



Advanced Teacher Certification: *A 50-State Review*

After a period where the number of students in K–12 schools grew faster than the number of incoming qualified teachers, the 2016 Washington State Legislature passed E2SSB 6455, “an act relating to expanding the professional educator workforce by increasing career opportunities in education.”¹ The Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) was directed to examine the impact of a new reciprocity policy included in the legislation, as well as identify which states have advanced teacher certificates and compare their requirements to Washington’s professional certificate.

While the 2016 Legislature directed a change in Washington’s reciprocity policy, subsequent policy decisions (discussed in [Section I](#)) meant a change was never implemented. Thus, there was no change in policy for WSIPP to evaluate. However, we addressed the other assignment components and also investigated other aspects of teacher credentials, namely incentives for advanced certification and micro-credential programs across the country. Finally, we examined the characteristics of teachers with professional certificates in Washington over time.

[Section I](#) provides background information that informs our assignment. [Section II](#) describes teaching certificates in Washington. [Section III](#) reports findings from a 50-state review of advanced certificates and other aspects of teacher credentials. [Section IV](#) summarizes key findings across all sections.

¹ [Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 6455, Chapter 233, Laws of 2016.](#)

Summary

The 2016 Legislature directed WSIPP to examine multiple policies related to advanced teacher certification that could impact the teacher workforce.

With various advanced teaching certificate policy changes in recent years, WSIPP was unable to analyze the effectiveness of specific policies toward expanding the educator workforce. However, we provide detailed background information on teachers with the professional certificates in Washington and conduct a 50-state review of certification-related policies that could impact teacher recruitment and retention in Washington and other states.

In 2019, nearly 25% of all classroom teachers in Washington held an advanced teacher certificate. However, since they became optional in 2017, the number of new certificates awarded has fallen by nearly 60%.

A 50-state review identified 28 states with advanced teacher certificates. Washington is among the majority of these states in using National Board Certification as a requirement toward advanced certification, and one of five using it as the primary path. Half of these states, including Washington, offer some sort of financial incentive for teachers to earn an advanced certificate.

Additionally, teachers in every state have earned micro-credentials, and 64% of states, including Washington, have micro-credential policies allowing them to be used toward some aspect of certification.

I. Policy Background

According to an analysis by the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB), Washington has experienced a shortage of teachers in public K–12 schools over the past decade due to increasing student enrollment, a decreasing number of teachers completing preparation programs, teacher turnover, and an outflow of retiring teachers.² For example, student enrollment in Washington public schools increased by 11% between 2011 and 2016 while the number of individuals completing teacher preparation programs decreased 13% over the same period.³ PESB’s analysis also found a shortage of teachers in specific content areas and certain geographic regions, as well as a scarcity of teachers who reflect the racial and ethnic makeup of the state’s student population.⁴

The 2016 Legislature passed E2SSB 6455, which proposed strategies to address the shortage including the creation of a statewide recruitment initiative, expanding alternative certificate route programs, and requiring PESB to create an expedited reciprocity process to award advanced certification to out-of-state candidates.⁵ In this legislation, WSIPP was directed to compare how the requirements of advanced teacher certificates in other states compare to Washington’s professional certificate and the extent to which the certificate allows Washington teachers to teach internationally (see parts a) and b) from the study language)

² PESB. (2015). *Addressing the recurring problem of teacher shortages*.

³ PESB. (2019). *The data and the story: Educator shortage in Washington State* and OSPI’s State Report Card Data.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ E2SSB 6455.

Legislative Assignment

...the Washington institute for public policy must review the effect of the provisions in RCW 28A.410.250(8) and section 5 of this act...The review and report must include information on:

- a) *The extent to which advanced level teacher certification from other states compare to the standards and requirements of the Washington professional certificate;*
- b) *The extent to which United States federal or state-issued advanced level certificates that allow individuals to teach internationally compare to the standards and requirements of the Washington professional certificate; and*
- c) *Whether the provisions in RCW 28A.410.250(8) and section 5 of this act have increased the number of professional certifications issued to individuals from out-of-state.*

E2SSB 6455, Chapter 233, Laws of 2016

We were also assigned to evaluate how the change in PESB’s reciprocity policy affected the number of professional certificates issued to out-of-state individuals (see part c) of the study language above).

The policies WSIPP was assigned to review have different goals related to expanding the educator workforce. Expedited reciprocity policies aim to decrease certification barriers for out-of-state candidates looking to move and teach in new states. Advanced certification policies offer growth opportunities (and sometimes financial incentives) to teachers and may help retain teachers in the workforce.

Ultimately, PESB did not change its reciprocity process because it had established a policy in 2000 and had determined that only a few states (Ohio and Wisconsin) had advanced certificates comparable to Washington’s professional certificate.⁶

Further, legislation passed in 2017 made the professional certificate optional for all teachers going forward. The ProTeach portfolio—a process most teachers were required to complete to obtain the certificate—was discontinued after 2019.⁷

Since PESB did not change its reciprocity for advanced certification, we could not evaluate the effect of the policy change. However, in this report, we discuss how advanced teacher certificates in other states compare to Washington’s professional certificate and the extent to which the certificate allows Washington teachers to teach internationally, as originally set forth in our legislative assignment.

Additionally, based on feedback from external stakeholders and legislative staff, we include information about the characteristics of teachers with professional certification in Washington over time, which provides specific context and background to the 50-state review. We also examined incentives tied to advanced certificates in other states, as well as micro-credential programs. These policies have been used to recruit and retain teachers; goals similar to the goal of expanding reciprocity, which we were originally assigned to evaluate.

These additions intend to add depth to the remaining portions of the original assignment and explore policies with goals similar to those initially assigned. Examining the characteristics of Washington teachers with the professional certificate over time will provide specific context and background to the 50-state review, while the review of incentives and micro-credentials policies, which have both been used to recruit and retain teachers, offers additional information for comparison.

⁶ PESB board meeting materials. September 2016 and WAC 181-79A-257.

⁷ Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 1341, Chapter 26, Laws of 2017.

II. Teacher Certificates

Teacher Certification in the U.S.

Across states, structure and terminology surrounding the governance of teacher certification vary. Some states offer certificates in multiple tiers with increasing requirements for higher tiers, while others operate under less complex models with only one tier. Washington is considered a two-tier licensure state (See [Exhibit 1](#) for definitions of terms commonly used throughout this report).

All states award a standard, full-time teaching certificate to individuals who complete a set of requirements. While requirements for standard certification differ among states, baseline requisites are similar. For standard certificates, all states require teachers hold a bachelor's degree, complete an accredited teacher preparation program, and participate in some form of student teaching. Washington's standard (first-tier) license is called the residency certificate.

Some states offer teacher certificates beyond a standard license to those who fulfill additional requirements. These are commonly referred to as "professional" or "advanced" certificates. Washington's advanced (second-tier) license is called the professional certificate.

WSIPP deemed states that offer a certificate beyond the standard license and with extra requirements, other than experience or degree attainment alone, as "multi-tiered" certification structures. States offering no such subsequent certificate are considered "single-tiered."⁸

⁸ Three states with single-tier certification structures, Alabama, Mississippi, and South Carolina, assign "class level" designation to teacher certificates. Class levels differ from full certificate tiers in that they only reflect a teacher's level of formal education. In both cases, class level reflects degree attainment.

Exhibit 1 Glossary of Terms

Standard Certificate: The initial (and sometimes only) teaching certificate that individuals are required to obtain, often after completing a bachelor's degree and an accredited teacher preparation program. We also refer to this as a first-tier license in this report.

Advanced Certificate: An advanced certificate beyond a standard certificate that teachers may or may not be required to obtain, either by completing higher education degrees, professional development, and/or oversight requirements. We also refer to this as a second-tier license.

Residency Certificate: Washington's required standard teaching certificate. To receive this license, individuals must earn a bachelor's degree and complete an accredited teacher preparation program.

Professional Certificate: Washington's optional advanced teaching certificate. Individuals can earn this certificate if they obtain National Board Certification or hold an advanced certificate from Ohio or Wisconsin.

Teacher License Reciprocity: A policy agreement in which out-of-state teacher candidates can earn a teaching license in another state if they meet specific requirements set by the "receiving" state.

Micro-credential Program: A digital form of certification that teachers can use to display competency of certain skills. Teachers can receive digital badges to demonstrate knowledge of a skill.

Teacher Portfolio: A process that requires teachers to document and compile evidence of effective pedagogical practices and student learning and can be used to assess teacher performance.

States also award teaching certificates other than standard and advanced. Often, states will award temporary or initial certificates to individuals who complete teacher preparation programs but are still in the process of completing other requirements. Most states also offer alternative paths to certification for Career and Technical Education (CTE) teachers. Some states also have a "master teacher designation" that functions similar to a certification tier but is not included as part of the certification structure. Master teacher designation is discussed in [Appendix II](#).

Throughout the U.S., "certificate," "license," and "credential" all refer to the piece of evidence that signify a teacher has met the requirements to legally teach in a state. In this report, we use these terms interchangeably but recognize that specific certificate names may differ.

We also explore an emerging certification tool in the U.S. education system known as micro-credentials. These are a digital form of certification used in education as a way for teachers to display competency of a specific skill through a series of portfolio assessments.⁹ Teachers who demonstrate that they have mastered a specific competency receive a "digital badge" as proof that their submission is approved.

Digital badges emerged in the early 2010s as a way for individuals to demonstrate command over specific technical skills. A badge represents the completion of a micro-credential or a group of micro-credentials known as a "stack" about the same skill or topic. Micro-credentials for teachers come in a variety of topics such as

⁹ Micro-credentials can be earned by all types of educators.

technical education, computer science, and culturally responsive social-emotional learning.¹⁰

Teacher Certification in Washington

Residency Certificate

Washington is considered a two-tier licensure state. The residency certificate is Washington's standard (first-tier) license that all beginning teachers, as well as many out-of-state teachers who move to Washington,¹¹ are required to obtain first.

Individuals must earn a bachelor's degree and complete a state-approved teacher preparation program to meet residency certificate requirements.¹² Once awarded, the residency certificate can be renewed every five years by completing a certain number of continuing education credits or meeting goals outlined in educators' professional growth plans.

Professional Certificate

Washington's advanced (second-tier) license is called the professional certificate, which was established in 2000. Before 2017, teachers with a residency certificate and two years of full-time employment were required to obtain a professional certificate. In-state candidates could obtain the professional certificate through two routes:

- 1) by completing the ProTeach portfolio, demonstrating their pedagogical knowledge, skills, and impact in the classroom or
- 2) receiving National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) Certification (referred to as NBPTS or National Board Certification hereafter).

Washington also issued the professional certificate to out-of-state teachers who held advanced licensure in Ohio or Wisconsin.¹³

With the passage of E2SHB 1341 in 2017,¹⁴ the professional certificate became an optional license. Further, the ProTeach portfolio was discontinued in December 2019 because few candidates were pursuing the certificate.¹⁵ [Exhibit 2](#) offers a timeline of policy events related to the certificate.

Currently, individuals can receive the professional certificate if they achieve National Board Certification or hold an advanced certificate from Ohio or Wisconsin.¹⁶ Similar to the residency certificate, the professional certificate is renewable every five years.

¹⁰ PESB. (2019). *The potential of micro-credentials in Washington state*.

¹¹ Washington's reciprocity policy awards the residency certificate to out-of-state teachers who have completed an approved teacher preparation program in any state. Washington also issues reciprocity if an out-of-state teacher holds a valid teacher certificate and has three years of teaching experience. [WAC 181-79a-257](#) and OSPI's [residency teacher out-of-state information](#).

¹² [WAC 181-79a-206](#) and OSPI flights from [Washington State certification—Frequently asked questions](#).

¹³ PESB has deemed that the standards and requirements for advanced teacher certificates issued in Ohio and Wisconsin are equivalent to Washington's professional certificate ProTeach process.

¹⁴ [E2SHB 1341](#).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Teachers who hold a National Board Certificate can apply for or renew a [professional certificate](#).

Exhibit 2

Professional Certificate Timeline

2000	Professional certificate established. State Board of Education (SBE) adopts policy in WAC 181-79A-257, establishing out-of-state reciprocity for the professional certificate.
2005	Rule-making authority for certification transferred to PESB. PESB adopts SBE's out-of-state reciprocity policy for professional certificates.
2008	SSB 6726: Legislature grants PESB authority to establish an assessment for the professional certificate.
2010	SSB 6726/HB 2261: PESB implements the ProTeach portfolio as a requirement to achieve professional certification.
2016	E2SSB 6455: PESB assigned to identify an expedited reciprocity process to award the professional certificate to out-of-state candidates. WSIPP assigned to examine policy effects and compare requirements of advanced certificates in other states to the professional certificate.
2017	E2SHB 1341: The professional certificate becomes optional. The ProTeach portfolio is discontinued (effective December 2019).
2019	E2SHB 1341: As of December 31, ProTeach portfolio no longer offered as a method for teachers to earn professional certification.

Professional Certification and Teacher Characteristics Over Time

We received educator data from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) on teachers with professional certificates for school years 2010-11 (the earliest year available) through 2018-19. Hereafter we refer to these as school years 2011 and 2019.

In this section, we report on the cumulative number of teachers with professional certification over time, the number of teachers with newly issued certificates, and their characteristics. We define these two populations as follows:

- **All teachers with professional certificates:** This includes classroom teachers who actively work during the school year in which their professional certificate is valid (not expired).
- **Teachers with new professional certificates:** This includes classroom teachers who actively work during the school year in which they are issued their first professional certificate (this does not include individuals with renewed certificates).

