual's profile and check the box next to the transaction for which you wish to request priority processing.

Transactions

Transactions that are qualified to be marked as high priority are **Initial Teaching**, **Out of State**, and **Reactivate License**. Once the transaction has met all the criteria listed below, it can be marked as high priority.

- All required fields have been completed and confirmed
- All required documentation is sent to the department and/or visible in TNCompass, including:
 - official transcripts from all institutions attended,
 - any out-of-state documentation (out of state license, verification of out-of-state program completion), if applicable;
 - any required assessment scores
- The transaction is fully-submitted and the transaction status is "Pending OELP Review."

High Priority	Transaction Type	License Type	EPP/Institution	Created	Submitted	Status
☐	Initial Teaching License	Practitioner Teacher - 1st Issuance		5/13/2020 10:46:40 AM	5/13/2020 10:52:26 AM	Pending OELP review

Transaction Statuses

- Not submitted** - The transaction has been started, but not submitted.
- Waiting for personal affirmation** - The transaction has been submitted, but is waiting on the educator to complete the personal affirmation
- Deleted** - The transaction has been deleted by the requester
- Pending OELP review** - The transaction has been submitted and the affirmation completed
- Approved** - The transaction has been approved by TDOE OELP
- Deficient** - The transaction has been found to be deficient by TDOE OELP
- Completed in MLO** - Review/actions done in external system
- Closed with no action** - The license request has been closed by the Specialist without an issuance or deficiency
- Deficient - Archived** - The transaction has been found to be deficient by TDOE OELP and was archived
- Deficient - Resubmitted** - The transaction has been found to be deficient by TDOE OELP and was resubmitted
- Waiting for information** - The transaction is pending processing by TDOE OELP but is waiting for information to become available

Step 3: Complete the affirmation by entering your PIN and click Yes.

High Priority Transaction

I affirm that I have reviewed this individual's professional and academic credentials to confirm, to the best of my ability, the individual's eligibility for Tennessee licensure, prior to requesting priority processing. I also understand that priority processing is reserved for individuals the district intends to hire pending issuance of a Tennessee license.

....|

Forgot your PIN?

No

Yes

A high priority transaction is denoted by a blue check mark. If you no longer wish to have a transaction prioritized, please remove the high priority processing request by unchecking the box.

Transactions

Transactions that are qualified to be marked as high priority are **Initial Teaching**, **Out of State**, and **Reactivate License**. Once the transaction has met all the criterias listed below, it can be marked as high priority.

- All elements in the transaction is confirmed.
- All data requirement per element (scores, transcripts, attachments, etc) is present.
- Transaction must be in Pending OELP Review.

High Priority	Transaction Type	License Type	EPP/Institution	Created	Submitted	Status
☒	Initial Teaching License	Practitioner Teacher - 1st Issuance		5/13/2020 10:46:40 AM	5/13/2020 10:52:26 AM	Pending OELP review

Transaction Statuses

- **Not submitted** - The transaction has been started, but not submitted.
- **Waiting for personal affirmation** - The transaction has been submitted, but is waiting on the educator to complete the personal affirmation
- **Deleted** - The transaction has been deleted by the requester
- **Pending OELP review** - The transaction has been submitted and the affirmation completed
- **Approved** - The transaction has been approved by TDOE OELP
- **Deficient** - The transaction has been found to be deficient by TDOE OELP
- **Completed in MLO** - Review/actions done in external system
- **Closed with no action** - The license request has been closed by the Specialist without an issuance or deficiency
- **Deficient - Archived** - The transaction has been found to be deficient by TDOE OELP and was archived
- **Deficient - Resubmitted** - The transaction has been found to be deficient by TDOE OELP and was resubmitted
- **Waiting for information** - The transaction is pending processing by TDOE OELP but is waiting for information to become available

Postsecondary Educator (PSE) License

Postsecondary Educator Pathway to Licensure

Per [T.C.A. § 49-5-112](#), individuals who taught at an eligible postsecondary institution, as defined in § 49-4-902, may apply for licensure with an endorsement to teach grades 9–12 (nine through twelve) in the subject area in which they taught at the eligible postsecondary institution. The following secondary education endorsements may be added through the postsecondary educator (PSE) pathway:

Postsecondary Educator Endorsement	Endorsement Code
Agricultural Education 9–12 (PSE)	950
Agriscience 9–12 (PSE)	951
American Sign Language 9–12 (PSE)	970
Arabic 9–12 (PSE)	960
Biology 9–12 (PSE)	926
Business Education 9–12 (PSE)	952
Business Technology 9–12 (PSE)	953
Chemistry 9–12 (PSE)	927
Chinese 9–12 (PSE)	961
Early Child Care and Service 9–12 (PSE)	981

Earth Science 9–12 (PSE)	928
Economics 9–12 (PSE)	930
English 9–12 (PSE)	959
Family and Consumer Science 9–12 (PSE)	954
Food Production and Management 9–12 (PSE)	980
French 9–12 (PSE)	963
Geography 9–12 (PSE)	931
German 9–12 (PSE)	964
Government 9–12 (PSE)	932
Greek 9–12 (PSE)	965
History 9–12 (PSE)	933
Japanese 9–12 (PSE)	966
Latin 9–12 (PSE)	967
Marketing Education 9–12 (PSE)	958
Mathematics 9–12 (PSE)	925
Physics 9–12 (PSE)	929
Russian 9–12 (PSE)	968
Spanish 9–12 (PSE)	969
Speech Communication 9–12 (PSE)	946
Tech Engineering Education 9–12 (PSE)	982

PSE Application Requirements

Applicants for Tennessee educator licensure through the PSE pathway must submit all of the following documentation to the department:

Academic Transcripts

Official transcripts are required from all institutions attended. See [Academic Transcripts](#).

Professional Assessments

Submission of qualifying scores on all assessments required for licensure in the desired endorsement area are required prior to the issuance of the license. See [Professional Assessments](#).

Experience

The candidate must provide verification of experience at an eligible postsecondary institution that is accredited by a regional accrediting association, as defined by [T.C.A. § 49-4-902](#). Qualifying experience requires serving as:

- a. a full-time college professor or instructor for at least two (2) of the last five (5) years; **or**
- b. a part-time college professor or instructor, teaching at least one (1) course per semester, for at least three (3) of the last five (5) years.

This information can be documented using the Department's [Experience Verification Form](#), which must be completed by a university official.

Evaluation of Teaching

Documentation is required to demonstrate at least three (3) years of teaching evaluations that rate the applicant as proficient or better in the subject area in which licensure is sought. Teaching evaluations must:

- a. have been administered by the institution where the applicant taught;
- b. indicate a formal, summative evaluation of the educator at the time of employment;
- c. include an evaluation rating of proficient or better

If the institution does not use a formal rating system, the dean, director, or other direct supervisor may verify the applicant's performance by submitting a letter to the Department including:

- a. name and current title of the dean/director/other direct supervisor providing verification;
- b. title and role/relationship to the applicant at the time of the applicant's employment;

- c. applicant dates of employment;
- d. courses and subject area(s) taught by the applicant while employed by the institution;
- e. confirmation that the institution did not use a formal, summative evaluation process at the time of the applicant's employment;
- f. verification of proficient or better teaching performance in the subject area during employment; **and**
- g. date and signature

Once all requirements have been met, the candidate can apply using the Out-of-State Educator – Practitioner 1st Issuance transaction. Please include a submission note indicating intent to apply using the Postsecondary Educator pathway to licensure.

Provisional Special Education Endorsements

The State Board of Education approved an additional pathway for educators seeking to add a provisional special education endorsement to their license. This pathway allows educators to teach in a special education classroom for up to three years while working towards completing requirements for the continuously renewable version of the endorsement. To obtain this endorsement, a State Board-approved EPP must submit a transaction in TNCompass on the educator's behalf. In the transaction, the EPP must provide a recommendation for the endorsement and verify the following:

- a. Enrollment in a program of study for additional endorsement in the specialty area, **and**
- b. That the candidate will be assigned a mentor who is appropriately endorsed in the area in which the candidate is seeking additional endorsement.

During the three-year validity period of the endorsement, educators must complete a preparation program and submit qualifying scores on the required professional assessments. If an educator does not complete these requirements, the endorsement will become inactive. Educators who are completing traditional post-baccalaureate programs may continue to be issued the full endorsement upon completion of the program (additional mentoring requirements do not apply to these programs).

