

290-3-2-.01 Definitions.

(1) **30/18.** The semester hours required in a teaching field, including at least 30 semester hours of credit with at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit.

(2) **Academic Major.** Refer to the definition in the Educator Preparation Chapter of the *Alabama Administrative Code*.

(3) **Administrator.** When “administrator” is used in conjunction with “superintendent,” “administrator” is defined as the chief administrative officer of a nonpublic school or nonpublic school system.

(4) **Administrative Experience.** Experience as a superintendent or assistant superintendent, principal or assistant principal, career and technical administrator or assistant career and technical administrator in a P-12 school system(s).

(5) **Alabama Council for Leadership Development (ACLD).** The ACLD provides advice for the development of a system of professional development for Alabama’s instructional leaders. The Council approves professional studies that fully address the Alabama Standards for Instructional Leaders and are aligned with the Alabama Standards for Professional Development.

(6) **Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program (AECAP).** The statewide testing program required by the Alabama State Board of Education for educators as a precondition for initial certification in each teaching field or area of instructional support. Official score reports must be submitted electronically from the testing service to the Alabama State Department of Education. Applicants must meet the requirements of the AECAP in effect at the time an application and nonrefundable fee are received in the Educator Certification Section. Additional information is in Rule 290-3-2-.02(9).

(7) **Applicant.** An individual who meets one of the following definitions:

(a) An individual who submits an application or for whom an educator preparation institution or a prospective or current employer submits an application to the Section for any certificate, substitute license, or other license issued by the Alabama State Superintendent of Education.

(b) An individual employed by a local education agency or nonpublic school to act in any capacity in which she or he will have unsupervised access to children in an educational environment.

(c) An individual applying for admission to a State-approved educator preparation program at an Alabama regionally accredited senior institution for the purpose of earning a certificate after completing that program and meeting other current requirements.

(8) Application for Certification. Completed, current official forms and supporting documents, including official transcripts and documentation of compliance with the requirements of the AECAP, to substantiate a request for certification. Application for certification includes initial certification, renewal, changing to a higher level of certification, and adding a teaching field and/or an area of instructional support. All requests for certification must include at least the current application form(s), the nonrefundable application fee(s) as indicated on the current application form(s) and the completion of the criminal history background check. A request for certification will not be assigned for review until at least these items are received. The application receipt date is the day on which the current application form(s) is received in the Educator Certification Section. The Section reserves the right to request an updated application form(s) if the application was signed by the applicant more than six months prior to receipt in the Section.

(9) Area. Any teaching field and grade level(s) or instructional support area and grade level(s).

(10) Candidate. A pre-service or in-service person enrolled in a senior institution for the purpose of earning initial or advanced certification in a teaching field or area of instructional support or for professional development purposes.

(11) Certificate. The official document issued by the Alabama State Department of Education to an applicant who has been deemed to meet all requirements for the issuance of the document. Printed information on the document includes the name of the applicant to whom it was issued, the date each area was issued, the degree level(s), valid period(s), and the specific teaching field(s) and/or area(s) of instructional support and grade level(s). Information on proper certification is in Rule 290-3-2-.01(40).

(12) Certification Officer. One person, designated by the head of the educator preparation unit at an Alabama regionally accredited senior institution of higher education with State-approved educator preparation programs, who is authorized to represent the unit. Responsibilities of the certification officer include but are not limited to:

(a) Verifying to the Alabama State Department of Education that an applicant for a certificate has successfully completed the State-approved program for the certificate sought and is recommended for certification.

(b) Verifying whether an applicant for a Special Alternative Certificate has met State requirements for unconditional admission to a State-approved program in the teaching field or area of instructional support for which the certificate is sought.

(c) Responding to requests for information from the Alabama State Department of Education.

(13) Child Abuse Crime. As defined in Act 2002-457, any crime committed under the law of the state that involves the physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or exploitation, or maltreatment of a child. Conviction of this crime shall cause an applicant to be deemed unsuitable for employment. Additional information about suitability determinations is in Rule 290-3-2-.01(54).

(14) Church-related / Parochial School. Includes only schools which offer instruction in Grades P-12, or any combination thereof, through on-site or home programs and are operated as a ministry of a local church, group of churches, denomination, and/or association of churches which do not receive any state or federal funding. Refer to Ala. Code §16-28-1 (1975).

(15) Criminal History Background Check. Information received from the Alabama State Bureau of Investigation (ASBI) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), resulting from a fingerprint review. Additional information is in Rule 290-3-2-.02(8).

(16) Department. Alabama State Department of Education.

(17) DoDEA. Department of Defense Education Activity.

(18) Educational Administrator. When used in this chapter or in applying Rules of the Alabama State Board of Education, the term applies to a person who holds a previously issued or current Alabama certificate as a career and technical administrator, educational administrator, instructional leader, principal, superintendent, or superintendent-principal.

(19) Educator Preparation Program. A State-approved program at an Alabama senior institution, a state-approved program at a senior institution in another state, or a program in another country leading to professional educator certification within grades P-12 as a teacher or as a provider of instructional support (administrator, counselor, librarian, psychologist, psychometrist, speech language pathologist, sport manager, and/or supervisor).

(20) Form. Official, required document(s) completed by or for applicants for a variety of purposes. Any reference to a form in this chapter means the current version of the form.

(21) GPA (Grade Point Average). In this chapter, all GPA requirements pertain to calculations on a four-point scale. Appropriate adjustments shall be made for other scales. GPAs may not be rounded. For example, a GPA of 2.74 cannot be rounded to 2.75. The official overall GPA is the GPA posted on the official transcript of the degree granting institution that was used as the basis for granting the degree.

(22) Initial Certificate. The first Alabama certificate in each specific teaching field or area of instructional support issued to an educator.

(23) Instructional Leader. When used in this chapter or in applying the Rules of the Alabama State Board of Education, the term applies to a person who holds a previously issued or current Alabama certificate as a career and technical administrator, educational administrator, instructional leader, principal, superintendent, superintendent-principal, or supervisor.

(24) Instructional Support Areas. The area(s) and grade level(s) printed on the certificate to which a person may be assigned and deemed properly certified. Area(s) include career and technical administrator, educational administrator, instructional leader, library media specialist, principal, school counselor, school psychologist, school psychometrist, speech language pathologist, sport manager, superintendent, superintendent-principal, and supervisor.

(25) Issuing Authority. The official state agency responsible for awarding educator credentials for grades P-12, or DoDEA.

(26) K (Kindergarten). In Alabama schools and as used in this chapter, kindergarten refers to programs for five-year olds.