Professional Certificates Over Time

Between school years 2011 and 2019, the number of teachers with professional certificates steadily grew by an average of 12% each year (see solid trend line in [Exhibit 3](#)). The dashed trend line in the exhibit shows the number of classroom teachers in Washington State over time. In 2019, about one-quarter of all classroom teachers in the state held the professional certificate and were actively working in a classroom. This

growth is not surprising given the fact that the certificate was required until 2017.

Over this same period, the number of teachers with newly issued professional certificates fluctuated, decreasing between 2011 and 2013 and increasing between 2013 and 2015 (dotted trend line in [Exhibit 3](#)). These fluctuations may be explained, in part, because statewide processes to achieve the professional certificate were transitioning over this period, which influenced certification timelines and requirements.¹⁷

Since the professional certificate became optional in 2017, the number of teachers with new professional certificates has decreased by almost 60% while the overall number of teachers and the total number of teachers with the professional certificate both increased.¹⁸ This suggests that since 2017, more teachers have earned professional certificates than teachers with professional certificates have exited the workforce. If the number of teachers with new professional certificates continues to decrease, the number of total teachers with the professional certificate will eventually decrease as well.

Teacher Characteristics

The demographic characteristics of classroom teachers with professional certificates have remained consistent between 2011 and 2019 and generally reflect the overall population of classroom teachers in Washington. [Exhibit 4](#) compares the demographics between all classroom

¹⁷ M. Johnson, Associate Director, Professional Educator Standards Board (personal communication, May 7, 2020).

¹⁸ As expected, the largest distributions of teachers with professional certificates worked in some of the largest school districts in the state including Seattle, Spokane, Evergreen (Clark), Tacoma, Kent, and Bellevue school districts.

teachers in Washington, those with professional certificates, and teachers with new professional certificates.

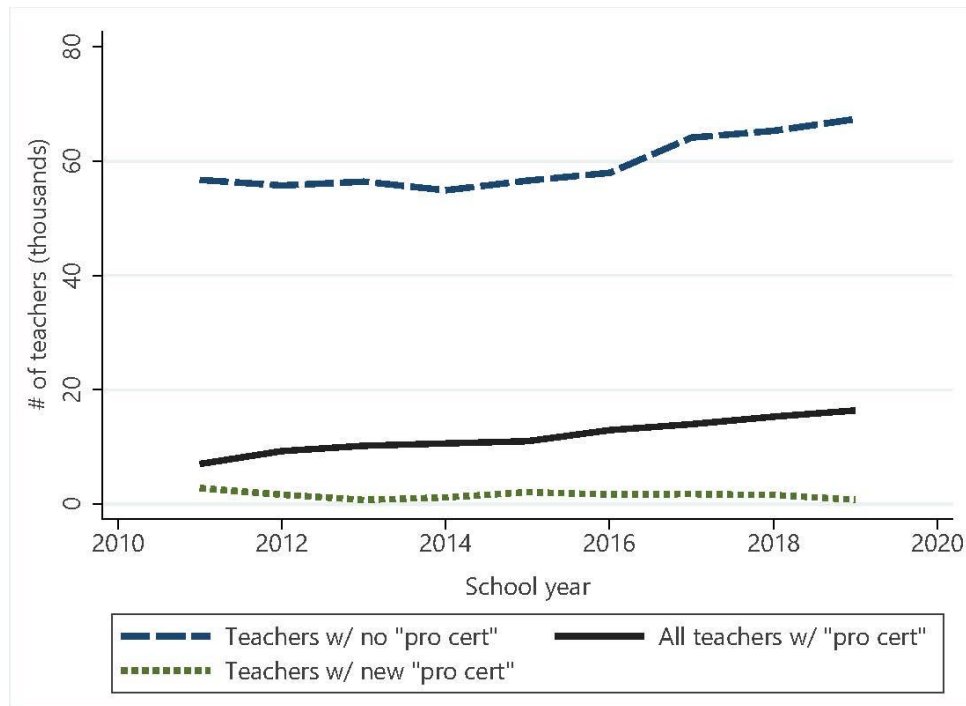
In 2019, 77% of classroom teachers with a professional certificate were female, 93% identified as white, 3% as Asian, 1% as Black, less than 1% as American Indian or Alaska Native, and less than 1% as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. Fewer than 2% of teachers identified as more than one race. OSPI provided race and ethnicity data separately. In 2019, 4% of classroom teachers with a professional certificate identified as Hispanic or Latino.

Most classroom teachers with a professional certificate were between 30 and 50 years old. A greater proportion of teachers with new professional certificates were between ages 20 to 30.

In terms of teaching experience, 75% of classroom teachers with the professional certificate had 6 to 15 years of experience. Over 80% of teachers with a new certificate had ten years or less.

Exhibit 3

Number of Classroom Teachers and Those with Professional Certificates



Notes:

Teachers w/ no "pro cert" = Classroom teachers who do not hold a professional certificate during the school year.
 All teachers with "pro cert" = Includes teachers actively working in a classroom during the school year in which their professional certificate is valid (not expired).
 Teachers w' new "pro cert" = Includes teachers actively working in a classroom during the school year in which they are issued their first professional certificate. This does not include individuals with renewed professional certificates.
 Classroom teachers include elementary homeroom teachers, secondary teachers, other teachers, elementary specialist teachers, and contractor teachers as reported in [OSPI's personnel data reports \(S-275 data\)](#).
 School year is defined as the period September 1st through August 31st.
 Certificate validity is defined by the period June 30th through July 1st. Therefore, an active teacher is one who is working in a classroom during the school year in which their professional certificate is valid.

Exhibit 4

Characteristics of Classroom Teachers in Washington State during the 2018-19 School Year, Including Individuals with Professional Certificates

	Classroom teachers in Washington [^]	Classroom teachers with professional certificate [#]	Classroom teachers with new professional certificate [*]
Total	67,362	16,366	723
Age range (%)			
20-30	-	2.0%	17.0%
31-40	-	43.0%	49.0%
41-50	-	32.0%	24.0%
51-60	-	17.0%	9.0%
61+	-	5.0%	2.0%
Sex (%)			
Female	74.0%	77.0%	82.0%
Male	26.0%	23.0%	18.0%
Race/ethnicity (%)^{^^}			
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.7%	0.9%	0.8%
Asian	2.8%	2.8%	4.1%
Black/African American	1.5%	1.0%	1.0%
Hispanic/Latino	4.9%	4.4%	4.7%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.3%	0.3%	0.1%
Two or more races	1.6%	1.7%	1.8%
White	87.0%	93.0%	92.0%
Not provided	1.2%	0.1%	0.0%
Years of experience (%)			
0-5	29.0%	3.0%	26.0%
6-10	18.0%	30.0%	54.0%
11-15	17.0%	45.0%	14.0%
16-20	14.0%	17.0%	4.0%
21+	23.0%	5.0%	1.0%

Notes:

[^] This population includes all classroom teachers in Washington during the 2018-19 school year. We pulled demographic information from [OSPI's report card site](#).

[#] This population includes teachers actively working in a classroom during the 2018-19 school year with a valid professional certificate (not expired).

^{*} This population includes teachers actively working in a classroom during the 2018-19 school year with a newly issued professional certificate. This does not include individuals with renewed professional certificates.

^{^^} Race and ethnicity percentages are greater than 100% for classroom teachers with professional certificates because OSPI provided data on race and ethnicity separately and "Hispanic/Latino" and race categories are not mutually exclusive.

We found that one-fourth of individuals with a professional certificate earned a teaching certificate from another state.¹⁹

Routes to Professional Certification

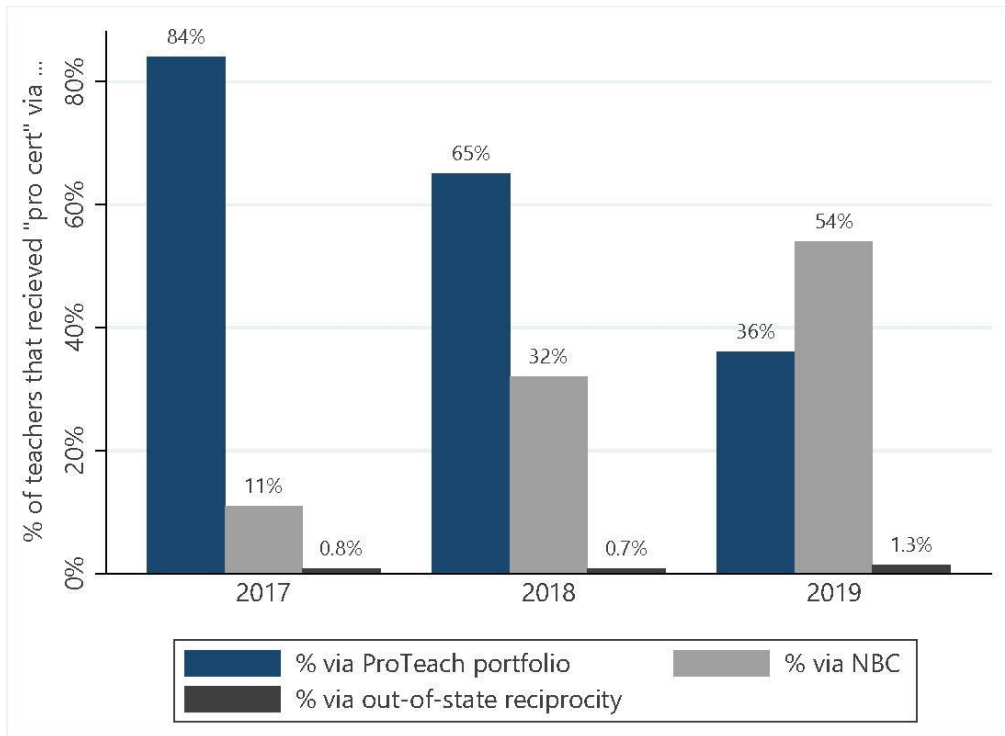
Before the professional certificate became optional in 2017, in-state candidates could obtain the certificate through two main routes; either by completing the ProTeach portfolio or through National Board Certification. Out-of-state candidates with advanced certificates from Ohio or Wisconsin could receive the certificate through Washington's reciprocity process. Now that the certificate is optional and there is no ProTeach portfolio, individuals can obtain the professional certificate through National Board Certification or reciprocity.

Beginning in 2017 and each year thereafter, fewer teachers completed the ProTeach portfolio, more obtained the license through National Board Certification, and few received the certificate through reciprocity (see [Exhibit 5](#)). In 2017, 84% of teachers with newly issued professional certificates completed a ProTeach portfolio, compared to 37% in 2019. Over the same period, 11% of teachers with new certificates obtained it through National Board Certification in 2017, compared to 55% in 2019. About 1% of new professional certificates were issued through reciprocity each year over this period.

¹⁹ Due to changes in OSPI's E-Certification data system over time, we could not identify states where teachers were originally certified in for 98% of our sample.

Exhibit 5

The Percentage of New Professional Certificates Issued Via the ProTeach Portfolio Process, National Board Certification, or Through Out-of-State Reciprocity



Note:

NBC = National Board Certification.

III. 50-State Review

This section of the report satisfies part a) of the legislative assignment and adds supplementary information about how Washington State teacher certification characteristics compare to other states. It also addresses part b) of the assignment by comparing the standards and requirements of Washington's professional certificate to licenses that allow individuals to teach at American schools abroad.²⁰

WSIPP reviewed teacher certification policies for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA).²¹ In our review, we found that 28 states have advanced teacher certificates. Twenty-three states, including Washington, offer optional advanced certificates, while five states require teachers to earn advanced certificates. [Exhibit 6](#) displays state-level certification structures.

Under current requirements, Washington's professional certification process is most comparable to advanced licensure in Alaska, Colorado, Delaware, and Kansas, which also use National Board Certification as the only path to obtain advanced certification for in-state teachers.

All states set experience requirements for teachers to earn advanced certificates. Twenty-two states allow National Board Certification to meet some or all requirements for achieving advanced certification. Thirteen states set professional development requirements. Ten states use oversight, and five operate state-level portfolio processes for advanced licensure.

Fifteen of the 28 states offering advanced teacher certificates provide at least one direct incentive for teachers to earn the certificate. We identified three incentive types in our review.²²

Washington does not provide a direct incentive for teachers to earn the professional certificate but does offer an indirect financial incentive via an annual stipend for teachers who become National Board Certified.²³ The incentive is considered indirect because the advanced certificate is not automatically awarded when a teacher earns National Board Certification. They must apply for the professional certificate. Maryland, Montana, Nevada, South Dakota, and Utah also provide this indirect incentive, though the amounts vary. All citations for state-specific information can be found in [Appendix III](#).

²⁰ Requirements and incentives compared to Washington's certification structure as of January 1, 2020. See [Appendix I](#) for summary of previous Washington professional certification requirements.