The following special education endorsements may be added through the provisional pathway:

Provisional Special Populations Endorsement	Endorsement Code
Provisional Early Development and Learning pre-K-K	199
Provisional Special Education Comprehensive K-12	195
Provisional Special Education Early Childhood pre-K-3	193
Provisional Special Education Gifted pre-K-12	198
Provisional Special Education Hearing pre-K-12	197
Provisional Special Education Interventionist 6-12	191
Provisional Special Education Interventionist K-8	190
Provisional Special Education Vision pre-K-12	196

Mathematics 6-10 Endorsement

To help meet the demand for qualified educators to teach Algebra I, the State Board of Education created an endorsement in mathematics 6-10 (endorsement code 2002). In addition to middle grades mathematics courses, educators who hold this endorsement are permitted to teach secondary mathematics courses, including Algebra 1, Geometry, and Integrated Math 1 & 2).

Initial In-State Licensure

In-state educator candidates completing approved programs in mathematics 6-10, as well as those completing programs in mathematics 6-8 and mathematics 6-12, may be eligible to receive the mathematics 6-10 endorsement, provided all criteria are met. Candidates should communicate directly with their educator preparation provider about program requirements.

Out-of-State Licensure

Educators who hold an active license in a state other than Tennessee with an aligned endorsement may receive the Mathematics 6-10 endorsement upon initial licensure. Educators who receive a Practitioner 1st Issuance license based on possession of an initial-level out-of-state license must pass the appropriate assessment (as indicated in [Professional Assessments for Educator Policy 5.105](#)) in order to qualify for their next renewal or advancement.

Additional Endorsements

The [Additional Endorsements Added by Content Assessments Only](#) section has been updated to include the mathematics 6-10 endorsement.

Reactivation

Educators who hold an expired license with endorsement in mathematics 6-12 (or have an expired mathematics 6-12 endorsement on an otherwise active license) may provide qualifying scores (as indicated in [Professional Assessments for Educator Policy 5.105](#)) on the NES Middle and Secondary Mathematics assessment (105) to reactivate and receive the Mathematics 6-10 endorsement in lieu of the Mathematics 6-12 endorsement. Please note that licensure reactivation also requires proof of program completion, per state board [Educator Licensure Rule 0520-02-03](#).

Substitute Teaching and Unfilled Vacancies

Substitute Teachers: 20 days

Educators must hold a valid Tennessee teaching license to teach in a public school, and educators without a valid teaching license cannot be staffed or evaluated in TNCompass. Substitute teachers are allowed by law to serve in their position for 20 consecutive days without a license.

ESSA-required 20-Day Parent Notification

In Tennessee, in accordance with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, all Title I schools are required to provide timely notice to parents of students who have been assigned to or taught by a teacher for four or more consecutive weeks when the teacher does not meet applicable state licensure requirements (*including professional qualifications developed by the LEA in alignment with an approved charter or strategic waiver application*) at the grade level(s) and subject area(s) in which the teacher has been assigned (*ESSA Sec. 1112 (e)(1)(B)(ii)*). In Tennessee, notification requirements apply to all educators in all LEA schools/programs. Notifications must be made within 10 business days following the four consecutive weeks. In compliance with ESSA requirements, parents must be notified of a teacher's professional qualifications under the following circumstances:

Public LEAs

When students have been assigned or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet applicable state licensure

requirements at the grade level(s) and subject area(s) in which the teacher has been assigned.

Charter/Strategic Waiver LEAs

When students have been assigned or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet LEA professional qualification requirements in alignment with approved state licensure requirements for special education teachers at the grade level(s) and subject area(s) in which the teacher has been assigned. It is possible for a teacher to meet charter/strategic waiver LEA professional qualification requirements and not meet in-field requirements. In this circumstance, 20 Day Notification is not required.

- *Clearance certificate requirements are not subject to 20 Day Notification.*
- 20-day notifications are not required for paraprofessionals and substitute teachers.
 - Paraprofessionals: ESSA does not include paraprofessionals as educators for whom 20-day notifications must be sent.