(27) Levels of Professional Educator Certificates.

(a) Class B: Bachelor's degree level.

(b) Class A: Master's degree level program of at least 30 semester hours of graduate credit in a teaching field or instructional support area. Coursework used to meet Class B certification or bachelor's degree requirements may not be used toward the issuance of higher level certification in any area. Coursework for which credit was applied toward the issuance of a previous level of certification, in any area, may not be used toward the issuance of higher level certification in any area.

(c) Class AA: Planned sixth-year program of at least 30 semester hours of graduate credit, which results in an education specialist degree. Coursework used to meet Class A certification or master's degree requirements may not be used toward the issuance of higher level certification in any area. Coursework for which credit was applied toward the issuance of a previous level of certification, in any area, may not be used toward the issuance of higher level certification in any area.

(28) Levels of Professional Leadership Certificates.

(a) Class A: Master's degree level program of at least 30 semester hours of graduate credit. Coursework used to meet Class B certification or bachelor's degree requirements may not be used toward the issuance of higher level certification in any area. Coursework for which credit was applied toward the issuance of a previous level of certification, in any area, may not be used toward the issuance of higher level certification in any area.

(b) Class AA: Planned sixth year program of at least 30 semester hours of graduate credit, which results in an education specialist degree. Coursework used to meet Class A certification or master's degree requirements may not be used toward the issuance of higher level certification in any area. Coursework for which credit was applied toward the issuance of a previous level of certification, in any area, may not be used toward the issuance of higher level certification in any area.

(29) Mentor. When used in this chapter in regard to an Alternative Baccalaureate-Level Certificate, Career and Technical Alternative Baccalaureate-Level Certificate, Special Alternative Certificate, Preliminary Certificate, Preliminary Certificate Through Exception, Business and Industry to Educational Administration Certificate, Provisional, or Interim Employment Certificate the term "mentor" is defined as a teacher or instructional support employee of a P-12 public school or a P-12 nonpublic school who has at least three full years of professional educational work experience; has demonstrated effectiveness in the performance of his or her work; has demonstrated excellence in communicating and collaborating with colleagues; and is designated by the superintendent or administrator to provide guidance, support, and assistance in the development and improvement of the professional skills and understanding to a beginning teacher or instructional support person. The mentor should hold a valid certificate in the same teaching field or area of instructional support for which the individual to be mentored is seeking certification.

(30) Nonpublic School. Includes P-12 schools that are church-related/parochial, federally operated, special schools that are supported by the state, and schools that are not public. Additional information is in the definition of church-related/parochial school in Rule 290-3-2-.01(14).

(31) Official Transcript. A college or university transcript that has been received directly from the issuing institution or from a Department approved electronic transcript delivery agent that bears the college/university seal, date of transcript issuance, and the signature of the Registrar.

(32) P (Preschool or Pre-K). Any level prior to kindergarten.

(33) Professional Development. Sustained and collaborative activities for teachers and instructional support personnel designed to increase the academic achievement of all students. The activities must strengthen pedagogical knowledge and promote the acquisition of research-based strategies. For currently employed Alabama educators, the need for such activities must be supported by data from local schools. Professional development plans must be approved by the employing superintendent or administrator.

(34) Professional Educational Work Experience. Acceptable employment in a teaching field or an area of instructional support. Additional information is in Rule 290-3-2-.02(10).

(35) Professional Educator Certificate. A certificate to teach in grades P-12 that is issued by the Alabama State Department of Education based on at least an earned bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited senior institution except as prescribed in Rule 290-3-2-.02(7)(c). A certificate to provide instructional support (counselor, librarian, psychologist, psychometrist, speech-language pathologist, sport manager) in grades P-12 that is issued by the Alabama State Department of Education based on at least an earned master's degree from a regionally accredited senior institution. Issuance of the Professional Educator Certificate is based on completion of a State-approved approach to certification. Since January 2010, administrative and supervisory certificates are no longer printed on the certificate entitled Professional Educator Certificate.

(36) professional educator certificate. A certificate to teach in grades P-12 that is issued by the certificate issuing authority in another state or DoDEA based on at least an earned bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited senior institution. A certificate to provide instructional support (administrator, counselor, librarian, psychologist, psychometrist, sport manager, supervisor) in grades P-12 that is issued by the certificate issuing authority in another state or DoDEA and is based on at least an earned master's degree.

(37) Professional Leadership Certificate. A certificate to provide leadership (career and technical administrator, educational administrator, instructional leader, principal, superintendent, superintendent-principal, and supervisor) in grades P-12 that is issued by the Alabama State Department of Education and is based on at least an earned master's degree from a regionally accredited senior institution and completion of a State-approved approach to certification. Since January 2010, administrative and supervisory certificates are printed on the certificate entitled Professional Leadership Certificate. Prior to January 2010, administrative and supervisory certificates were printed on the certificate entitled Professional Educator Certificate.

(38) Professional Learning Unit. A Professional Learning Unit (PLU) is a content driven, long-term unit of professional study for instructional leaders that fully addresses all knowledge and ability indicators under an Alabama Standard for Instructional Leaders. Professional study that constitutes a PLU requires multiple professional development experiences over time and will always be aligned with the Alabama Standards for Professional Development. A PLU is earned at the completion of professional study which fully addresses the knowledge and ability indicators under an Alabama Standard for Instructional Leaders. The professional study must include comprehensive coverage and evaluation of effectiveness in the school setting. Professional study that earns a PLU must be approved either by the Alabama Council for Leadership Development (ACLD) or approved by an Alabama city or county superintendent or an administrator of an Alabama nonpublic school.

(39) Program Checklist. An official document identifying all courses required to complete a State-approved educator preparation program. Program checklists are submitted by an institution and approved by the Alabama State Board of Education following a review. The official State-approved checklist will be used as the basis for issuing a certificate. Additional information on program approval is in the current Educator Preparation Chapter of the *Alabama Administrative Code*. If institutions modify the format of the State-approved program checklist to facilitate advisement, all requirements on the official program checklist must be included on the modified forms.

(40) Proper Certification. Proper certification is defined as having a valid Alabama certificate in the teaching field(s) and/or area(s) of instructional support in which the person is assigned throughout the school day. The current edition of the *Subject and Personnel Codes* of the Alabama State Department of Education shall be used to determine whether an individual holds proper certification for his or her assignments throughout the school day.

(41) Reasonable Suspicion. Reasonable articulable grounds to believe that a crime has been committed by the individual.

(42) Receipt Date. The date a document is received and date stamped by the Educator Certification Section. The date a fee is received in the Educator Certification Section.