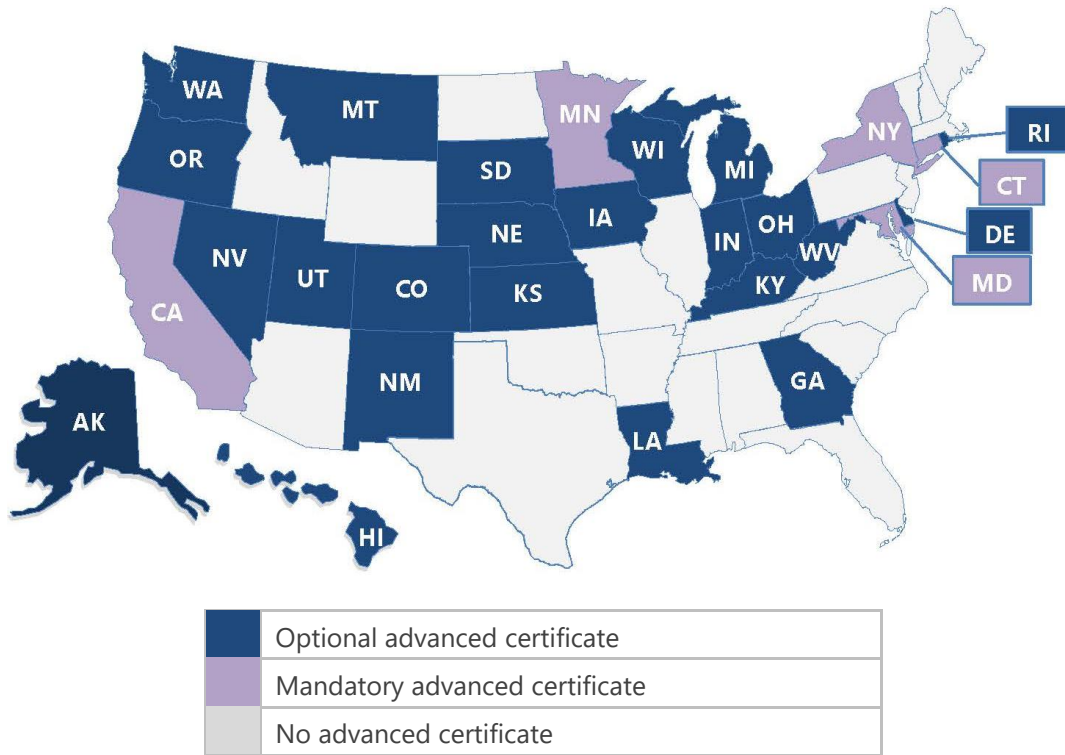
²¹ DoDEA operates American schools abroad, and was included in the 50-state review based on part b) of the legislative assignment.

²² Wisconsin offers professional development grants to teachers who earn their advanced certificate and are considered to offer both professional development and financial incentives.

²³ Washington teachers with National Board Certification receive \$5,500 per year beyond their salary and may also receive up to an additional \$5,000 for teaching in a high poverty school. OSPI. [Washington State National Board Certified teacher bonus](#).

Exhibit 6

States with Advanced Teacher Certificates



Requirements for Advanced Certification

Standards and requirements for advanced certification vary among states but share common intents.²⁴ Standards are the criteria by which states measure teachers' skill while requirements are tangible tools through which states assure teachers meet standards. In other words, teachers fulfill requirements to demonstrate they meet a standard. In this report, we focus on requirements as a concrete and comparable measure of teaching quality across states.

Some states use a single standard or requirement while others use multiple or a combination of tools. States using multiple tools often offer more than one path for teachers to earn the advanced certificate. Comprehensive state profiles can be found in [Appendix III](#).

²⁴ We found that even states using a similar set of requirements nearly always had slight differences in the details. The categories we outline allow for comparison when details differ, but the intent is consistent. For example, we assume that if one state requires three years of teaching experience and another requires five, both states view "experience" as an important factor in teaching quality, even though they maintain a slightly different standard.

We categorized advanced certificate requirements across the states into the following five types:

- Experience,
- Professional development,
- Oversight,
- Portfolio processes, and
- National Board Certification.

Our review includes all requirements a state uses even if some can count as substitutes for others. If a state offers multiple routes to advanced certification, we include all route options in our review. For example, if a state requires either NBPTS Certification or a master's degree, both requirements are included for that state.

In [Exhibit 7](#), we list which states with advanced certificates use each of the five requirements. We follow with a description for each, an example (when applicable), the number of states using it, and whether or not Washington uses the requirement type.

Experience

The experience category includes higher education degree requirements and minimum thresholds for instruction time. Minimum levels of educational attainment and instruction time are two of the most prevalent requirements for advanced certification. Degree attainment acts as a signaling tool for competency, and teachers with more experience have been linked to improved student learning outcomes.²⁵ All states offering advanced certificates require teachers to hold at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited teaching program and require classroom teaching experience while holding a lower-level certificate.

Unlike Washington, 20 states use graduate-level degrees—typically master's degrees—as a requirement toward advanced certification. Utah requires individuals to hold a doctorate for their highest-tier K–12 teacher certificate. It is common for states to allow graduate coursework that does not result in a master's degree or NBPTS Certification to fulfill the same requirements. Connecticut, Iowa, and Louisiana all have non-replaceable master's degree requirements for teachers to earn advanced certification.

²⁵ Kini, T., & Podolsky, A. (2016). Does teaching experience increase teacher effectiveness? A review of the research. *Learning Policy Institute* and Pennucci, A. (2012). *Teacher compensation and training policies: Impacts on student outcomes*. (Doc. No. 12-05-2201). Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.

Professional Development

Another common tool used in teacher certification is professional development, which in some instances has been linked to improved student achievement.²⁶ WSIPP identified three types of professional development activities that states require for advanced certificates. They include the following:

- **Additional academic coursework:** formal education credits beyond a degree;
- **Induction or mentoring:** programs designed for seasoned teachers to guide newer teachers; and
- **Leader training:** programs or coursework aimed at developing leadership capabilities.

Thirteen states use at least one of these three types of professional development activities for teachers who earn an advanced certificate.²⁷ Washington does not set professional development requirements for teachers to earn professional certification. However, National Board Certification, currently the main route to professional certification in Washington, is widely considered a professional development process. Thus, Washington and other states that recognize National Board Certification as a route for advanced certification indirectly use professional development. National Board Certification details are outlined below.

²⁶ Desimone, L., Smith, T., & Phillips, K. (2013). [Linking student achievement growth to profession development participation and changes in instruction: A longitudinal study of elementary students and teachers in title I schools.](#) *Teachers College Record*, 115, 5 and Washington State Institute for Public Policy. (2014, June). [Teacher professional development: Targeted meta-analytic results.](#) Olympia, WA: Author.

²⁷ Induction programs are common requirement for standard certificates. We only include requirements if they are explicitly outlined as required for the advanced certificates. This holds true across requirement analysis.

Exhibit 7
Advanced Certificate Requirements

State	Required	Experience	Professional development	Oversight	Non-national board portfolio process	NBPTS certification
Alaska		BA & 3 years				✓
California	✓	BA & 2 years	Induction			✓
Colorado		BA & 3 years				✓
Connecticut	✓	MA & 3 years	Academic			
Delaware		BA & 4 years				✓
Georgia		MA & 15 years	Leader & Academic	Evaluation		✓
Hawaii		MA & 5 years		Recommendation		✓
Indiana		MA & 4 years	Academic			✓
Iowa		MA & 5 years				
Kansas		BA & 3 year	Induction			✓
Kentucky		MA & 3 years	Academic	Recommendation		✓
Louisiana		MA & 5 years		Evaluation & Recommendation		
Maryland	✓	MA & 3 years	Leader & Academic	Recommendation		✓
Michigan		MA & 5 years	Leader & Academic	Evaluation		✓
Minnesota	✓	BA & 3 years	Academic	Assessment & Evaluation	✓	
Montana		MA & 3 years				✓
Nebraska		MA & 2 years				✓
Nevada		MA & 3 years				✓
New Mexico		MA & 3 years			✓	✓
New York	✓	MA & 3 years	Induction, Academic, & Leader			
Ohio		MA & 9 years	Leader		✓	✓
Oregon		MA & 5 years	Academic	Evaluation & Recommendation	✓	✓
Rhode Island		BA & 5 years	Leader	Evaluation		
South Dakota		MA & 5 years				✓
Utah		PhD & 3 years				✓
Washington		BA & 3 years				✓
West Virginia		MA & 5 years				✓
Wisconsin		MA & 5 years		Evaluation	✓	✓

Notes:

The table includes all requirements states use to allow teachers to earn advanced certificates.

For states with multiple tiers of advanced certificates, these data reflect requirements for the state's highest certificate.

National Board Certification requires three years of teaching experience. Neither Washington nor Colorado explicitly set a teaching experience requirement; however, National Board Certification requires three years of teaching experience.

Detailed information for every state can be found in [Appendix III](#).

Oversight

Requirements aimed at assessing teacher performance and knowledge are categorized as oversight. While the effectiveness of some types of teacher oversight is unclear, assessment and evaluation have been linked to improved student outcomes in some circumstances.²⁸ Teacher oversight aims to offer insight into teaching quality. Among states offering advanced certificates, WSIPP identified the following three forms of oversight:

- **Assessment:** tests given to teachers to measure knowledge;
- **Evaluation:** scoring teachers based on the performance of students, and student evaluations OR administrators or other educators observing and scoring teachers; and
- **Recommendation:** referral from a building or district administrator, or a teacher who already holds an advanced certificate.

Ten states use oversight in their advanced certification process.²⁹ Similar to professional development, Washington does not set oversight requirements for teachers to earn the professional certificate. However, teachers undergo assessments during National Board Certification. Thus, Washington and other states that recognize National Board Certification indirectly use oversight.

²⁸ Aldeman, C., & Chuong, C. (2014). *Teacher evaluations in an era of rapid change: From "unsatisfactory" to "needs improvement"*. Bellweather Education Partners.

²⁹ Similar to induction, most states require teachers to pass an assessment prior to earning their standard certificate. The most common group of assessments used for standard certification come from PRAXIS.

Portfolio Process

Portfolio processes require documenting evidence of effective teaching and professional improvement over time. By requiring teachers to provide evidence from a variety of sources, portfolios built for advanced certification are a more integrated approach to evaluating teachers, which allows state certification bodies to learn about a teacher's environment, view evidence of successful teaching, and observe the educator's development arc.³⁰ While specific portfolio requirements vary across states, all portfolio processes require teachers to submit artifacts to demonstrate successful teaching.

Portfolios typically align with a set of standards designated for advanced certificate holders. For example, in Ohio, portfolios are assessed using five criteria: consistent leadership; focused collaboration; focus on students and environments; focus on content, instruction and assessment; and professional growth. For each of these criteria, Ohio teachers must submit at least two pieces of evidence demonstrating how they meet or exceed requirements.³¹

Prior to December 2019, Washington used a process known as the ProTeach portfolio as an option for earning advanced certification. The ProTeach portfolio required teachers to demonstrate effective teaching, professional development, and contributions to the teaching profession. Portfolios were assessed by the Washington State Professional Educator Standards Board. (PESB)³²

³⁰ Center for Teaching, Vanderbilt University. (2020). *Teaching portfolios*.

³¹ The Ohio Department of Education. *Master teacher program scoring samples*.

³² Washington State PESB. *ProTeach sample score report*.

National Board Certification

National Board Certification is a voluntary and nationally recognized teaching certificate. Teachers may pursue it to build teaching skills, improve classroom learning, advance in the teaching profession, and/or receive higher compensation.³³

The certification process contains elements from each of the other four requirement types (experience, professional development, oversight, portfolio), and can take one to five years to complete. Teachers with a bachelor's degree and at least three years of teaching experience are eligible to apply. Candidates have up to three years to initially complete four required components plus an additional two years to retake components if needed. The four required components consist of three portfolio entries and one computer-based assessment.³⁴

The portfolio entries include samples of student work and require candidates to demonstrate their instructional decisions; interactions with students; ability to assess student performance; and collaboration with colleagues, parents, and the broader community. The computer-based assessment includes three sections that evaluate candidates' knowledge and teaching practices within a chosen certification field.³⁵ National Board Certification also requires teachers to meet professional development standards on continuous growth in the profession and teaching to diverse students.³⁶

³³ Cramer, J., Hansen, J., & Bitney, K. (2018). *An evaluation of National Board-Certified Teachers in Washington and review of financial incentives in other states*. (Doc. No.18-12-2201). Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). *What teachers should know and be able to do*.

Including Washington, 22 states allow National Board Certification to fulfill some or all requirements for advanced certification. Most states allowing NBPTS Certification to count toward advanced state-level certification accept it in lieu of all other requirements. In 19 of the 28 states granting advanced certificates, National Board Certification alone qualifies teachers for advanced certification, suggesting that states view the National Board Certification process as at least as rigorous as the alternative path to advanced certification in their state. Similar to Washington, in Alaska, Colorado, Delaware, and Kansas National Board Certified is the primary path to advanced certification.³⁷

Additional Certification Components

This report focuses on requirements and standards for teachers to earn their advanced certificate. The initial stage of achieving advanced certification accounts for only part of a teacher's experience and does not include the effort involved with maintaining certification. Renewal and reciprocity are two components to maintaining certification that are also important to highlight.

Renewal

After teachers achieve advanced certification, they are expected to maintain a valid certificate by meeting certain renewal requirements.