In Tennessee, notifications must occur within 10 business days following the four consecutive weeks and, for verification purposes, notifications must contain:

- Day/month/year of notification
- Name of the teacher who has not met professional qualification requirements
- Name of the LEA and/or school/program
- Statement that the teacher has not met state certification OR LEA charter/strategic waiver professional qualification requirements for the grade level(s) and/or subject area(s) in which the teacher is assigned. Grade level and/or subject area must be identified.

In Tennessee, notification requirements apply to ALL educators in all LEA schools/programs. The LEA must maintain records of notifications that meet the above requirements.

Best Practices for 20-Day Parent Notification

ESSA does not prescribe the exact method of dissemination for notifications. In Tennessee, the following are considered best practices when notifying parents; a sample is provided on the following page.

- Develop written procedures for compliance which include a timeline and person, by position, responsible for verifying notification content, verifying dissemination of notification, and maintaining notification documentation.
- Notify parents in a format such that all parents have the opportunity to receive the information.
- Notify parents, to the extent practicable, in a language that they may understand.
- Ensure the notification includes a point of contact information by position, school/program, or LEA name.

Parent Notification Letter Template

To be issued if a teacher has taught a student for four or more consecutive weeks and does not meet state and/or LEA professional qualifications.

[Print on Letterhead]

[Month, Day, Year]

Dear Parent(s)/Legal Guardian(s):

In Tennessee, in accordance with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, all Title I schools are required to provide timely notice to parents of students who have been assigned to or taught by a teacher, for four or more consecutive weeks, when the teacher does not meet applicable state licensure requirements at the grade level(s) and subject area(s) in which the teacher has been assigned. *ESSA Sec.*

1112 (e)(1)(B)(ii)

We are notifying you that your child's [insert grade-if applicable-and course] teacher, [educator name], does not meet state and/or district professional qualifications. [Insert name of LEA or school] is working with this teacher to ensure that the necessary steps are taken in order to meet these requirements.

[Insert educator name] has [insert qualifications, such as the name of the degree the teacher earned and the college from which it was earned] and has taught in a local school for [insert number, if relevant] years.

We will closely monitor this class to ensure students are receiving adequate instruction. However, if you have additional questions or concerns about your child's educational progress or teacher, you may contact me.

Sincerely, Name, Title Telephone Email

Screening Licensed and Non-Licensed Applicants

For over 25 years, the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) has helped keep students safe by maintaining the [NASDTEC Educator Identification Clearinghouse](#). *The Clearinghouse* is used by the educator certification/licensure agencies in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Department of Defense schools, and U.S. Territories to screen out-of-state licensure applicants to identify those who have had an adverse action taken against their certificates. The Clearinghouse is now available to local school districts as well.

Since most adverse actions taken against an educator's license are not prosecuted as criminal offenses, the educator's misconduct may not show up in a traditional criminal background check. By including the Clearinghouse in its screening of licensed and non-licensed applicants, a school district can make more fully informed hiring decisions. A brief overview video about *The Clearinghouse* is available [here](#).

Employment Standards

Employment standards allow an educator to fill specific positions without obtaining a full endorsement. By meeting the criteria outlined in the State Board of Education's Employment Standards rule, educators can qualify to teach courses such as Algebra I, Gifted Education, and Personal Finance. For current information about available employment standard options and specific requirements, visit [Rules of the State Board of Education Chapter 0520-02-06](#).

See also [District and School Endorsement Flexibility](#).

Algebra I

Gifted Education

0520-02-06-.02

(2) (a) A general education or special education teacher providing direct instruction to a student identified as intellectually gifted, in accordance with the student's individualized education program (IEP), shall meet the following employment standards:

1. Hold a valid Tennessee Teaching license with an endorsement in a general education area or special education area; **and**
2. Meet one (1) of the following criteria:
 - (i) Hold an endorsement in gifted education;
 - (ii) Provide gifted services under the supervision of a gifted consulting teacher that meets the requirements of this rule;
 - (iii) Complete a minimum of six (6) semester hours in gifted coursework from a state board approved educator preparation program, or from an educator preparation program approved by a state other than Tennessee; or
 - (iv) Complete a gifted education training program recognized by the department of education.