(43) Regional Accrediting Agency. The six regional accrediting agencies recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Department are:

(a) Middle States Commission on Higher Education for institutions of higher education in Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

(b) New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education for institutions of higher education in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

(c) Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, for institutions of higher education in Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming, including schools of the Navajo Nation.

(d) Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities for institutions of higher education in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington.

(e) Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges for institutions of higher education in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

(f) Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities for institutions of higher education in California, Hawaii, the United States territories of Guam and American Samoa, the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

(44) Regionally Accredited. Refers to action taken by one of the regional accrediting agencies in Rule 290-3-2-.01(43) and is specific to the status of the institution at the time credit or degrees were earned.

(45) Renewal. The continuation of a valid certificate with a new valid period or the reinstatement of an expired certificate with a new valid period. Additional information is in Rule 290-3-2-.29.

(46) Revocation. The process of taking adverse action against a certificate, substitute teacher license, or other license.

(47) Scholastic Year. Begins with the first day of July and ends with the thirtieth day of June each year. Refer to Ala. Code §16-1-1 (1975).

(48) Section. The Educator Certification Section of the Office of Teaching and Leading of the Alabama State Department of Education.

(49) Senior Institution. A college or university that confers at least the bachelor's degree.

(50) State. Any state or commonwealth, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, or territory of the United States of America.

(51) State-approved Approach. The various methods of obtaining a Professional Educator Certificate or a Professional Leadership Certificate that have been approved by the Alabama State Board of Education.

(52) State-approved Program. An educator preparation program at an Alabama regionally accredited senior institution of higher education that has been formally approved by the Alabama State Board of Education on the basis of Alabama standards. All of the courses in an approved educator preparation program shall be indicated on an Alabama State Department of Education form called a program checklist.

(53) state-approved Program. An educator preparation program at a college or university in another state that has been approved by the Department of Education in that state based on its standards.

(54) Suitability Determination. Determination issued by the Alabama State Superintendent of Education to employing superintendents, administrators, or applicants in response to a criminal history background check indicating an applicant's or current employee's fitness for employment as prescribed in Act 2002-457.

(55) Superintendent. In this chapter, the Alabama State Superintendent of Education shall be designated as the Superintendent.

(56) superintendent. In this chapter, an Alabama city, county, or other public school superintendent shall be designated as a superintendent.

(57) Supervisor. When used in this chapter or in applying Rules of the Alabama State Board of Education, the term applies to a person who holds a previously issued or current Alabama certificate as a supervisor.

(58) Supervisory Experience. Experience directing an educational program at the central office level of a P-12 school system(s).

(59) Teacher. When used in this chapter or in applying the Rules of the Alabama State Board of Education, the term applies to a person who holds a previously issued or current Alabama certificate for a teaching field.

(60) Teaching Field. Subject(s) and grade level(s) printed on a certificate to which a person may be assigned and deemed properly certified. Additional information about proper certification is in Rule 290-3-2-.01(40).

(61) Upper-Division. Coursework designated by an institution of higher education to be at the junior or senior level of undergraduate study.

(62) Valid. In effect; not expired.

(63) Valid Period. The dates during which a certificate or license is in effect.

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Statutory Authority: Ala. Const. Amend. 284, Ala. Code §§16-3-11, 16-23-1 and 16-23-2 (1975).

History: New 12-19-78, repealed 12-8-94, effective 12-31-96; new adopted 12-8-94, effective 1-1-97, repealed 11-14-96 and amended repealed date of original chapter to 6-30-97 new adopted 1-9-97 effective 7-1-97; amended: 6-14-99; effective 7-19-99; amended: 9-9-99; effective 10-14-99, repealed and new adopted 06-13-02; emergency Rule to appeal and adopt new filed on 6-13-02; new adopted 8-8-02, effective 9-12-02; emergency Rule to appeal and adopt new filed on 10-10-02; new adopted 12-12-02, effective 1-16-03; repealed and new adopted 09-11-03 effective 10-16-03; emergency amended Rule adopted 4-14-05, effective 4-14-05; amended Rule adopted 6-9-05, effective 7-14-05; repealed and adopted new, 8-4-08, effective 9-18-08; repealed and adopted new 12-9-10, effective 1-14-11; repealed and adopted new 3-10-16, effective 4-24-16; amended 08-13-20, effective 10-15-20.

290-3-2-.02 Basic Principles.

(1) Certification Authority.

(a) The Educator Certification Section shall be the sole office within the Alabama State Department of Education to issue certificates and licenses and to implement Alabama laws and Rules adopted by the Alabama State Board of Education relating to the certification of teachers and instructional support personnel for preschool through Grade 12 (P-12). Rules, standards, directives, and memoranda written prior to adoption of these Rules are invalid and shall not be used to determine the application of these Rules. These Rules shall apply to all individuals whose applications for certification have a receipt date of on or after May 1, 2016, unless otherwise noted throughout this chapter.

(b) Unless otherwise provided by law, the educator certification Rules in this chapter shall be the sole authority by which certification is administered. Only the Alabama State Superintendent of Education shall have the authority to make exceptions to these Rules. Additional information on the certification authority of the State Superintendent of Education is in Rule 290-3-2-.04.

(c) Certificates issued by another state, DoDEA, or another certificate issuing authority may not be validated as the authority of their holders to teach in Alabama schools.

(d) State certification Rules grant broad general authority but ensure uniformity of administration.

(e) State certification Rules allow modifications to supporting policies and procedures to facilitate adoption and implementation of new technologies and improved business processes.

(2) Proper Certification.

(a) Each person who serves as a teacher or in an instructional support personnel position in the public schools of the State is required to hold a valid Alabama certificate as prescribed in Ala. Code §16-23-1 (1975).

(b) Each person who serves as a private tutor is required to hold a valid Alabama certificate as prescribed in Ala. Code §16-28-5 (1975).

(c) Proper certification is defined as having a valid Alabama certificate in the teaching field(s) and/or area(s) of instructional support in which the person is assigned throughout the school day. The current edition of the *Subject and Personnel Codes* of the Alabama State Department of Education, which is updated annually, shall be used to determine whether a person holds proper certification for his or her assignments throughout the school day.

(d) An individual who is assigned one or more periods per day in a teaching field in which he or she is not properly certified will cause a penalty of a minimum of \$500.00 per teacher per year to be assessed against the employing board of education. Additional information about proper certification is in Rule 290-3-2-.01(40). Additional information about the penalty is in Rule 290-2-1-.01. All teachers must be paid according to the State Minimum Salary Schedule. Additional information about the schedule is in Rule 290-2-1-.01.