We found in our 50-state review that renewal requirements tend to be similar across states. Nearly all states use a combination of continuing education,

³⁷ Outside of reciprocity, NBPTS is currently the only path to advanced certification in these states.

professional development, and evaluation for teachers to recertify, and all advanced certificates are valid for at least five years.³⁸ States that allow National Board Certification to qualify teachers for advanced certification require teachers to maintain a valid NBPTS certificate.³⁹

Reciprocity

While the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification's (NASDTEC) interstate agreement helped coordinate reciprocity agreements for standard certificates, no equivalent agreement exists for advanced certifications.⁴⁰

PESB offers reciprocity for out-of-state candidates with advanced certificates in Ohio and Wisconsin.⁴¹ PESB deemed the requirements and standards for advanced certification in these states equivalent to those in Washington, primarily due to the similarity in portfolio structures.⁴² Additionally, NBPTS-Certified teachers moving to Washington can qualify for Washington's professional certificate.

Incentives for Advanced Certification

Direct Incentives

Washington differs from 15 states that offer some form of direct incentive for advanced certification but is one of the 14 offering an indirect financial incentive via financial awards for National Board Certification. Similar to the five types we identified in our requirements review, we use the following three direct incentive categories when comparing states:

- Certificate validity increases,
- Financial, and
- Professional development.

Validity Extension

We found that the most common direct incentive type is an extension of certificate validity. Ten states incentivize teachers by allowing those with advanced certificates to re-certify less frequently than those with standard certificates. For example, in Colorado, the standard certificate is valid for five years, while the advanced certificate is valid for seven. In [Exhibit 8](#), we note this as a two-year validity increase.

³⁸ If a teacher earned their advanced certificate via National Board Certification, the duration of their certificate may be tied to their Board certification. In some instances a teacher may have applied for their advanced certificate sometime after becoming Board certified making their validity period less than five years.

³⁹ To renew National Board Certification, teachers submit one component that demonstrates how their teaching practices continue to meet certification standards. In 2020, the cost to renew a certificate is \$1,250. Prepared by Pearson for NBPTS. (2019). [2019-20 Renewal Guide to National Board Certification](#).

⁴⁰ The NASDTEC Interstate Agreement is a collection of over 50 individuals agreements that outline which other states' educator certificates will be accepted by a receiving state. Although there may be additional conditions for certain states or jurisdictions, the agreement makes it possible for teachers who earn certification in one state to more quickly obtain certification in another. New Mexico, New York, South Dakota, and Wisconsin have not signed the Interstate Agreement but have their own reciprocity policies. All other states, the DoDEA, and the District of Columbia have signed. NASDTEC. (2019). [Interstate agreement](#).

⁴¹ PESB also recognized reciprocity for candidates with advanced certification in Oregon until 2017. [WAC 181-79A-257](#).

⁴² M. Johnson, Associate Director, Professional Educator Standards Board (personal communication, July 28, 2019).

Financial Incentives

Three states, Kentucky, New Mexico, and Wisconsin offer direct financial incentives tied to advanced certification. In Kentucky, the salary schedule for teachers is tied to certificate levels and years of experience.⁴³ In 2020, Kentucky teachers can earn 8.6% to 22.7% more in base salary if they have an advanced certificate.⁴⁴ Similarly, New Mexico also ties salaries to certificate levels, operating a three-tier system with minimum salaries of \$41,000 for level 1, \$50,000 for level 2, and \$60,000 for level 3 (advanced) certificate holders.⁴⁵ Finally, Wisconsin offers nine years of professional development funding up to \$2,000 annually to teachers who hold their advanced certificate.

Professional Development

Incentives granting teachers access to exclusive professional development opportunities fell under this category. In Georgia, Louisiana, and Wisconsin teachers with advanced certificates gain access to professional development opportunities unavailable to teachers with standard certificates. In Georgia and Louisiana, teachers with advanced certificates are eligible to become mentor teachers, which some districts incentivize with a stipend. In some instances, teachers in both states also provide feedback on the induction of new teachers and teacher leadership standards.

[Exhibit 8](#) summarizes the incentives tied directly to advanced certification in each state.

⁴³ [Kentucky Revised Statute § 161.1211](#) and Kentucky Department of Education. (2020). *School District Personnel Information*.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ [New Mexico House Bill 2](#) (2019) and [New Mexico Statutes Annotated § 22-10A-7, 10, and 11](#).

Exhibit 8

Advanced Certificate Incentives

State	Incentive
Alaska	5-year license validity increase
Colorado	2-year license validity increase
Delaware	5-year license validity increase
Georgia	Exclusive professional development
Hawaii	5-year license validity increase
Indiana	5-year license validity increase
Kansas	5-year license validity increase
Kentucky	Salary tied to certificate level
Louisiana	Exclusive professional development
Nebraska	5-year license validity increase
Nevada	Increased license validity period
New Mexico	Salary tied to certificate level
Rhode Island	2-year license validity increase
West Virginia	Indefinite license validity
Wisconsin	Professional development grants

Notes:

A 5-year license validity increase means that the advanced certificate is valid for five years longer than the standard certificate. Nevada's advanced certificate is valid for six years with a master's degree, eight years with an education specialist degree, and ten years with a doctorate.

Wisconsin's professional development grants are considered both financial and professional development incentives.

Indirect Incentives

Including Washington, 14 states offer an indirect financial incentive to earn advanced certification by offering a financial award for National Board Certification and allowing it to fulfill the requirements for advanced certification. [Exhibit 9](#) shows financial incentives for National Board Certification in such states. These incentives are considered indirect because the advanced certificate is not automatically awarded; teachers must still apply for an advanced certificate after obtaining Board certification. In Washington and five other states—Maryland, Montana, South Dakota, and Utah—this appears to be the only incentive for teachers to earn the advanced certificate.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Some states, including Washington, offer additional financial incentives to NBPTS Certified teachers teaching in

Exhibit 9

Indirect Financial Incentives for Advanced Certificates via Board Certification

State	Incentive
Colorado	\$1,600
Delaware	12% salary increase
Hawaii	\$5,000
Kansas	\$1,000
Kentucky	\$2,000
Maryland	\$1,000
Montana	\$1,000
Nevada	5% salary increase
New Mexico	\$6,000
South Dakota	\$2,000
Utah	\$750
Washington	\$5,500
West Virginia	\$3,500
Wisconsin	\$2,500

Notes:

Dollar value awards occur annually while salary increases occur when teachers earn National Board Certification and remain for the duration of the certification.

Incentive amounts current as of July, 2019.

Micro-credentials

The landscape of micro-credentials in education is broad and dynamic. States, districts, schools, education associations, and individual teachers deploy use micro-credentials for multiple purposes. We provide examples of how micro-credentials are currently used at the state level while acknowledging districts and individual schools may use them in other ways and that it is likely states' are currently formulating innovative ways to both construct and deploy micro-credentials. Currently, states use micro-credentials in a variety of ways including but not limited to the following:

- Certification,
- Pathways to leadership,
- Personalized professional development, and
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements.

Thus, teachers in different states may pursue micro-credentials for a variety of reasons. In some states, teachers can partially fulfill professional development credits necessary to renew their teaching certificates. In others, a micro-credential may be a more accessible option for earning an endorsement. In states where micro-credentials are not formally recognized, teachers may still want to earn a micro-credential to improve a specific teaching skill and display their mastery.

high-needs schools. In Washington teachers may receive up to an additional \$5,000 for teaching in a high-poverty school. [WAC 392-140-973](#).

The micro-credential ecosystem includes the following five key roles:

- 1) **Developers:** Organizations or individuals that identify and establish the expected knowledge and skills to be recognized through the micro-credential.
- 2) **Earners:** Individuals who submit evidence demonstrating their learning or competency to earn a micro-credential.
- 3) **Assessors:** Individuals who review evidence submitted by earners and apply criteria to assess and determine each earner's proficiency.
- 4) **Issuers:** Organizations or institutions that formally award the micro-credential to earners who have successfully met the proficiency criteria.⁴⁷
- 5) **Recognizers:** Organizations or institutions that recognize and give currency or value to micro-credentials and allow them to be used by earners for various purposes.

Some developers and issuers have created micro-credentials available to any teacher while others have been designed specifically for a state, district, or program.⁴⁸ When designed for a specific purpose, states, districts, and other recognizers typically partner with an online platform provider (developer/issuer) to offer the micro-credential; examples of micro-credential developers include Digital Promise, Bloomboard, Educators Rising, and the National Education Association (NEA).⁴⁹ Some recognizers, typically those accepting micro-credentials to count toward professional development requirements, recognize credentials from any approved issuer.

From 2016 to 2019, PESB ran a three-part micro-credential pilot program. Pilot one tested micro-credential technology with a single teacher. Pilot two saw the development of three micro-credential programs: Elementary Computer Science (ECS), Culturally Responsive Social and Emotional Learning (CR-SEL), and Recruiting Washington Teachers (RWT) and expanded to ten teachers. Finally, for pilot three, PESB offered 20 \$18,000 grants to Washington State school districts, district consortiums, educational services districts (ESDs), and clock-hour providers/higher education institutions (partnered with a district). Eighty-eight participants earned 132 micro-credentials during pilot three.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Demonte, J. (2017). *Micro-credentials for teachers: What three early adopter states have learned so far*. American Institute for Research.

⁴⁹ Witteveen, A. (2019). [18 sources for microcredentials, certifications, and more learning options](#). *School Library Journal* and Aragon, S. (2017). *State information request: Micro-credentialing in teacher professional development*. Education Commission of the States.

⁵⁰ PESB. (2019). *The potential of micro-credentials in Washington state*.

⁴⁷ Developers and issuers are often then same entity.

While only 99 teachers earned a micro-credential through PESB's pilot, Washington teachers have likely earned other micro-credentials via non-state issuers. Currently, PESB allows micro-credentials to count toward certificate renewal if they are issued as continuing education credits or college credits by an approved provider or an accredited college or university.⁵¹ PESB has halted the exploration of micro-credentials as of May 8, 2019, unless or until the legislature directs them to do so.⁵² New micro-credential uses or programs cannot be explored but current activity can continue.

Educators in every state have earned micro-credentials.⁵³ Exhibit 10 summarizes micro-credential activity across states. State and district micro-credential policies either create specific programs, recognize micro-credentials from outside issuers, or do both.

Micro-credentials are becoming a recognized method for fulfilling professional development credits toward certification and recertification. For example, Arkansas allows micro-credentials to fulfill educator professional learning requirements. Similarly, in 2017, Colorado passed legislation creating the Colorado Education Leadership Council (ELC). At the suggestion of the ELC, Colorado is currently developing a framework to allow certain micro-credentials to count toward re-certification for standard teacher certificates. Further, teachers in Kentucky can use micro-credentials to fulfill some of the requirements necessary to upgrade their

certificate from level one (initial) to level two (standard).

Some states develop and use micro-credentials as an option to fulfill more specific requirements. For example, Arizona and Rhode Island offer micro-credential stacks as one option for teachers to earn an endorsement in teaching computer science. Likewise, Minnesota offers micro-credentials as an option for a CTE endorsement.

Finally, states also see micro-credentialing as a path for developing education leaders and a chance for teachers to communicate their accomplishments. Many state education associations and groups offer micro-credentials to their members⁵⁴ and market them as ways to advance as a teacher and educational leader. In Indiana, the Education Leaders Network offers micro-credential courses to member teachers noting that their micro-credentials, "match the School Leader Paradigm" and encourages them to "add your earned badges to your resume to showcase your expertise."

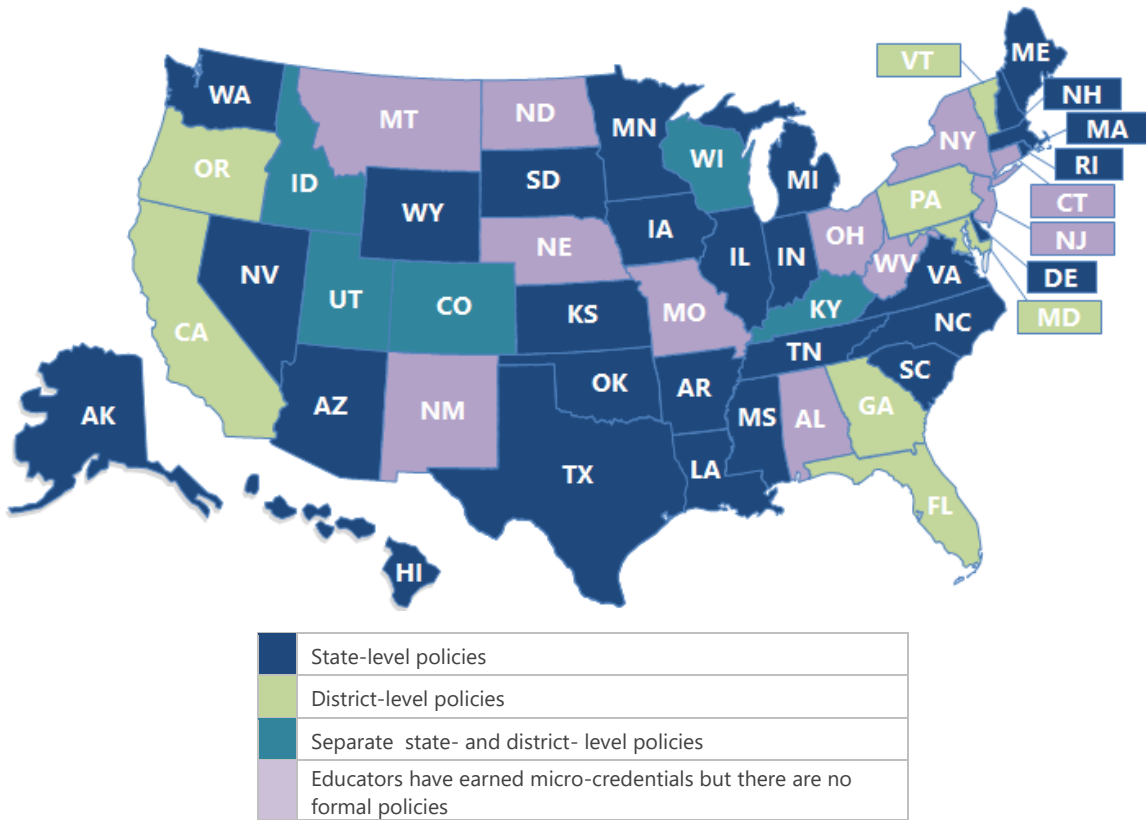
⁵¹ M. Johnson, Associate Director, Professional Educator Standards Board (personal communication, June 5, 2020).