Operating Procedures

- (b) Individuals serving as a consulting teacher in gifted education are responsible, either through direct instruction or supervision, for implementation of IEPs for gifted students. All consulting teachers in gifted education shall hold a valid Tennessee teaching license with an endorsement in gifted education.
- (c) Individuals serving as a gifted education coordinator in special or general education shall meet one (1) of the following employment standards:
1. Hold a valid Tennessee Teaching license with an endorsement in a gifted education;
 2. Hold a valid Tennessee teaching license and complete six (6) semester hours in gifted education from a State Board approved educator preparation program or from an educator preparation program approved by a state other than Tennessee; **or**
 3. Hold a valid Tennessee Instructional Leader License.
- (d) Individuals serving as a gifted education coordinator in special or general education shall not serve as a consulting teacher in gifted education unless they meet the requirements of a consulting teacher in gifted education under this rule.

Personal Finance

0520-02-06-.02

- (3) (a) **A teacher of personal finance** shall hold a valid secondary or K-12 Tennessee teacher license and shall meet one (1) of the following requirements:
1. Complete a minimum of fourteen (14) clock hours of training on use of the state adopted Personal Finance standards provided by:
 - (i) The department of education; or
 - (ii) A department of education-approved organization or institution of higher education; or
 2. Hold an active endorsement in economics, business, marketing, or family and consumer science.

Endorsements

District & School Endorsement Flexibility

Teaching One Course Out of Area of Endorsement

Operating Procedures

Tennessee districts and schools have the option to staff a licensed educator to teach up to two sections of one course outside of their endorsement area. This flexibility cannot be used to cover elementary P.E., special education, or EOC courses.

Flexibility – Grade Span of Endorsement/In School

Tennessee districts and schools may exercise limited flexibility according to the following table:

Grade-level of Endorsement Held	Flexibility to Teach
Pre-K-3	Any course in grade 4 in a school that includes grade 3
K-5	Any course in grade 6 in a school that includes grade 5
6-8	Courses in grade 5 in the same content area as the 6-8 endorsement
6-12	Courses in grade 5 in the same content area as the 6-12 endorsement
7-12	Courses in grades 5 and 6 in the same content area as the 7-12 endorsement

Endorsement areas and grade spans not listed in this table are ineligible for flexibility (e.g.; an educator who holds an endorsement in grades 4-8 may not also teach grade 3).

Additional Endorsements

Educators with a full and valid license may add additional endorsements through one (1) of the following options:

(a) Option 1 – In-State Additional Endorsement Program:

1. Complete an additional endorsement program from a State Board-approved educator preparation provider
2. Be recommended by the approved educator preparation provider; and
3. Submit qualifying scores on all required content assessments as defined in the [Professional Assessments for Tennessee Educators Policy \(5.105\)](#).

(b) Option 2 – Out-of-State Additional Endorsement Program:

1. Complete an additional endorsement program from an educator preparation provider approved by a state other than Tennessee;
2. Be recommended by the approved educator preparation provider using the [Out-of-State Verification of Completion](#) form; and

Operating Procedures

3. Submit qualifying scores on all required content assessments as defined in the [Professional Assessments for Tennessee Educators Policy \(5.105\)](#).

(c) Option 3 – Initial Out-of-State License:

1. Hold a qualifying current endorsement, as determined by the department, on an active *initial*-level educator license from a state other than Tennessee; and
2. Submit qualifying scores on all required content assessments as defined in the [Professional Assessments for Tennessee Educators Policy \(5.105\)](#).

(d) Option 4 – Professional Out-of-State License:

1. Hold a qualifying current endorsement, as determined by the department, on an active *professional*-level educator license from a state other than Tennessee

(e) Option 5 – Assessment-Only:

1. Hold a qualifying current endorsement, as determined by the department, on an active Tennessee educator license; and
2. Submit qualifying scores on all required content assessments as defined in the [Professional Assessments for Tennessee Educators Policy \(5.105\)](#).

See Additional Endorsements Added by Assessment Only in the next section.

(f) Option 6 – Degree

1. Hold a valid practitioner-level or professional-level Tennessee teacher license; and
2. Hold a degree with a major aligned to a qualifying middle or secondary core academic or World Language endorsement as defined in the [Professional Assessments for Tennessee Educators Policy 5.105](#).