(3) Highly Qualified Teacher. A teacher may be officially designated highly qualified by the Alabama State Superintendent of Education in a specific core academic subject area(s) and grade level(s) based on having met criteria outlined in the current edition of *The Alabama Model for Identifying Highly Qualified Teachers*. Highly Qualified Teacher status may be verified on the Educator Certification Section of the Departmental website.

(4) Alabama Special Requirements

(a) Completion of a criminal history background check as required by the *Alabama Child Protection Act of 1999*, as amended, and in Rule 290-3-2-.02(8).

(b) Verification, on the current application form for each certification approach, of citizenship or nationality status as required by the *Beason-Hammon Alabama Taxpayer & Citizen Protection Act 2011-535*, and as amended, by *Alabama Act No. 2012-491*.

(c) Completion of requirements of the Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program (AECAP) as prescribed in Rule 290-3-2-.02(9).

(5) Applications.

(a) An applicant must meet all certification requirements for the selected approach to certification in effect on the receipt date of the application.

(b) Requirements must be met at the time of application receipt. An applicant who submits an incomplete application for certification must submit the additional required documentation within the 60 day period beginning with the date of a letter from the Educator Certification Section indicating the requirements yet to be verified. If the required documentation is not received in the Section within that 60 day period, the applicant must submit a current application, submit another nonrefundable fee, and meet requirements in effect on the receipt date of the new application.

(c) Applicants required to successfully complete the Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program (AECAP) must submit verification of meeting the test requirements within the 6 month period beginning with the date of a letter from the Educator Certification Section indicating certificate eligibility status. If the testing requirements are not met or verification is not received in the Section within that 6 month period, the applicant must submit a current application, submit another nonrefundable fee, and meet requirements in effect on the receipt date of the new application. Some approaches to certification require successful completion of the AECAP at a specific time and must be met as prescribed in this chapter.

(6) Application Fee.

(a) The Educator Certification Section shall collect fees for certification purposes pursuant to Ala. Code § 16-23-4 (1975).

(b) Each application for certification must be accompanied by a \$30.00 nonrefundable fee.

1. If the applicant is eligible or becomes eligible for certification within 60 days or 6 months as prescribed in Rule 290-3-2-.02(5), a certificate will be issued. Additional fee(s) may be requested for certification in more than one area.

2. If the applicant does not become eligible for certification within 60 days or 6 months as prescribed in Rule 290-3-2-.02(5), an Emergency Certificate or Substitute License may be issued for a qualified applicant at the request of an employing superintendent or administrator. Otherwise, the \$30.00 fee is non-transferable and will be forfeited.

3. If eligibility requirements are not met within 60 days or 6 months as prescribed in Rule 290-3-2-.02(5), the applicant must submit a current application, submit another nonrefundable fee, and meet requirements in effect on the receipt date of the new application.

(c) A cashier's check, money order, or receipt for online payment through the Department approved payment system is required. No other form of payment is accepted. Money orders and cashier's checks must be payable to the Alabama State Department of Education.

(d) All fees are nonrefundable.

(7) Minimum Degree and Academic Requirements.

(a) Specific degree requirements must be met in the Rules as prescribed in this chapter.

(b) An applicant whose only degree is a bachelor's degree that has been earned from a non-regionally accredited senior institution may apply for a Class B Professional Educator Certificate with acceptable verification that all of the following conditions have been met:

1. Completion of a state-approved educator preparation program.

2. Valid professional educator certificate from another state or DoDEA in an area in which Alabama offers comparable certification at the Class B level.

3. Nine semester hours of graduate credit with grades of "B" or above earned from an Alabama institution with State-approved programs and posted on the official transcript of that institution.

(c) An applicant who holds a bachelor's degree from a non-regionally accredited senior institution and a bachelor's or higher degree from a regionally accredited senior institution shall have both degrees recognized for certification purposes.

(d) Degrees above the bachelor's level earned from non-regionally accredited senior institutions will not be recognized for certification purposes.

(e) Remedial courses will not be recognized for certification purposes. Other than remedial, these courses may be called compensatory, developmental, or basic skills. These courses are usually numbered below 100.

(8) Criminal History Background Check.

(a) Effective July 1, 2002, an applicant for certification/licensure or an applicant employed by a local school system or nonpublic school who will have unsupervised access to children in an educational environment and who has not completed a background check since July 1, 1999, as required by the Alabama Child Protection Act of 1999, as amended, shall be required to be fingerprinted for a criminal history background check through the Alabama Bureau of Investigation (ABI) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) pursuant to Act 2002-457.

1. The applicant shall be fingerprinted by the approved third party contractor designated by the Alabama Department of Education who has been trained to take acceptable fingerprints.

2. An applicant for certification/licensure:

(i) Shall be fingerprinted by the approved third party contractor designated by the Alabama Department of Education who has been trained to take acceptable fingerprints, submit the required nonrefundable and nontransferable fee, and authorize the Alabama Department of Public Safety to conduct a criminal history background check and allow the release of any criminal history information to the Alabama Department of Education; and

(ii) After a suitability determination by the Alabama State Superintendent of Education, the appropriate certificate shall be issued, if other requirements for certification are met.

3. An applicant recommended for employment by a local employing board of a public school:

(i) Shall be fingerprinted by the approved third party contractor designated by the Alabama Department of Education who has been trained to take acceptable fingerprints, submit the required nonrefundable and nontransferable fee, and authorize the Alabama Department of Public Safety to conduct a criminal history background check and allow the release of any criminal history information to the Alabama Department of Education; and

(ii) Shall be issued a suitability determination from the Alabama State Superintendent of Education if the individual is a certified applicant for employment; or

(iii) Shall be issued a clear report or a report consisting of confirmed convictions and pending criminal charges if the individual is a noncertified applicant for employment; and

(iv) Shall have the suitability determination or report issued to the local employing superintendent.

4. An applicant recommended for employment in a nonpublic school:
 - (i) Shall be fingerprinted by the approved third party contractor designated by the Alabama Department of Education who has been trained to take acceptable fingerprints, submit the required nonrefundable and nontransferable fee, and authorize the Alabama Department of Public Safety to conduct a criminal history background check and allow the release of any criminal history information to the Alabama Department of Education; and
 - (ii) Shall have a suitability determination issued by the Alabama State Superintendent of Education to the administrator of the nonpublic school requesting the determination.