⁵² [RCW 28A.410.330](#).

⁵³ Digital Promise. (2020). *Micro-credential policy map*. and South Dakota Education Association. (2020). *Professional development*.

⁵⁴ Some education associations, such as NEA, offer micro-credentials to non-members as well.

Exhibit 10
Micro-credential Policies by State



Teaching Overseas

While U.S. citizens may teach overseas through a variety of programs, the only full-time teachers certified and overseen by the U.S. government are those teaching in schools operated by the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA). DoDEA offers three teaching certificates: emergency, provisional, and professional. Standard and advanced teaching certificates from all U.S. states, including Washington, qualify a teacher for a provisional certificate from DoDEA. Professional certificates are awarded only after teachers have completed two years of successful teaching in a DoDEA school.⁵⁵ Washington teachers

with an advanced certificate are eligible to teach overseas in DoDEA schools if they meet the physical ability and availability requirements necessary to teach on a worldwide basis.⁵⁶ With no additional requirements beyond teaching experience differentiating DoDEA provisional and professional certificates, the licenses are otherwise equivalent from a requirement and incentive standpoint.

⁵⁵ DoDEA. (2019). *Application requirements for teachers*.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

IV. Summary

The 2016 Legislature passed E2SSB 6455 aimed at increasing the number of quality K–12 teachers in Washington. One strategy in the legislation aimed to increase teacher recruitment by directing PESB to create an expedited reciprocity policy for out-of-state teacher candidates to earn Washington’s professional teacher certificate. When the bill passed, all teachers in the state were required to work toward the professional teacher certificate. WSIPP was assigned to evaluate the impact of expedited reciprocity on the number of professional certificates issued to teachers from out of state. WSIPP was also directed to compare the standards and requirements for the professional certificate to advanced certificates in other states and to similar certificates that allow individuals to teach internationally.

PESB ultimately did not change its reciprocity policy because they had already reviewed state certificates and determined that two states—Wisconsin and Ohio—had certificates comparable to Washington’s professional certificate. Therefore, there was no policy change for WSIPP to evaluate. Additional changes to the professional certificate in 2017 further complicated understanding of how these policy changes impacted teacher recruitment and retention. However, we addressed other parts of the assignment.

Based on feedback from external stakeholders and legislative staff, WSIPP investigated three additional aspects of teacher certification related to teacher recruitment and retention: a summary of Washington teachers with the professional certificate over time (additional

background), a review of incentives for advanced certification (recruitment and retention), and a review of micro-credential policies in other states (recruitment and retention). While these analyses do not evaluate impacts of policies on the number of teachers in Washington schools, they provide insight into tools used to retain teachers in other states and allow for a more complete comparison between Washington and other states.

In our review of Washington teachers with the professional certificate, we found that of the 67,362 classroom teachers in 2019, 16,366 held the professional certificate and were actively working. Between school years 2011 and 2019, the total number of teachers with a professional certificate steadily grew. However, once the certificate became optional in 2017, fewer teachers chose to obtain it and the number of teachers with *new* certificates decreased by 60%.

In our 50-state review, we found that 55% of states, including Washington, offer advanced teacher certificates but that certification structures vary across states. We identified the following five types of requirements common for advanced certification:

- 1) Experience,
- 2) Professional development,
- 3) Oversight,
- 4) Portfolio processes, and
- 5) National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification.

Alaska, Colorado, Delaware, and Kansas compare most closely with Washington by using National Board Certification as their primary path to advanced certification (18% of states that offer advanced certificates); while 17 others (61%) allow National Board Certification to fulfill some or all requirements for advanced certification. All states set experience requirements for teachers to earn advanced certificates, 13 (46%) set professional development requirements, ten (36%) use oversight, and five (18%) operate state-level portfolio processes. By using National Board Certification as the primary route to advanced certification, Washington uses the most common non-experience requirement.

We also find that, unlike Washington, 15 states (54% of states that offer advanced certificates) offer direct incentives for teachers to earn advanced certificates. We identified the following three direct incentive types in our review:

- Certificate validity extensions,
- Financial, and
- Exclusive professional development opportunities.

Washington and 13 other states (50%) offer an indirect financial incentive by offering financial awards for teachers who are National Board Certified and allow this certification to count towards advanced certification requirements.

Additionally, in our review of micro-credential policies, we found that educators in all 50 states and the District of Columbia have earned micro-credentials. Thirty-two states (63% of all states) have state-level micro-credential policies either creating a micro-credential program or allowing micro-credentials to fulfill requirements

toward some level of certification at the state level. Micro-credentials are currently used for the following:

- Certification,
- Pathways to leadership,
- Personalized professional development, and
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements.

Most micro-credential policies have been created in the past five years. Thus, it is likely more states will develop such policies. Designed to be a more personalized and accessible form of teacher development, micro-credentials have been used to recruit, retain, and develop teachers in other states.

We also found that teachers with an advanced certificate from any state are eligible to teach overseas in DoDEA schools if they meet the physical ability and availability requirements necessary to teach on a worldwide basis.

With various professional teaching certificate policy changes in recent years, WSIPP was unable to analyze the effectiveness of specific policies toward expanding the educator workforce. However, we provide detailed background information on teachers with the professional certificate in Washington, and our review of certification-related policies that could impact teacher recruitment and retention allows for policy comparison between Washington and other states.



Appendices

Advanced Teacher Certification: A Fifty-State Review

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I. Washington Professional Certification Comparison from 2000 to 2020

Requirements for Washington’s professional certificate changed in 2017. As outlined in [Section I](#), the professional certificate become optional in 2017, and the ProTeach portfolio was discontinued in 2019. Throughout the body of this report, we focus on the current version of Washington’s professional certificate structure [Exhibit A1](#) compares the previous requirements of Washington’s professional certificate using the same structure outlined in [Section II](#).

Exhibit A1

Recent Professional Certification Requirements in Washington

Time period	Required	Experience	Professional development	Oversight	Portfolio process	National Board certification
2000 - 2017	✓	BA			✓ [^]	✓
2017 - 2019		BA			✓	✓
Current policy		BA				✓

Note:

[^] ProTeach portfolio process established in 2010.

Similar to current structures in California, Connecticut, Maryland, Minnesota, and New York, Washington’s professional certificate was mandatory from 2000 through 2017. Until it was discontinued in December 2019, the ProTeach portfolio was the main route for certification. From 2010 to 2019 the use of the ProTeach portfolio made Washington most comparable to other states using state-level portfolio processes and allowing National Board Certification instead of the state-level portfolio (New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, and Wisconsin). Since 2000, Washington has allowed National Board Certification to fulfill the requirements for professional certification. New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, and Wisconsin currently use state portfolios for advanced certification. PESB reviewed state portfolio processes and found standards in Ohio and Wisconsin to be most aligned to Washington’s ProTeach Portfolio and therefore recognized (and continues to recognize) reciprocity for out-of-state candidates with advanced certificates in these states.

II. Master Teacher Designation

While the legislative assignment for this report directed WSIPP to specifically review teacher certification policies, other tools that function similar to tiered certification, but operate outside of state certification structures emerged. One particular tool, “master teacher” designation stood out as similar to advanced certification in that teachers must fulfill a set of requirements to qualify, and they often come with financial or professional incentives. Some single-tiered certification states offer master teacher designations in-lieu of multi-tiered certification but appear to use them to lead teachers toward similar goals.

Master teacher designation is an additional classification given, in some states, to teachers who satisfy a specific set of requirements that demonstrate mastery of the teaching profession. States use the master teacher designation to incentivize teachers to reach professional milestones deemed important by the state. Requirements for master teacher designation fall into the same categories as tools toward certification. Teaching experience, educational attainment, specific trainings or classes, and recommendation are all used for teachers to earn master teacher designation. Master teacher designation requirements stand out because they all use language requiring teachers to demonstrate effective teaching or to provide evidence of effective teaching (similar to portfolio processes).

Master teacher designation differs from standard certification in that standard certification is typically required for full-time employment where master teacher designation is an award given to certified teachers. In states that do not have advanced teacher certification, master teacher designation functions similar to an advance certificate, whereas states that have multi-tiered certification use master teacher designation as an additional achievement in a teacher’s professional development arc.

The PESB explored establishing standards and requirements for a master teacher designation in the 2010s. Through that exploration, it was determined that such a designation would be, “cost prohibitive and largely duplicative with National Board Certification.”⁵⁷

Idaho and Illinois offer master-teacher designation in lieu of an advanced certificate.

To earn master teacher designation in Idaho teachers must fulfill the following:

- Hold employment as a certified instructional staff member in an Idaho public school;
- Have eight or more years of teaching experience; demonstrate mastery of instruction techniques via artifacts demonstrating evidence of effective teaching and successful completion of an annual individualized professional learning plan; and
- Have their students meet measurable student achievement goals.⁵⁸

Teachers who receive the master teacher designation in Idaho receive a \$4,000 annual stipend for three years and then become eligible to receive the stipend continuingly if they continue to complete the required personalized professional development plan.

⁵⁷ PESB. (2010). *Strengthening the continuum of teacher development: Professional Educators Standards Board response to the changes in ESHB 2261*.

⁵⁸ In Idaho, the master educator designation is referred to as the “master educator premium.” For the teaching experience requirement, the most recent three years of teaching experience must occur continuously in an Idaho public school. Additionally, “measurable student achievement” must occur in three of the previous five years. [Idaho Code § 33-1004I](#). (2015) and Idaho State Board of Education [Master educator premium](#).

In Illinois, the master teacher designation is tied directly to NBPTS Certification.⁵⁹ Teachers who earn NBPTS Certification automatically earn master teacher designation, and become part of the “Illinois Teaching Excellence Program.” Teachers actively attempting to complete NBPTS Certification are available for state payments towards NBPTS testing and submission requirements, and teachers in the Teaching Excellence Program are eligible for annual stipends of \$1,500 depending on the availability of funds.⁶⁰

Nebraska, Ohio, and New York offer master teacher designation in addition to operating multi-tiered certification structures. In these states, the master teacher designation is designed to provide teachers with additional incentives to develop as teachers.

In Nebraska, the master teacher program was designed to, “build a group of recognized teacher[s] of high achievement in the teaching profession.”⁶¹ Nebraska ties master teacher designation to certification via National Board Certification. Earning NBPTS Certification partially fulfills requirements for the advanced certificate, and is the sole mechanism for teachers to earn master teacher designation. Currently, no financial incentives exist for teachers to earn master teacher designation in Nebraska.⁶²

Ohio teachers must complete a portfolio process to earn master teacher designation. This, “master teacher portfolio” is also one of three ways to earn the first advanced certificate. In their portfolio, teachers must demonstrate criteria outlined by the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession, and receive exemplary scores in four of five areas (given below) on the assessment scoring guide.⁶³

- A. Consistent Leadership: Master Teachers ensure student learning and well-being by participating in decision-making and initiating innovations and improvements for school change. They are leaders who empower and influence others. They engage in a variety of leadership roles and perform thoughtful stewardship responsibilities for the school community and profession.
- B. Focused Collaboration: Master Teachers work with educators, students, families, and communities to create relationships; share knowledge, practice, and responsibility; communicate effectively; and support student learning. They respond to the needs of their colleagues and students in a timely and competent manner.
- C. Distinguished Teaching—Focus on Students and Environment: Master Teachers analyze individual and group student development to connect instruction to students’ needs, interests, and prior knowledge. They strive to create an environment that engages learners in inquiry, promotes high levels of learning for all students, and creates a culture of civility and success.
- D. Distinguished Teaching—Focus on Content, Instruction, and Assessment: Master Teachers have a deep and reflective understanding of the academic content that they teach. They use multiple assessments to evaluate student learning and inform instruction. They continually reflect on student outcomes and make decisions to promote high levels of learning for all students.
- E. Continued Professional Growth: Master Teachers engage in continuous professional development and reflection. They use multiple resources to shape the focus and goals of their professional development including student learning, assessment data, researched best practices, and school and district goals. They evaluate their personal growth, understanding and application of knowledge, and develop an appropriate professional plan.

⁵⁹ In Illinois, this designation is referred to as NBPTS master teacher designation. [105 Illinois Compiled Statute 5/21B-45](#).

⁶⁰ [Illinois School Code § 21B-70. \(2020\)](#) and Illinois State Board of Education. [Educator licensure: National Board Certified teachers](#).

⁶¹ Nebraska Department of Education. (2016). [Current Rules and Regulations Title 92, Chapter 22](#).

⁶² From the program’s inception until 2017 Nebraska teachers with master teacher designation earned a \$5,000 stipend.