Additional Endorsements Added by Assessment Only

Educators may apply for additional endorsements by content assessments only for each endorsement an educator is seeking to add if all the criteria below are met. To qualify for the assessment-only option, educators must:

1. have completed an approved educator preparation program;
2. hold an active Tennessee educator license; **and**
3. have obtained qualifying scores on all state-required content assessments that are:

Operating Procedures

- submitted to the Department directly by the assessment administrator (e.g., ETS or Pearson); **and**
- aligned with the requirements outlined in the State Board's [Professional Assessment Policy](#);

The following table lists endorsements that may be added by assessment only. Educators seeking an additional endorsement not listed in the table below must complete a qualifying endorsement program or possess an active out-of-state license with an aligned endorsement area.

Endorsement Held		Additional Endorsement Options by Content Assessments Only
Category (Grade Span)	Content Area	
College, Career, & Technical Education Academic Secondary Grades (6–12; 9–12)	Agribusiness	College, Career, & Technical Education Academic (All) Secondary Grades (6–12; 9–12) Core Academic Middle Grades (6–8 only) Middle and Secondary Grades (6–10, 6–12) World Languages (6–12 only)
	Agriscience	
	Business Education	
	Business Technology	
	Early Childcare and Services	
	Family and Consumer Science	
	Food Production and Management Services	
	Marketing	
	Tech– Engineering	
Core Academic Middle Grades (4–8; 6–8)	English/Language Arts	Core Academic Middle Grades (6–8 only) Middle and Secondary Grades (6–10 only)
	Mathematics	
	Middle Grades Education	
	Science	
	Social Studies	

Operating Procedures

Endorsement Held		Additional Endorsement Options by Content Assessments-Only
Category (Grade Span)	Content Area	
Core Academic Middle and Secondary Grades (6–12; 7–12)	Biology	College, Career, & Technical Education Academic (All) Secondary Grades (6–12; 9–12) Core Academic Middle Grades (6–8 only) Middle & Secondary Grades (6–12, 6–10) World Languages (6–12 only)
	Chemistry	
	Earth Science	
	Economics	
	English	
	Geography	
	Government	
	History	
	Mathematics	
	Physics	
	Psychology	
	Sociology	
	Speech Communication	
Early Childhood Education (pre-K–3; pre-K–K)	Early Childhood Education	Early Childhood Education (pre-K–K only)
	Early Development/ Learning	N/A
Elementary Education (K–6; K–5)	Elementary Education	Special Populations English as a Second Language pre-K-8
Fine Arts (K–12)	Computer Science	Core Academic Middle Grades (6–8 only) Middle and Secondary Grades (6–12, 6–10)
	Dance	
	Instrumental/General Music	
	Theatre	College, Career, & Technical Education Academic (All) Secondary Grades (6–12; 9–12)
	Visual Arts	
	Vocal/General Music	Fine Arts (All)
		Physical Education and Health (All)

Operating Procedures

Endorsement Held		Additional Endorsement Options by Content Assessments-Only
Category (Grade Span)	Content Area	
Library Information Specialist (pre-K-12)	Library Information Specialist	College, Career, & Technical Education Academic (All) Secondary Grades (6-12; 9-12) Core Academic Middle Grades (6-8 only) Middle and Secondary Grades (6-12, 6-10) Fine Arts (All) Physical Education and Health (All)
Physical Education and Health (K-12)	Health and Wellness	College, Career, & Technical Education Academic (All) Secondary Grades (6-12; 9-12) Core Academic Middle Grades (6-8 only) Middle and Secondary Grades (6-12, 6-10 only) Fine Arts (All) Physical Education and Health (All)
	Physical Education	

Operating Procedures

Endorsement Held		Additional Endorsement Options by Content Assessments-Only
Category (Grade Span)	Content Area	
Reading Specialist (pre-K-12)	Reading Specialist	College, Career, & Technical Education Academic (All) Secondary Grades (6-12; 9-12) Core Academic Middle Grades (6-8 only) Middle and Secondary Grades (6-12, 6-10) Fine Arts (All) Physical Education and Health (All)
Special Populations (pre-K-12)	Speech/Language Teacher	N/A