(b) Effective July 1, 2002, a current certified/licensed or noncertified employee who has or will have unsupervised access to children in an educational environment and who has not completed a background check since July 1, 1999, through the ABI and the FBI for the purposes of Alabama certification/licensure or employment with a local employing board or nonpublic school shall be required to submit fingerprints for a background check pursuant to Act 2002-457.

1. Any current certified/licensed or noncertified employee in a public school system:
 - (i) Shall be fingerprinted by the approved third party contractor designated by the Alabama Department of Education who has been trained to take acceptable fingerprints, submit the required nonrefundable and nontransferable fee, and authorize the Alabama Department of Public Safety to conduct a criminal history background check and allow the release of any criminal history information to the to the Alabama Department of Education;
 - (ii) Shall be issued a suitability determination from the Alabama State Superintendent of Education; and
 - (iii) Shall have the same suitability determination issued to the local employing superintendent.
2. Any current certified/licensed or noncertified employee in a nonpublic school:
 - (i) Shall be fingerprinted by the approved third party contractor designated by the Alabama Department of Education who has been trained to take acceptable fingerprints, submit the required nonrefundable and nontransferable fee, and authorize the Alabama Department of Public Safety to conduct a criminal history background check and allow the release of any criminal history information to the Alabama Department of Education; and
 - (ii) Shall have a suitability determination issued by the Alabama State Superintendent of Education to the administrator of the nonpublic school requesting the determination.

(c) Effective July 1, 2002, a background check shall be required for any current employee and any new employee of the Alabama Department of Education who has unsupervised access to and provides education, training, instruction, or supervision for children in an educational setting.

1. An Alabama Department of Education employee shall be fingerprinted by the approved third party contractor designated by the Alabama Department of Education who has been trained to take acceptable fingerprints, submit the required nonrefundable and nontransferable fee, and authorize the Alabama Department of Public Safety to conduct a criminal history background check and allow the release of any criminal history information to the Alabama Department of Education.

2. An Alabama Department of Education employee shall be issued a suitability determination by the Alabama State Superintendent of Education.

(d) Effective no later than the beginning of the fall 2008 semester, any candidate applying for admission to a State-approved teacher education program shall be required to be fingerprinted for a criminal history background check through the Alabama Department of Education to the Alabama Bureau of Investigation (ABI) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) pursuant to Act 2002-457.

1. The candidate shall be fingerprinted by the approved third party contractor designated by the Alabama Department of Education who has been trained to take acceptable fingerprints, submit the required nonrefundable and nontransferable fee, and authorize the Alabama Department of Public Safety to conduct a criminal history background check and allow the release of any criminal history information to the Alabama Department of Education.

2. The candidate shall be issued a suitability determination from the State Superintendent of Education. The candidate must provide the designated official of the teacher education unit documentation of having cleared the criminal history background check prior to admission to a State-approved teacher education program.

3. A candidate whose suitability determination precludes admission to a State-approved teacher education program has the right to due process procedures in accordance with Rule 290-3-2-.04, Revocation and Suspension of Certificates and Unsuitability Determinations.

(e) After such time that all current employees have been fingerprinted for a background check, any individual who submits an application for additional certification or for the renewal of a certificate, and who has not completed a background check shall be required to be fingerprinted by the approved third party contractor designated by the Alabama Department of Education who has been trained to take acceptable fingerprints, submit the required nonrefundable and nontransferable fee, and authorize the Alabama Department of Public Safety to conduct a criminal history background check and allow the release of any criminal history information to the Alabama Department of Education.

(f) A background clearance shall also be required of an applicant or current employee who completed a background check for certification/licensure purposes prior to July 1, 2002, but no longer has those prints on file due to the lapse of the certificate or license or because the individual was not eligible for a certificate or license.

(g) When the Alabama State Superintendent of Education has reasonable suspicion that an individual who holds a certificate or license issued by the Alabama State Board of Education or is a current public employee has been convicted of a felony or a misdemeanor other than a minor traffic violation or has been guilty of immoral, indecent or unbecoming behavior, that individual shall be subject to a background clearance through a fingerprint review. In such case, the individual will not be responsible for the required fee. A letter of notification from the Alabama State Superintendent of Education regarding the intent to conduct a review will be sent to the individual. The individual shall be fingerprinted by the approved third party contractor designated by the Alabama Department of Education who has been trained to take acceptable fingerprints and authorize the Alabama Department of Public Safety to conduct a criminal history background check and allow the release of any criminal history information to the Alabama Department of Education. Failure to comply with this requirement shall result in appropriate disciplinary action.

(h) No local employing board or nonpublic school shall hire an applicant who may have unsupervised access to a child without first obtaining a criminal history background information check, except on a temporary emergency basis. In the event that this exception is used and a position is filled by the employer due to exigent circumstances, the applicant so employed may be placed on payroll until such time as a criminal history background information check on the employee is completed as prescribed in Act 2002-457.

(9) Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program (AECAP). The statewide testing program required by the Alabama State Board of Education.

(a) Applicants must meet the AECAP requirements in effect at the time the application is received in the Educator Certification Section.

(b) Additional information regarding AECAP requirements may be found in the Rule for each approach as prescribed in this chapter and on the Departmental website.

(c) Only electronic score reports submitted directly from the testing service to the Alabama State Department of Education will be accepted.

(d) Components of the AECAP are:

1. Basic skills assessments from the ACT WorkKeys System (Applied Mathematics, Reading for Information, and Writing). The requirements for the basic skills assessments became effective January 1, 2003, as a precondition for initial certification. Effective September 1, 2013, successful passage of the basic skills assessments became a precondition for unconditional admission to a Class B program or an Alternative Class A program. The basic skills assessments are also a precondition for selected State-approved approaches. Additional information regarding the basic skills assessments may be found on the Departmental website and on the ACT website. Effective April 17, 2019, Praxis Core was rescinded as a requirement for unconditional admission to an Alternative Class A program. Effective June 11, 2020, Praxis Core will no longer be required for unconditional admission to a Class B program.

2. Praxis II tests from Educational Testing Service (ETS). The requirements for the Praxis II tests became effective April 14, 2005, as a precondition for initial certification in any teaching field or area of instructional support. Additional information regarding the Alabama prescribed Praxis II tests can be found on the Departmental website and on the ETS website.

3. Effective September 1, 2018, a performance assessment. The performance assessment, administered by Pearson, will be required for initial certification in a teaching field or area of instructional support.

(10) Professional Educational Work Experience.