⁶³ Ohio Educator Standards Board. [Ohio standards for the teaching profession](#) and State Board of Ohio. (2007). [Ohio master teacher program documentation](#).

School districts in Ohio may offer a 5% salary bonus to teachers with the master teacher designation but are not required to do so.⁶⁴

New York offers a region-based master teacher designation for science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) teachers via the State University of New York. The New York State Master Teacher Program (NYSMTP) was created to, “attract our best and brightest teachers to the classroom and strengthen the quality of our schools in communities across the state.”⁶⁵ Teachers from around New York come together to collaborate on teaching in STEM fields to bring those skills back to their classrooms. The requirements for the NYSMTP are less specific than in other states offering a master teacher designation, outlining three broad qualifications teachers must show mastery of in their application materials:

- 1) Knowledge of STEM content,
- 2) Knowledge of pedagogy, and
- 3) Knowledge of students, their families, their communities.

Participation in the NYSMTP makes New York teachers eligible for \$15,000 stipends annually over four years.

⁶⁴ Ohio Rev. Code. § 124.181. (2017).

⁶⁵ The State University of New York. *About the master teacher program*.

III. Certification and Micro-credential State Profiles

Alabama

Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure. Separate “class levels” based on degree level.⁶⁶

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Educators in Alabama have earned micro-credentials, but no state or district level policies currently exist. Alabama Education Association members have had access to micro-credentials since 2017.⁶⁷



⁶⁶ The Alabama Legislature directs the State board of Education to set policies regarding teacher certification in [Alabama Code § 16-23-2](#). Certification rules related to class level are set in the [Rules of Alabama, State Board of Education 290-3-2-.01\(27\)](#).

⁶⁷ Alabama Education Association. (2017). [AEA members have access to micro-credentials](#).

Alaska



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Three-tiered certification structure:

- Advanced optional
- Initial (initial)
- Professional (standard)
- Master (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

4 AAC 12.305.⁶⁸

Requirements

To earn the master teacher certificate in Alaska teachers must fulfill the following:

- Have at least two years of teaching experience and
- Hold a valid NBPTS certificate.

Incentives

- Master certificates stay valid for five years longer than professional certificates.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Alaska currently has a state-level partnership between the Alaska Department of Education and the University of Alaska Fairbanks to pilot a micro-credential program to recruit teachers who grew up in Alaska.⁶⁹ The plan was initiated by the Alaska Department of Education in the 2017 Revised State Template for the Consolidated State Plan.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Alaska administrative code dictates teacher certification rules. [4 Alaska Administrative Code 12.305](#), and Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. *Types of certification*.

⁶⁹ Educators Rising. (2017). *News release: Alaska kicks off first statewide pilot of EdRising Academy program*.

⁷⁰ U.S. Department of Education. (2018). *Revised state template for the consolidated state plan: Alaska*.

Arizona



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Single-tier certification structure.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Arizona has a state-level policy allowing specific micro-credentials to partially satisfy requirements for computer science endorsement.⁷¹

Arkansas



Certification Structure

Single-tier certification structure.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Arkansas has a state-level policy allowing micro-credentials to count toward professional development requirements related to re-certification.⁷²

⁷¹ CODE Advocacy Coalition. (2019). *Micro-credentials: Addressing certification and professional learning in computer science*.

⁷² *Arkansas House Bill 1647*. (2017). and *Arkansas Code § 6-17-704, 705, and 707*.

California

Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Two-tiered certification structure: Advanced required.

- Preliminary (initial/standard)
- Clear (advanced)



Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

California Education Code, section 44253.⁷³

Requirements

Teachers have the following three options for earning the clear credential in California:

- Complete an approved induction program; a two-year job embedded individualized induction program that is focused on extensive support and mentoring to new teachers in their first and second year of teaching;
- Complete a credential program (only available when induction program not available); or
- Obtain NBPTS Certification.

Incentives

- No direct incentives, clear credential is required for California teachers.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

California has district level micro-credential programs for teachers, and higher education institutions offering digital badges. For example, the Burlingame School District offered a micro-credential pilot program to teachers and allowed them to count toward professional credits used to advance on the salary schedule.⁷⁴ The University of California, Davis currently offers six digital badge programs.⁷⁵

⁷³ California Education Code § 44253.

⁷⁴ Duncan, B. (2019). *Innovating professional learning with micro-credentials*. Digital Promise.

⁷⁵ University of California Davis . [Continuing and professional education digital badges](#).

Colorado

Advanced Certification

Three-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Initial (initial)
- Professional (standard)
- Master (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

1 CCR 301-37 Section 3.⁷⁶

Requirements

To earn the master teacher certificate, Colorado teachers must fulfill the following requirements:

- Hold a professional certificate,⁷⁷
- Have three years of teaching experience, and
- Hold NBPTS Certification.⁷⁸

Incentives

- Master certificates stay valid for two years longer than professional certificates.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Colorado is developing a statewide strategy to allow micro-credentials to count toward teacher-license renewal, and the Aurora School District currently offers micro-credential programs to their teachers.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ 1 CCR 301-37 Section 3.

⁷⁷ Standard certification in Colorado requires participation in an induction program.

⁷⁸ Colorado Department of Education. (2019). *General requirements for licenses and authorizations*.

⁷⁹ Colorado's Education Leadership Council. (2018). *The state of education* and Aurora School District *Micro-Credential site*.

Connecticut



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Three-tiered certification structure: Advanced required.

- Initial (initial)
- Provisional (standard)
- Professional (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

Connecticut Code § 10-145b.⁸⁰

Requirements

To earn the Professional certificate Connecticut teachers must fulfill the following:

- Complete at least 30 months of successful appropriate experience in a Connecticut public or approved nonpublic school under the provisional certificate;
- Hold a master's degree; and
- Complete 15 semester hours of teaching pedagogy training.

Incentives

- No direct or indirect incentives

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

No micro-credential programs at the state or district level, but educators in the state have earned micro-credentials.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Connecticut Code § 10-145b.

⁸¹ Digital Promise. (2020). *Micro-credential policy map*.

Delaware



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Three-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Initial (initial)
- Continuing (standard)
- Advanced (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

Delaware Code Title 14 Chapter 12 § 1210 – 1215.⁸²

Requirements

To earn the advanced certificate Delaware teachers must fulfill the following:

- Complete requirements for the continuing certificate;
- Have four years of teaching experience under the initial/continuing license; and
- Earn National Board Certification.⁸³

Incentives

- The advanced certificate stays valid for 5 years longer than the continuing certificate.
- 12% salary increase for teachers who earn National Board Certification; NBPTS Certification necessary for an advanced certificate.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

In 2019, Connecticut implemented a state-level policy offering bonuses for teachers who complete micro-credentials.⁸⁴

⁸² Delaware Code Title 14 Chapter 12 § 1210 - 1215.

⁸³ Delaware Department of Education. (2020). *Educators certification*.

⁸⁴ Carney, J. (2019). *Delaware governor's 2019 legislative recap*.

District of Columbia

Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

George Washington University in the District of Columbia offers micro-credentials for secondary school teachers to teach personal finance. Teachers in D.C. have earned micro-credentials.⁸⁵

Florida



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

At least two Florida districts have piloted micro-credential programs focused on professional development for educators.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ The George Washington University. (2020). *Financial literacy micro-credentials*.

⁸⁶ Kuriacose, C. & Warn, A. (n.d.). *A movement toward personalized professional learning: An exploration of six educator micro-credential programs*. Center for Collaborative Education.

Georgia



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Three-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Initial (initial)
- Professional (standard)
- Advanced/Lead (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

Ga. Comp. R. and Regs. r. 505-2-.01⁸⁷ and Georgia Professional Standards Commission.⁸⁸

Requirements

To earn an advanced professional certificate in Georgia, teachers must fulfill the following:

- Ten years of teaching experience with at least three of the last five earned in Georgia and
- One of the following: Advanced degree, education-specific certificate, or NBPTS Certification.
 - Master's degree or above in relevant subject area;
 - Education specific certificate;
 - NBPTS Certification.

To become a "lead" professional in Georgia, teachers must fulfill the following:

- Hold the advanced professional certificate for at least five years;
- Receive ratings of satisfactory, proficient, or exemplary on the annual summative performance evaluation while holding a Georgia professional teaching certificate;
- Receive a passing score on the GACE Teacher Leadership assessment; and
- Complete one of the following:
 - Teacher Leadership certification;
 - Advanced degree in a teaching field beyond the initial preparation program and a Teacher Leader, Coaching, or Teacher Support and Coaching endorsement;
 - Certificate in Curriculum and Instruction or Instructional Technology and a Teacher Leader, Coaching, or Teacher Support and Coaching endorsement; or
 - NBPTS Certification and a Teacher Leader, Coaching, or Teacher Support and Coaching endorsement.

Incentives

- Georgia teachers who hold the professional certificate are eligible to become mentor teachers. Some districts offer stipends to mentor teachers.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Georgia Professional Standards Commission regulation [505-2-.01](#).

⁸⁸ Georgia Professional Standards Commission. [Tiered teacher certification](#).

⁸⁹ Georgia Department of Education. [FY 18 Equity Action Plan](#).

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Around eight educators in Henry County Schools participated in the Assessment for Learning micro-credential project.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ Chapin, G., & Sheppard, K. (2018). *3 Months, 3 Micro-credentials, 1 teacher: Building performance assessment capacity in Georgia. Center for Collaborative Education.*

Hawaii



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Three-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Provisional (initial)
- Standard (standard)
- Advanced (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

HI Rev Stat § 302A-602 (2016)⁹¹ and Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board.⁹²

Requirements

To earn an advanced teacher certificate in Hawaii, teachers must fulfill the following:

- Have five years of satisfactory full-time teaching experience within the past eight years and
- Complete one of the following:
 - Master's degree or above in relevant subject area;
 - NBPTS Certification; or
 - Designated a teacher leader by the Hawaii Department of Education, a Hawaii charter school, or a particular private school.

Incentives

- The advanced certificate is valid for five years longer than the standard certificate.
- Hawaii offers \$5,000 stipends to teachers who earn NBPTS Certification. NBPTS Certification counts toward the advanced certificate.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

The Hawaii Department of Education offers teachers eight micro-credential stacks via the National Education Association.⁹³

⁹¹ HI Rev Stat § 302A-602. (2016). via Justia Law.

⁹² Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board. *License and permit information*.

⁹³ Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board. *NEA micro-credentials*.

Idaho



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure. Offers master teacher designation discussed in [Appendix II](#).

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Idaho launched a state-wide initiative geared toward “mastery based education,” which resulted in a micro-credential pilot program that included 20 Idaho school districts.⁹⁴

Illinois



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure. Offers master teacher designation discussed in [Appendix II](#).

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Illinois allows teachers to count micro-credentials as professional development clock-hours toward recertification.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ [Idaho Statutes 33-1632](#) and Idaho Board of Education. (2017). *Idaho's digital campus*.

⁹⁵ Illinois Principal Association. *Micro-credentials*.

Indiana



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Three-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Initial (initial)
- Practitioner (standard)
- Accomplished practitioner (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

IC 20-28-5-1 and Indiana Department of Education Office of Educator Licensing.⁹⁶

Requirements

To earn the accomplished practitioner teacher certificate in Indiana, teachers must fulfill the following:

- Have four years of satisfactory full-time teaching experience (at least two with the practitioner license) and
- Complete one of the following:
 - Master's degree or above in relevant subject area,
 - NBPTS Certification, or 60 graduate course hours if coursework in a relevant content area.

Incentives

- The accomplished practitioner certificate is valid for five years longer than the practitioner certificate.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Indiana offers micro-credentials as a low-cost alternative for teacher professional development.⁹⁷ The Purdue College of Education offers micro-credentials as part of their education and learning design program.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ [Indiana State Statute IC 20-28-5-1](#) and Indiana Department of Education Office of Educator. *Licensing*.

⁹⁷ Indiana Association of School Principals. (2019). *A hidden gem for pd!*

⁹⁸ Purdue College of Education Newsroom. (2018). *Competency-based online program*.

Iowa



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Three-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Initial (initial)
- Standard (standard)
- Master (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

Iowa Code § 284.15-284.18⁹⁹ and Iowa Board of Educational Examiners.¹⁰⁰

Requirements

To earn the master teacher certificate in Iowa, teachers must fulfill the following:

- Have five years of successful teaching and
- Hold a master's degree or above in a relevant subject area.

Incentives

- No direct or indirect incentives.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Iowa offers 16 micro-credentials via the National Education Association (NEA) and allows them to count toward teacher recertification requirements.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Iowa Code § 284.15-284.18.

¹⁰⁰ Iowa Board of Educational Examiners. *License authorization and information site*.

¹⁰¹ Iowa State Education Association. (2019). *Certification bank*.

Kansas



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Three-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Initial (initial)
- Professional (standard)
- Advanced (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

KS Stat § 72-2157 (2017)¹⁰² and the Kansas State Department of Education.¹⁰³

Requirements

To earn an advanced teacher certificate in Kansas, teachers must fulfill the following:

- Hold a professional license (one-year mentoring program and one year of teaching experience) and
- Obtain NBPTS Certification.

Incentives

- The advanced certificate is valid five years longer than the professional certificate.
- Kansas offers \$1,000 stipends to teachers who earn NBPTS Certification. NBPTS Certification is necessary for the advanced certificate.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

In 2018, Kansas indicated they would implement a micro-credential pilot program.¹⁰⁴ Both Kansas State University and Kansas offer micro-credentials to teachers through their education programs.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² [Kansas Stat § 72-2157 \(2017\)](#).