Operating Procedures

Endorsement Held		Additional Endorsement Options by Content Assessments-Only
Category (Grade Span)	Content Area	
Special Populations Special Education (K-12)	Special Education Comprehensive	College, Career, & Technical Education Academic (All) Secondary Grades (6-12; 9-12) Core Academic Middle Grades (6-8 only) Middle and Secondary Grades (6-12, 6-10) Early Childhood Education (All) Elementary Education (K-5 only)
	Special Education Modified	Fine Arts (All) Integrated Early Childhood and Special Education (All) Physical Education and Health (All) Special Populations Early Childhood Education (pre-K-3) Early Development and Learning pre-K-K Gifted Education pre-K-12 Special Education Comprehensive (K-12) Special Education Interventionist (K-8) Special Education Interventionist (6-12) Special Education Vision (pre-K-12)

Operating Procedures

Endorsement Held		Additional Endorsement Options by Content Assessments-Only
Category (Grade Span)	Content Area	
Special Populations Special Education (K-8)	Special Education Interventionist	Core Academic Middle Grades (6-8 only) Early Childhood Education (All) Elementary Education (K-5 only) Integrated Early Childhood and Special Education (All) Special Populations Early Development and Learning pre-K-K Gifted Education pre-K-12 Special Education Vision pre-K-12 Special Education Preschool/Early Childhood pre-K-3
Special Populations Special Education (6-12)	Special Education Interventionist	College, Career, & Technical Education Academic Secondary Grades (6-12; 9-12) Core Academic Middle Grades (6-8 only) Middle and Secondary Grades (6-12, 6-10) Special Populations Gifted Education pre-K-12 Special Education Vision pre-K-12
Special Populations Special Education (pre-K-12)	Special Education Hearing	N/A
	Special Education Vision	
	Gifted Education	

Operating Procedures

Endorsement Held		Additional Endorsement Options by Content Assessments-Only
Category (Grade Span)	Content Area	
Special Populations English as a Second Language (pre-K-12)	English as a Second Language	College, Career, & Technical Education Academic (All) Secondary Grades (6-12; 9-12)
		Core Academic Middle Grades (6-8 only) Middle and Secondary Grades (6-12, 6-10) Middle and Secondary Grades (9-12)
		Fine Arts (All)
		Physical Education and Health (All)
Special Populations Early Childhood Education (pre-K-3) Early Development and Learning pre-K-K	Special Education Early Childhood	Early Childhood Education (All)
		Integrated Early Childhood and Special Education (All)
World Languages All Grades (pre-K-12)	Arabic	College, Career, Fine Arts Technical Education Academic (All) Secondary Grades (6-12; 9-12) Core Academic Middle Grades (6-8 only) Middle and Secondary Grades (6-12, 6-10) Fine Arts (All) Physical Education and Health (All) World Languages (pre-K-12)
	American Sign Language	
	Chinese	
	French	
	German	
	Greek	
	Japanese	
	Latin	
	Other World Languages	
	Russian	
	Spanish	

Experience and Staffing

Experience Verification

Experience earned by teaching in a Tennessee public school is entered electronically in TNCompass by the district at the end of each school year. It then appears under the *Experience* section on the *Licensure* tab under the educator profile in TNCompass.

In the event that experience must be verified for the purpose of licensure advancement prior to the annual district update in TNCompass, or if data was incorrectly reported for previous years, educators may request that the district complete the [Experience Verification Form](#). Once completed by the district, the educator must upload the form to their educator profile in TNCompass on the *Licensure* tab, as an attachment.

Please note that the information provided on this form will not change what is reflected in the Experience section of the educator's TNCompass profile. However, analysts will be able to access the documentation for the purpose of experience verification, and the department recommends that any additional experience added via this form is considered by districts when calculating current salary, as per district policy.

Staffing Assignments

Staffing changes, including changes to the historical staffing record, must be completed at the district level by a user with evaluation administrator or superintendent designee permissions. Educators with inaccuracies in their staffing records must reach out to the district for these corrections. Staffing assignments, including historical staffing changes, will not be reflected in the experience record.