(a) Acceptable professional educational work experience is full-time employment in teaching or an area of instructional support (e.g., counseling, etc.) in the following educational settings:

1. A state or local P-12 public school;
2. An Alabama P-12 nonpublic school;
3. A P-12 nonpublic school outside of Alabama that was regionally accredited or approved by the State Department of Education where the school was geographically located when the experience was earned;
4. A P-12 church-related school;
5. A P-12 charter school that was regionally accredited or approved by the State Department of Education where the school is geographically located when the experience was earned;
6. State Departments of Education;
7. An Alabama State Department of Education sponsored Initiative (e.g., Alabama Reading Initiative, etc.);
8. A professional educational association (e.g., National Education Association, National Federation of Teachers, etc.);
9. A post-secondary institution that was regionally accredited when the professional educational work experience was earned. Full-time employment in a post-secondary institution is determined by the written policies of that institution.
10. A P-12 federally operated school (e.g., Department of Defense Education Activity, Bureau of Indian Affairs, etc.);

11. A Head Start Program under the legal jurisdiction of a public school system when the experience was earned;

12. A childcare facility below Kindergarten (Age 5) if the facility was accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) when the experience was earned.

(b) Professional educational work experience earned outside of the United States will be considered on an individual basis.

(c) Employment in increments of less than one semester (4.5 months) will not be considered.

(d) Educational experience as an intern, graduate assistant, student teacher, member of a board of education, or in positions such as an aide, clerical worker, or substitute teacher is not acceptable.

(e) Supplement EXP must be used to document professional educational work experience.

(11) Valid Periods for Certificates and Licenses.

(a) If applicable, deadlines for meeting requirements to issue a certificate are outlined in the specific rule for that certification approach.

(b) Current valid periods for Professional Educator Certificates, Professional Leadership Certificates, and renewable Career and Technical Certificates. Professional Educator Certificates, Professional Leadership Certificates, and renewable Career and Technical Certificates issued beginning December 2013 are valid from the date of issuance through the remainder of the same scholastic year, and thereafter, for the next five consecutive scholastic years unless otherwise prescribed elsewhere in this chapter.

(c) Changing valid periods when a new Professional Educator Certificate, Professional Leadership Certificate, or renewable Career and Technical Certificate is added. When an additional Professional Educator Certificate, Professional Leadership Certificate, or renewable Career and Technical Certificate is issued, the valid period for each valid Professional Educator Certificate, Professional Leadership Certificate, or renewable Career and Technical Certificate shall be updated to reflect the valid period of the newest Professional Educator Certificate, Professional Leadership Certificate or renewable Career and Technical Certificate.

(d) Changing valid periods when an additional teaching field is added to a Professional Educator Certificate. When an additional teaching field is added to a valid Professional Educator Certificate, the valid period for each valid Professional Educator Certificate, Professional Leadership Certificate, or renewable Career and Technical Certificate shall be updated to the valid period of the newest Professional Educator Certificate.

(e) Additional information regarding the valid period of a certificate is in the Rule for the specific certificate.

(f) Valid period historical information.

1. From July 1, 1997 through November 2013, the Department issued Professional Educator Certificates with a valid period of five scholastic years. In January 2010, the Department began to issue Professional Leadership Certificates with a valid period of five scholastic years.

2. Prior to July 1, 1997, a Class B Professional Educator Certificate was issued with a valid period of 8 scholastic years, a Class A Professional Educator Certificate was issued with a valid period of 10 scholastic years, and a Class AA Professional Educator Certificate was issued with a valid period of 12 scholastic years.

(12) Failure to Maintain a Valid Certificate. An individual who allows a certificate to expire cannot qualify for a certificate at the same degree-level in the same teaching field or area of instructional support based on the same approach and criteria or credentials that were used to earn the certificate initially. Additional information on the requirements for reinstating an expired certificate is in Rule 290-3-2-.29.

(13) Foreign Credential Evaluations.

(a) An individual who earned a bachelor's or higher degree at a university or college in another country must submit an evaluation of their foreign credentials from a Department-approved foreign credential evaluation agency.

(b) The original complete evaluation must be submitted and must include **all** of the following:

1. An accurate course-by-course and credit hour-by-credit hour translation of the coursework completed.

2. A statement verifying the degree earned which is equivalent to a degree granted by a regionally accredited senior institution in the United States.

3. The major program area.

4. The overall grade point average (GPA). The overall GPA is the GPA posted on the official transcript of the degree granting institution that was used as a basis for granting the degree.

(c) An individual who earned a bachelor's or higher degree and completed an educator preparation program at a university or college in another country may seek a Professional Educator Certificate in a teaching field. Additional information may be found in Rule 290-3-2-.25.

Author: Dr. Eric G. Mackey.

Statutory Authority: Ala. Code §§16-3-11, 16-23-1 and 16-23-2 (1975).

History: New 12-19-78, repealed 12-8-94, effective 12-31-96; new adopted 12-8-94, effective 1-1-97, repealed 11-14-96 and amended repealed date of original chapter to 6-30-97 new adopted 1-9-97 effective 7-1-97; amended: 6-14-99; effective 7-19-99, repealed and new adopted 06-13-02; emergency Rule to appeal and adopt new filed on 6-13-02; new adopted 8-8-02, effective 9-12-02; emergency Rule to appeal and adopt new filed on 10-10-02; new adopted 12-12-02, effective 1-16-03; repealed and new adopted 09-11-03 effective 10-16-03; emergency amended Rule adopted 4-14-05, effective 4-14-05; amended Rule adopted 6-9-05, effective 7-14-05; amended 8-7-06, effective 9-11-06; repealed and adopted new, 8-4-08, effective 9-18-08; repealed and adopted new 12-9-10, effective 1-14-11; emergency Rule to amend filed 1-10-13; amended Rule adopted 3-14-13, effective 4-18-13; emergency Rule to repeal filed 11-14-13; repealed and adopted new 1-17-14, effective 2-21-14; repealed and adopted new 3-10-16, effective 4-24-16; amended 08-13-20, effective 10-15-20.

290-3-3-.01 Definitions. Other terms related to the preparation and certification of educators are provided in the current Educator Certification Chapter of the *Alabama Administrative Code*.

(1) **30/18.** The semester hours required in a teaching field, including at least 30 semester hours of credit in a teaching field with at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.01(54).

(2) **Academic Major.** The specialized area of study in a discipline. For the purpose of program approval, the major must require a minimum of 30 semester hours of credit with at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit. This requirement applies to all certification age or grade spans: Pre-kindergarten (birth to age 4), early childhood (P-3), elementary (K-6), middle level (4-8) secondary (6-12), and all grades (P-12).