¹⁰³ Kansas State Department of Education. *License applications*.

¹⁰⁴ Kansas State Department of Education. (2018). *Teacher licensure and accreditation update presentation*.

¹⁰⁵ Kansas State University College of Education. *Micro-credentials* and Kansas University. *The strategic instruction model*.

Kentucky



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Four-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Rank IV (initial)
- Rank III (standard)
- Rank II (semi-advanced)
- Rank I (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

Kentucky Revised Statute 161.1211.¹⁰⁶

Requirements

To earn the Rank II certificate in Kentucky, teachers must fulfill the following:

- Hold a master's degree or higher in a subject field approved by the Education Professional Standards Board or equivalent continuing education and
- Have three years of teaching experience.

To earn the Rank I certificate in Kentucky, teachers must fulfill the following:

- Fulfill requirements for Rank II and
- Hold NBPTS Certification.

Incentives

- Teacher salaries tied directly to certificate rank.¹⁰⁷
- Kentucky offers a \$2,000 stipend to teachers who earn NBPTS Certification. NBPTS Certification is necessary for the Rank I certificate.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

In 2017, Kentucky passed Senate Bill 117 allowing teachers to explore alternative pathways for certificate renewal; micro-credentials are one of the alternative tools under consideration.¹⁰⁸ Districts in Kentucky currently offer micro-credentials to teachers.¹⁰⁹ Northern Kentucky University offers micro-credentials for teachers.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ [Kentucky Revised Statute 161.1211](#). (2017).

¹⁰⁷ Kentucky Department of Education School District Personnel Information. [Kentucky minimum salary schedules](#).

¹⁰⁸ [CODE Advocacy Coalition](#). (2019).

¹⁰⁹ Harvey, R. (2018). [Stacks for learning: Micro-credentials in Jefferson County](#). Center for Collaborative Education and Daley, R. (2019). [Kentucky hosts third national summit on micro-credentials; Plans for Rural Education Association](#). KyForward.

¹¹⁰ Northern Kentucky University. [Micro-credentials](#).

Louisiana



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Three-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Level 1(initial)
- Level 2 (standard)
- Level 3 (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

Louisiana Revised Statute § 17:7.1.¹¹¹

Requirements

To earn the Level 3 certificate in Louisiana, teachers must fulfill the following:

- Hold a master’s degree or higher in an approved subject;
- Have five years of teaching experience;
- Meet standards of effectiveness on teacher evaluations for three years; and
- District of employment must apply to increase certificate level.

Incentives

- Higher certificate levels make it more likely for the Louisiana Department of Education to select a teacher to become a teacher leader and mentor teacher.¹¹²

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Louisiana operates a state-level micro-credential program that allows teachers to earn credits toward subject-specific “credentials” and other professional development goals.¹¹³ The state partnered with Louisiana State University to grow its micro-credential offerings.¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ Louisiana Revised Statute § 17:7.1.

¹¹² Louisiana Department of Education. *Credentials for teacher leadership roles*.

¹¹³ Louisiana Association of Educators. *Micro-credential* and Blankley, B. (2019). *Louisiana awarded \$115 million in federal grants for education*. The Hayride.

¹¹⁴ LSU Media Center. (2019). *LSU launches micro-credentialing programs online*.

Maine



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Maine runs state-level micro-credential programs for educator professional development, student learning, and workforce development.¹¹⁵ The University of Maine received a two-year micro-credentialing grant to partner with the Maine Department of Education to offer micro-credentials to teachers.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Priest, N. (2016). *Digital badging and micro-credentialing*. Nellie Mae Education Foundation.

¹¹⁶ Nagel, M. (2019). *UMaine tapped as one of three nationwide to participate in BadgeToHire*. UMaine News.

Maryland



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Three-tiered certification structure: Advanced required.

- Professional Eligibility/Standard Professional I (initial)
- Standard Professional II (standard)
- Advanced Professional (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

Md. Code Ann., Education § 1-303 (2020) and the Maryland State Department of Education.¹¹⁷

Requirements

To earn the advanced professional teacher certificate in Maryland, teachers must fulfill the following:

- At least three years of satisfactory experience (also necessary for standard);
- At least six approved semester hours of professional development (also necessary for standard);
- Professional development plan approved by the district superintendent to satisfy requirements for an advanced professional certificate; and
- Complete one of the following:
 - Master's degree or above in relevant subject area,
 - NBPTS Certification and 12 semester hours of approved graduate course work, or
 - 36 graduate course hours of approved content or professional education coursework.

Incentives

- No direct or indirect incentives.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Baltimore County Public Schools offered micro-credentials as part of Maryland's Students and Teachers Accessing Tomorrow (S.T.A.T) Initiative.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ Maryland Education § 1-303 and Maryland State Department of Education. [Maryland certifications.](#)

¹¹⁸ The Citizens Advisory Committee for Gifted and Talented Education in Baltimore County Maryland. (2018). [Micro-credentialing!](#) and Digital Promise. (2016). [Micro-credentials: Igniting impact in the ecosystem.](#)

Massachusetts



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education allows micro-credentials to count as professional development credits toward certificate renewal.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. (2017). [License renewal guidelines for Massachusetts educators](#).



Michigan

Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Three-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Standard (initial)
- Professional (standard)
- Advanced Professional (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

Michigan Compiled Laws School Code Act of 1976 Part 22 § 380.1531k and the Michigan Department of Education.¹²⁰

Requirements

To earn the advanced professional teacher certificate in Michigan, teachers must fulfill the following:

- Have at least five years of successful teaching; this requires a rating of effective or highly effective on year-end performance evaluations (also required for standard);
- Additional six credit hours of teaching reading (for elementary) or three credit hours of teaching reading (for secondary or K–12);
- Complete one of the following (also required for standard):
 - Master’s degree or above in relevant subject area or
 - At least six semester credit hours of college credit, continuing education, or district-provided professional development; and
- Complete one of the following:
 - Hold an NBPTS certificate or
 - Complete an approved teacher leader training or preparation program.

Incentives

- No direct or indirect incentives.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Michigan currently offers micro-credentials for school administrators and is partnering with Michigan State University to create a teacher micro-credential for integrating computation thinking across disciplines.¹²¹

¹²⁰ MCL 380.1531k and Michigan Department of Education. *Certification public acts and rules*.

¹²¹ Michigan Virtual. *Micro-credentials* and National Science Foundation. (2019). *Award Abstract #1933933*.

Minnesota



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Four-tiered certification structure: Tier 3 required, Tier 4 optional.

- Tier 1 (initial)
- Tier 2 (standard)
- Tier 3 (advanced)
- Tier 4 (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

Minn. Statute 122A.181-184.¹²²

Requirements

To earn the Tier 4 teacher certificate in Minnesota, teachers must fulfill the following:

- Complete one of the following: (required for Tier 3)
 - Board-approved teacher preparation aligned to licensure area,
 - Equivalent license from another state,
 - Recommendation for licensure via portfolio process, or
 - Three years of successful teaching under a Tier 2 certificate;
- Three years of total teaching experience in Minnesota; and
- Passing scores on the board-approved “skills exam.”

Incentives

- No direct or indirect incentives

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Minnesota uses micro-credentials for certification and endorsement of alternative career and technical education (CTE) teachers.¹²³

¹²² Minn. Statute 122A.181-184.

¹²³ Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board. *Licensure via portfolio*.

Mississippi



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure. Separate “class levels” based on degree attainment.¹²⁴

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

In 2019, Mississippi passed House Bill 357, which mandated, “The creation of micro-credentials designed to recognize participants’ specifically demonstrated leadership abilities” aimed at improving leadership in rural school districts.¹²⁵

Missouri



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Teachers in Missouri have earned micro-credentials, but no state or district policies exist.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Mississippi Department of Education. (2020). *Guidelines for Mississippi Educator Licensure K–12*.

¹²⁵ Mississippi Legislature. *House Bill 357*. (2019).

¹²⁶ Digital Promise. (2020). *Micro-credential policy map*.

Montana



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Two-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Class 2 (initial/standard)
- Class 1 (professional)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

Montana Code Annotated. § 20-4-106. 2019. and Montana Office of Public Instruction.¹²⁷

Requirements

To earn the Class 1 teacher certificate in Montana, teachers must fulfill the following:

- Have three years of teaching experience and
- One of the following:
 - Hold a master's degree in a relevant subject area or
 - Hold NBPTS Certification.

Incentives

- Montana offers a \$1,000 stipend to teachers who earn NBPTS Certification. NBPTS Certification is one option toward earning the professional-level certification in Montana.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Teachers in Montana have earned micro-credentials, but no state or district policies exist.¹²⁸

¹²⁷ MCA. § 20-4-106 (2019) and Montana Office of Public Instruction. *Teaching and specialist licenses*.

¹²⁸ Digital Promise. (2020). *Micro-credential policy map*.

Nebraska



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Three-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Initial (initial)
- Standard (standard)
- Professional (advanced)

Nebraska also offers a Master Teacher designation.

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

Nebraska Revised Statute § 79-808 and the Nebraska Department of Education.¹²⁹

Requirements

To earn the Professional teacher certificate in Nebraska, teachers must fulfill the following:

- Two consecutive years of teaching and
- Complete one of the following:
 - Hold a master's degree in a relevant subject area or
 - Hold NBPTS Certification.

Incentives

- The professional certificate is valid for five years longer than the standard certificate.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Teachers in Nebraska have earned micro-credentials, but no state or district policies exist.¹³⁰

¹²⁹ [Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-808](#) and Nebraska Department of Education. (2019). *Teaching certificates and permits*.

¹³⁰ Digital Promise. (2020). *Micro-credential policy map*.

Nevada



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Three-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Provisional (initial)
- Standard (standard)
- Professional (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

Nevada Revised Statute § 391.031-391.035 and State of Nevada Department of Education.¹³¹

Requirements

To earn the professional teacher certificate in Nevada, teachers must fulfill the following:

- Have three years of teaching experience and
- Complete one of the following:
 - Hold a master's degree in a relevant subject area or
 - Hold NBPTS Certification.

Incentives

- Professional certificates are valid for longer than standard certificates. The validity extension varies by the degree earned; one-year extension for teachers with any master's degree, a three-year extension for teachers with an educational specialist master's degree, and a five-year extension for teachers with a doctorate.
- Nevada offers a 5% salary bonus to teachers who earn NBPTS Certification. NBPTS Certification is one option toward earning a professional certificate.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Nevada operates a state-wide micro-credential program for teachers.¹³²

¹³¹ NRS § 391.031-391.035 and State of Nevada Department of Education. *Licenses and fees.*

¹³² Nevada State Education Association. (2019). *Micro credentials* and The Nevada Collaboratory. *Earning a microcredential.*

New Hampshire



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

New Hampshire offers micro-credentials statewide via NEA.¹³³

New Jersey



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Teachers in New Jersey have earned micro-credentials, but no state or district policies exist.¹³⁴

¹³³ NEA New Hampshire. (2019). *NEA micro-credentials for professional development*.

¹³⁴ Digital Promise. (2020). *Micro-credential policy map*.

New Mexico



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Three-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Level 1 (initial)
- Level 2 (standard)
- Level 3 (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

§ 22-10A-4–11 NMSA 1978 and the New Mexico Public Education Department.¹³⁵

Requirements

To earn the level 3 certificate in New Mexico, teachers must fulfill the following:

- Complete three years of teaching experience with a level 2 license;
- Demonstrate “level 3 competency” in a portfolio professional development process; and
- Complete one of the following:
 - Hold a master’s degree in a relevant subject area or
 - Hold NBPTS Certification.

Incentives

- Statewide minimum teacher salaries tied directly to the certificate level.¹³⁶
- New Mexico offers a \$6,000 stipend to teachers who earn NBPTS Certification. NBPTS Certification is one option toward **earning** professional-level certification.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Teachers in New-Mexico have earned micro-credentials, but no state or district policies exist.¹³⁷ Teachers may be able to use micro-credentials to fulfill professional development requirements for recertification, but the policies are unclear.

¹³⁵ § 22-10A-4 NMSA 1978 and New Mexico Public Education Department. *Teacher license Advancement*.

¹³⁶ In 2019, *New Mexico Legislature House Bill 2* increased teacher salaries for all certification levels.

¹³⁷ Digital Promise. (2020). *Micro-credential policy map* and NEA New Mexico. (2019). *A better way to fulfill your PDP requirements and grow professionally!*

New York



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Two-tiered certification structure: Advanced required.

- Initial (initial/standard)
- Professional (advanced)

New York operates a master teacher program for STEM teachers.

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

New York Education Law § 3004-A. and New York State Office of Teaching Initiatives.¹³⁸

Requirements

To earn a professional certificate in New York, teachers must fulfill the following:

- Three years of teaching experience with an initial certificate or other certificate;
- Six clock hours of leadership training;
- If completed in New York, must participate in teacher mentoring; and
- Complete one of the following:
 - Hold a master's degree or higher in the content core of the initial certificate or related content area,
 - Hold a master's degree or higher in any area with at least 12 semester hours of study in the content core of initial certificate or related content area, or
 - Hold a master's degree from an approved program leading to certification in other subject areas.

Incentives

- No direct incentives, a professional certificate is required for New York teachers.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Teachers in New York have earned micro-credentials, but no state or district policies exist.¹³⁹ The State University of New York (SUNY) launched a micro-credential program across their campuses starting in 2018. They stated they plan to collaborate with K–12 partners.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ [New York Education Law § 3004-A](#) and New York State Office of Teaching Initiatives. [Certification](#).