(3) **Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program (AECAP).** The statewide testing program required by the Alabama State Board of Education. Electronic score reports must be submitted directly from the testing service to the Alabama State Department of Education. Applicants must meet the requirements in effect at the time an application is received in the Alabama State Department of Education. Additional information is provided in the current Educator Certification Chapter of the *Alabama Administrative Code*.

(a) Three Basic Skills Assessments in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics. ACT WorkKeys was the testing vendor for the Basic Skills Assessment from 2003 until 2017. The ACT WorkKeys Basic Skills Assessment underwent one major change during this timeframe in 2012; however, due to the test being offered by the same vendor, the ALSDE allowed a combination of the test issued under the Alabama Perspective Teacher Testing Program (2003-2012) and the test issued under the Alabama Educator Certification Testing Program (2012-2017). Beginning September 1, 2013, successful passage of the three basic skills assessments became a precondition for unconditional admission to a Class B program or an Alternative Class A program. On September 1, 2017, the Educational Testing Services (ETS) Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators Tests replaced the ACT WorkKeys as the Basic Skills Assessment recognized in Alabama. Like the ACT WorkKeys, the Praxis Core also consists of three areas: Reading, Writing and Mathematics. All three areas must be passed to fulfill Basic Skills requirements. Effective April 17, 2019, Praxis Core was rescinded as a requirement for unconditional admission to an Alternative Class A program. Effective June 11, 2020, Praxis Core will no longer be required for unconditional admission to a Class B program.

(b) Praxis Subject Assessments from ETS became effective April 14, 2005, as a precondition for initial certification in any teaching field or area of instructional support.

(c) Pedagogical Assessment: Praxis Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) assessments from ETS became effective September 1, 2013, as a precondition for initial certification in any teaching field. Effective September 1, 2018, for initial certification in a teaching field for which a handbook has been developed, the Educative Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA) administered by Pearson will be the required pedagogical assessment. For areas where no edTPA handbook exists, PLT will still be the required Pedagogical Assessment.

(4) Application for Certification. Current, completed official forms and supporting documents, including documentation of compliance with the requirements of the Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program (AECAP) as prescribed in Rule 290-3-3-.01(3), to substantiate a request for certification. At a minimum, documentation must include the application form, application fee, and an official transcript verifying a degree at the level for which certification is sought. If the degree has not been conferred at the time of application, in addition to the official transcript, the application must include an official document from the institution's registrar stating all degree requirements have been met. An individual who completes an Alabama State-approved program must submit an application for Alabama certification within 60 calendar months of the program completion date. Additional information about the time limit is provided in the current Educator Certification Chapter of the *Alabama Administrative Code*.

(5) Approved Program. An educator preparation program at an institution of higher education that has been formally approved by the Alabama State Board of Education. All of the courses in an approved program shall be indicated on an Alabama State Department of Education form called a program checklist. A separate checklist must be submitted for each approved program, even if programs will be combined to result in a simultaneous recommendation for certification for two or more teaching fields and/or grade spans. Programs approved based on Alabama standards shall be designated as State-approved. Programs approved by any state other than Alabama shall be designated as state-approved.

(6) Candidates. Pre-service or in-service persons enrolled in higher education for the purpose of earning initial or advanced certification in a teaching field or area of instructional support or for professional development purposes. The term "students" is used in the Educator Preparation and Educator Certification Chapters of the *Alabama Administrative Code* in reference to persons enrolled in P-12 schools.

(7) Certification. Issuance of certificates to persons who have met the requirements of the Alabama State Board of Education.

(8) Clinical Faculty. P-12 school and higher education faculty responsible for instruction, supervision, and assessment of candidates during field experiences and clinical practice.

(9) Clinical Practice. An internship that provides candidates with an intensive and extensive culminating experience. Candidates are immersed in the learning community and are provided opportunities to develop and demonstrate competence in the professional roles for which they are preparing. Additional information is provided in the definitions for field experiences and internship in Rule 290-3-3-.01(20) and (28). Alabama uses the word internship in lieu of student teaching.

(10) Cohort. All of the prospective candidates deemed to meet requirements for unconditional admission to a Class B program during one of three time periods: fall semester, spring semester (including a period of time known by a title such as “Jan term”), or summer term (including a period of time known by a title such as “May term”).

(11) Conceptual Framework. An underlying structure developed cooperatively by an EPP and its partners to give conceptual meanings through an articulated rationale to the EPP’s operation, providing direction for programs, courses, teaching, candidate performance, faculty scholarship and service, assessment, and EPP accountability. See EPP definition in Rule 290-3-3-.01(19).

(12) Continuous Improvement of Educator Preparation (CIEP). CIEP is the process that Alabama uses to review teaching field and instructional support programs that are not submitted for review by a national Specialized Professional Association (SPA) or another national, discipline-specific accrediting association or organization, such as the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). A program that is accredited by a SPA or another national, discipline specific accrediting association or organization is not required to respond to Alabama’s program-specific standards.

(13) Cooperating Teacher. Information about the qualifications for P-12 clinical faculty is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.02(6)(f)3.

(14) Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). CAEP was created in 2013 to combine two separate, national non-discipline specific accrediting agencies for educator preparation, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC).

(15) Courses, Credits, and/or Programs Acceptable to Meet State-Approved Program Requirements. Full information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.02(6)(a).

(16) Dispositions. The commitments and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator’s own professional growth. Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, and responsibility. For example, dispositions might include a belief that all students can learn, a vision of high and challenging standards, and/or a commitment to a safe and supportive learning environment.

(17) **Diversity.** Individual differences (e.g. personality, interests, learning modalities, and life experiences) and group differences (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, ability, nationality, language, religion, political affiliation, and socio-economic background).

(18) **Educational Experience.** See the current Educator Certification Chapter, *Alabama Administrative Code*, 290-3-2, definition of Professional Educational Work Experience. Classroom teaching experience in Grades P-12 does not include time in instructional support positions (counselor, librarian, reading coach, administrator, etc.).

(19) **Educator Preparation Provider (EPP).** A term adopted by CAEP to mean the entity responsible for the preparation of educators. The word “provider” may be used in lieu of educator preparation provider or EPP. See Rule 290-3-3-.01(3).

(20) **Field Experiences.** Prior to the internship, a variety of early and ongoing field-based contacts in diverse P-12 schools and other appropriate settings that are provided as a part of the instructional program available through observation, study of school situations, assisting in instruction, and supervised teaching that contribute to the understanding and competence of the candidate. Additional information is provided in the definition of clinical practice in Rule 290-3-3-.01(9) and in Rule 290-3-3-.02(6)(e)1.