¹³⁹ Digital Promise. (2020). [Micro-credential policy map](#).

¹⁴⁰ SUNY. (2018). [SUNY launches micro-credential policy](#).

North Carolina



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction has a “micro-credentialing and state policy” workgroup and is piloting micro-credentialing programs in districts throughout the state.¹⁴¹ North Carolina State University offers micro-credentials to teachers.¹⁴²

North Dakota



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

From May 1, 2020, until December 31, 2020, North Dakota United will partner with NEA to offer micro-credentials to North Dakota educators.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. *Micro-credentialing in North Carolina*.

¹⁴² NC State University Friday Institute. *Micro-credentials @ Friday Institute*.

¹⁴³ North Dakota United. (2020). *NEA micro-credentials*.

Ohio



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Four-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Resident Educator (initial)
- Professional (standard)
- Senior Professional (advanced)
- Lead Professional (advanced)

Ohio also offers a master teacher designation.

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

Ohio Revised Code. § 3319.22 (2017) and Ohio Department of Education.¹⁴⁴

Requirements

To earn the Lead professional certificate in Ohio, teachers must fulfill the following:¹⁴⁵

- Hold a master's degree or higher;
- Have nine years of experience with at least five under the professional certificate;
- Complete a master teacher portfolio; and
- Complete one of the following, for lead professional only:
 - Hold NBPTS Certification or
 - Master teacher portfolio and hold the Ohio teacher leader endorsement.

Incentives

- Teachers holding the advanced certificates in Ohio can serve as school improvement leaders, an exclusive professional opportunity.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Ohio operates a statewide individual micro-credential assistance program, but K–12 teachers are not discussed in the legislation establishing the program.¹⁴⁶ Teachers in Ohio have earned teacher-specific micro-credentials.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ Ohio Rev. Code. § 3319.22. (2017) and Ohio Department of Education. [Teacher license overview](#).

¹⁴⁵ The teacher leadership endorsement, when combined with the master teacher portfolio, qualifies a teacher for the lead professional certificate. Without the leadership endorsement a teacher qualifies for the senior professional certificate. If the teacher holds NBPTS certification they qualify as a lead professional.

¹⁴⁶ OH Amended Substitute [House Bill Number 2](#). (2019).

Oklahoma



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure.

*Micro-credentials*¹⁴⁸

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Oklahoma passed state-level legislation allowing the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) to establish and implement a new framework for teacher career paths. As part of this process, the OSDE participated in a multi-state collaboration to create a “micro-credentialing in an educational human capital system framework.”

¹⁴⁷ Ohio Education Association. (2020). About OEA/NEA *micro-credentials*.

¹⁴⁸ Rutkowski, M. (2020, May 06). *Oklahoma educators to have access to micro-endorsement resource new partnership will help enrich skills and advance careers*. Bloomboard.

Oregon



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Three-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Preliminary (initial)
- Professional (standard)
- Teacher Leader (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

Oregon Revised Statute. § 342.130 (2017) and Oregon Administrative Rules. Chapter 584-210-0010–0060.¹⁴⁸

Requirements

To earn the teacher leader certificate in Oregon, teachers must fulfill the following:

- Earn the professional license or equivalent;¹⁴⁹
- Have five years of full-time teaching experience in the five years preceding application;
- Two evaluations of “effective” or highly effective” within the five years preceding application and while holding the standard certificate;
- No evaluations lower than “effective” level within the five years preceding application and while holding the standard certificate; and
- Submit a portfolio of current leadership practices.

Incentives

- No direct or indirect incentives.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Some Oregon Education Association (OEA) micro-credentials can be used to fulfill professional development requirements for renewing Oregon teacher certificates. No state-wide micro-credential policies exist, but some districts are applying for micro-credential mini-grants offered by OEA.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ [ORS § 342.130. \(2017\)](#) and [OAR 584-210-0010–0060](#).

¹⁴⁹ Teachers in Oregon earn the standard certificate by holding an initial certificate, teaching full-time for four consecutive years, and completing a professional development or endorsement program. Master’s degrees related to teaching and NBPTS Certification both fulfill these professional development requirements.

¹⁵⁰ Oregon Education Association. [Member resources: Microcredentials](#) and Shunk, A., [Micro-credentials are here at last](#). Oregon Education Association.

Pennsylvania



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

The Nazareth Area School District started a micro-credential pilot program in the 2019 school year, and the Pennsylvania State Education Association offers micro-credentials to member teachers.¹⁵¹

¹⁵¹ Nazareth Area School District Education Program Department. (2018). *Professional development plan 2018-2019* and Pennsylvania State Education Association. (2020). *PSEA/NEA Act 48 and micro-credentials program*.

Rhode Island



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Three-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Initial (initial)
- Professional (standard)
- Advanced (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

Rhode Island General Laws. § 16-1-1. and Rhode Island Code of Regulations 200-20-20-1.¹⁵²

Requirements

To earn an advanced certificate in Rhode Island, teachers must fulfill the following:

- Earn the professional certificate,¹⁵³
- Complete specified amount of professional learning units in accordance with the teacher's professional learning plan coordinated at the district level; and
- Complete five years of teaching with the professional certificate with at least four years of "highly effective" ratings on evaluations and no ratings below effective.

Incentives

- The advanced certificate is valid for two years longer than the professional certificate.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

From 2016-2019 Rhode Island ran a state-wide micro-credential pilot program and is currently developing a computer science endorsement that will include a micro-credential pathway toward earning the endorsement.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² [R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-11-1](#) and [200-RICR-20-20-1](#).

¹⁵³ Teachers in Rhode Island earn the professional certificate by holding an initial certificate, teaching full-time for three years, and completing required professional learning units mandated by district of employment or be rated effective in an evaluation.

¹⁵⁴ Paley, J., & Chapin, G., (2016). *Micro-credentials guide assessment for learning in Rhode Island*. Center for Collaborative Education and [CODE Advocacy Coalition](#). (2019).

South Carolina



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure. Separate “class levels” based on degree level.¹⁵⁵

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

In 2018, South Carolina ran a micro-credential pilot program offered to districts across the state.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁵ South Carolina Department of Education. *Education class levels*.

¹⁵⁶ Quinn, Dr. Sheila, Deputy Superintendent, Division of Innovation and Effectiveness. (2018). *Memorandum to district superintendents regarding the Collective Leadership Initiative and micro-credential pilot program opportunity*.

South Dakota



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Two-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Professional (initial/standard)
- Advanced (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

South Dakota Codified Laws § 13-1-12.1 (2017) and (2017) Administrative Rules of South Dakota 24:28:06:05.¹⁵⁷

Requirements

To earn an advanced certificate in South Dakota, teachers must fulfill the following:

- Have five years of teaching experience and
- Complete one of the following:
 - Hold NBPTS Certification or
 - Hold a master's degree or higher.

Incentives

- South Dakota offers a \$2,000 stipend to teachers who earn NBPTS Certification. NBPTS Certification is one option toward earning professional-level certification.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

North Dakota allows micro-credentials to count toward professional development requirements for re-certification.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ [SDLC 13-1-12.1](#) and [\(2017\) ARSD 24:28:06:05](#).

¹⁵⁸ South Dakota Education Association. (2020). *Professional development*.

Tennessee

Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Tennessee ran a micro-credential pilot program from 2017 to 2018.¹⁵⁹ Now, Tennessee state policy allows for micro-credentials to count toward professional development requirements for re-certification and certificate advancement.¹⁶⁰



Texas

Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

The 2019 Texas State Legislature passed legislation mandating the Texas State Board for Educator Certification to propose rules for establishing a micro-credential program related to educator certification. In 2017 and 2018, the Texas Education Agency conducted a micro-credential pilot program via BloomBoard.¹⁶¹



¹⁵⁹ Tennessee Department of Education. (2017). *Micro-credential pilot: Year two*.

¹⁶⁰ Tennessee State Board of Education. (2017). *Educator Licensure Policy 5.502*.

¹⁶¹ Huang, Ray., (2019). *Statewide micro-credential certification approved by Texas State Legislature*. BloomBoard and [Texas House Bill 2424](#). (2019).

Utah



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Three-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Level 1 (initial)
- Level 2 (standard)
- Level 3 (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

Utah Administrative Code R277-504 and Utah State Board of Education.¹⁶²

Requirements

To earn the level 3 certificate in Utah, teachers must fulfill the following:

- Have three years of teaching experience;
- Hold a level 2 license; and¹⁶³
- Complete one of the following:
 - Hold NBPTS Certification or
 - Hold a doctorate.

Incentives

- Utah offers a \$750 stipend to teachers who earn NBPTS Certification. NBPTS Certification is one option toward earning advanced certification.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Utah runs a statewide micro-credential program, and some districts offer incentives for teachers to earn micro-credentials. Utah teachers can use micro-credentials to count toward Utah State Board of Education credit which can go toward certificate renewal or level change.¹⁶⁴ The Juab School District offers \$200 per year per micro-credential earned.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶² Utah Admin. Code R277-504 and Utah State Board of Education. [Renew/upgrade a Utah educator license.](#)

¹⁶³ Utah teachers earn the level 2 license through a combination of teaching experience, a mentor program, evaluation, and a district-level portfolio.

¹⁶⁴ Utah Education Network. (2020). [Move your professional learning forward.](#)

¹⁶⁵ Juab School District. [Professional learning menu.](#)

Vermont



Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

Franklin West Supervisory Union, a group comprised of three Vermont school districts, began offering micro-credentials to teachers in 2017.¹⁶⁶ The Union of Vermont Educators offers NEA micro-credentials to member teachers, and Castleton University offers micro-credentials for academic credit that can be used by teachers to advance up the salary schedule.¹⁶⁷

Virginia



Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

In 2019, the Virginia Legislature passed legislation allowing the Virginia Department of Education to create a micro-credential program permitting teachers to use micro-credentials to count towards “additional coursework for certificate advancement,” and credit toward earning teaching endorsements in specific subjects.¹⁶⁸ Radford University offers micro-credentials for teachers.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁶ Franklin West SU. (2017). *The FWSU story: How micro-credentials are changing the face of professional development*.

¹⁶⁷ Vermont NEA. *Personalized professional learning through micro-credentials*.

¹⁶⁸ *Code of Virginia*. (2019). § 22.1-299.7.

¹⁶⁹ Radford University. (2020.) *Earn asset micro-credentials*.

West Virginia



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Three-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Initial (initial)
- Professional (standard)
- Permanent Professional (advanced)

West Virginia offers various endorsements specific to advanced certificate holders including mentor, master mentor, and teacher leader.

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

West Virginia Department of Education. Policy 5202.¹⁷⁰

Requirements

To earn the permanent professional certificate West Virginia, teachers must complete one of three following criteria:

- Option one:
 - Hold or eligible for the professional (standard) five-year certificate;
 - Hold a master's degree or higher; and
 - Have five years of teaching experience including two within a specialization.
- Option two:
 - Hold a valid standard certificate and
 - Renew the standard certificate one time.
- Option three:
 - Hold NBPTS Certification.

Incentives

- The permanent professional certificate is valid indefinitely while the professional certificate is only valid for five years. Salary increases tied to endorsements within the permanent professional certificate.
- West Virginia offers a \$3,500 stipend to teachers who earn NBPTS Certification. NBPTS Certification is one option toward earning professional-level certification.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

¹⁷⁰ West Virginia Department of Education. [Policy 5202](#).

Information

West Virginia has no state- or district-level policies, but educators in the state have earned micro-credentials.¹⁷¹

Wisconsin



Advanced Certification

Certification Structure

Four-tiered certification structure: Advanced optional.

- Initial (initial)
- Provisional (initial+)
- Lifetime (standard)
- Master Professional (advanced)

Relevant Code/Statutes/Policies

Wisconsin Administrative Code. § 34.118.19.¹⁷²

Requirements

To earn the master certificate, Wisconsin teachers must fulfill the following:

- Hold a master's degree or above;
- Have at least five years of teaching experience;
- Provide evidence of contributions to the profession and improved pupil learning; and
- Complete one of the following:
 - Hold NBPTS Certification or
 - Complete a performance-based portfolio process.

Incentives

- Wisconsin offers professional development grants of up to \$2,000 annually to teachers with the master certificate.
- Wisconsin offers a \$2,500 stipend to teachers who earn NBPTS Certification. NBPTS Certification is one option toward earning an advanced certificate.

Micro-credentials

¹⁷¹ Digital Promise. (2020). *Micro-credential policy map*.

¹⁷² Wisconsin Admin. Code. § 34.118.19.

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction operates a micro-credential program that allows approved micro-credentials to count toward professional development requirements for advancing certification.¹⁷³ The University of Wisconsin offers micro-credentials for teachers at their extension campus.¹⁷⁴

Wyoming



Certification Structure

Single-tiered certification structure.

Micro-credentials

Uses

- Certification
- Pathways to leadership
- Personalized professional development
- Fulfillment of specific course requirements

Information

As part of the Wyoming Digital Learning Plan, Wyoming accepts micro-credentials as professional development credit.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³ Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. *Digital instructional leadership licensure, credential options, and micro-credentials*.

¹⁷⁴ Mason, J. (2017). *Learner-generated instructions and CBE micro-credentials*. University of Wisconsin extended campus.

¹⁷⁵ Wyoming Department of Education. (2020). *Digital learning plan*.

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