(21) **Full-time Faculty.** Employees of a higher education institution with full-time assignments in educator preparation as instructors, professors at different ranks, or administrators.

(22) **GPA** (Grade Point Average). In this chapter, all GPA requirements pertain to calculations on a four-point scale. Appropriate adjustments shall be made for other scales. GPAs may not be rounded. For example, a GPA of 2.74 cannot be rounded to 2.75. The official overall GPA is the GPA posted on the official transcript of the degree-granting institution that was used as the basis for granting the degree.

(23) **Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT).** When the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was in place, Alabama used *The Alabama Model for Identifying Highly Qualified Teachers* to identify highly qualified teachers.

(24) **Initial Certificate.** The first Alabama certificate in any teaching field or area of instructional support. (Examples: If a person earns a first Alabama Class B Professional Educator Certificate in elementary education, that person would have earned an initial certificate in elementary education. If that person earns a Class A Professional Educator Certificate in elementary education, that person would have earned an advanced certificate in elementary education. If an individual with a Class B Professional Educator Certificate in elementary education earns a Class B Professional Educator Certificate in mathematics, that individual would have earned an initial certificate in mathematics. Similarly, if a person with a Class B Professional Educator Certificate in elementary education earns a Class A Professional Educator Certificate in library media, that person would have earned an initial certificate in library media. The same

examples are applicable to a teacher whose initial certificate is issued at the Class A level. Note that this definition pertains to Alabama certification, while the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation defines initial and advanced programs for teachers differently.

(25) Instructional Support Area: The concentrated area of graduate study in a State-approved program that leads toward Class A or Class AA certification in instructional leadership, library media, school counseling, school psychometry, sport management, speech-language pathology, or school psychology.

(26) Instructional Support Personnel. Professional administrative and support staff of a school or school system: instructional leader (educational administrator, superintendent, principal, supervisor, vocational administrator), library media specialist, school counselor, school psychometrist, sport manager, speech-language pathologist, or school psychologist.

(27) Intern Supervisor. A person assigned by the college or university to supervise interns.

(28) Internship. Experiences in public P-12 schools, regionally accredited private schools, or settings accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children to serve children from birth through kindergarten and culminating in the exercise of responsibility for the teaching or instructional support role for which the candidate is preparing under the supervision of P-12 personnel and the institution of higher education in which the candidate is enrolled. Additional information is provided in the definitions of clinical practice and field experiences in Rule 290-3-3-.01(9) and (20) and in the rules for specific programs.

(29) Kindergarten. In Alabama schools and in this chapter, the word kindergarten typically refers to programs for five-year olds.

(30) Levels of Alabama-Approved Programs. Alabama-approved programs in teaching fields and instructional support areas lead to Professional Educator Certificates. Alabama-approved programs in instructional leadership lead to Professional Leadership Certificates.

(a) Class B: Bachelor's degree level. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.04.

(b) Class A: Master's degree-level program of at least 30 semester hours of graduate credit in a teaching field or instructional support area. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.42 and Rule 290-3-3-.47.

(c) Class AA: Education specialist degree-level program of at least 30 semester hours of graduate credit beyond the master's degree that may result in an education specialist degree in a teaching field or area of instructional support. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.52 and Rule 290-3-3-.53.

(31) Levels of Alabama Professional Educator Certificates.

- (a) Class B: Bachelor's degree level.
- (b) Class A: Master's degree level.
- (c) Class AA: Education specialist degree level. (Prior to adoption of the 2018 Educator Preparation Chapter, Class AA certificates were issued based on completion of a planned and approved sixth-year program.)

(32) Levels of Alabama Professional Leadership Certificates.

- (a) Class A: Master's degree level.
- (b) Class AA: Education specialist degree level.

(33) Major Area of Faculty Specialization. The concentrated area of academic study as determined by a statement on the faculty member's official doctoral transcript from a regionally accredited institution that indicates the area. If the area is not identified on the transcript, 30 semester (45 quarter) hours of post-bachelor's, graduate-level coursework from a regionally accredited institution appropriate to the area of primary assignment must be identified. No more than three (3) semester hours of dissertation credit may be used to satisfy this requirement, even if the dissertation is directly related to the major area of specialization.

(34) Office. The Office of Teaching and Leading of the Alabama State Department of Education.

(35) P (Pre-school). Any level prior to kindergarten.

(36) Practicum. A unit of instruction that combines formal study and instruction with practical experience in the area of specialization of the candidate. A practicum must be in a public P-12 school, a regionally accredited private school, or a child care facility accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

(37) Pre-service Education. The academic and professional preparation that a prospective teacher must complete successfully before certification as a teacher.

(38) Professional Education Work Experience. See the current Educator Certification Chapter, *Alabama Administrative Code*, 290-3-2, definition of Professional Educational Work Experience.

(39) Professional Studies. A coordinated and integrated program of courses and experiences that includes foundations, methodology, curriculum, evaluation, the teaching of reading, technology, survey of special education, direct observation and participation in a variety of school settings, and internship. Except for a discipline-specific or categorical methods course, professional studies courses are typically common to multiple disciplines or areas.

(40) Program Approval Process. The procedures followed in determining whether proposed preparation programs meet program approval rules adopted by the Alabama State Board of Education. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.56(2).

(41) Program Checklist. An official document identifying all courses required to complete a State-approved educator preparation program. Program checklists are submitted by an institution and approved by the Alabama State Board of Education following a review. The official State-approved program checklist will be used as the basis for issuing a certificate. Additional information on program approval is in Rule 290-3-3-.56(2). If institutions modify the format of the State-approved program checklist to facilitate advisement, all requirements on the official program checklist must be included on the modified forms, and the modified checklist must be submitted for approval.

(42) Program Overlap. Written institutional policies applicable across all majors and programs that allow an individual in the process of earning a degree on one level who meets specified institutional criteria to take a limited number of courses at the next higher degree level. Coursework used to meet Class B certification or bachelor's degree requirements may not be used to meet requirements for Class A certification in any teaching field or area of instructional support. Coursework used to meet Class B or Class A certification or bachelor's or master's degree requirements may not be used to meet certification requirements for Class AA certification in any teaching field or area of instructional support. However, graduate courses used to renew a certificate may be used to earn an advanced degree. [See Rule 290-3-3-.02(6)(a)5.]

(43) Recent P-12 Experiences Requirement. A written policy enforced by an EPP to ensure that faculty who teach professional education courses or supervise interns and who have not been employed in a P-12 setting within the most recent five-year period spend sufficient time in P-12 schools to maintain current knowledge of what is experienced by currently employed P-12 educators.

(44) Regional Accrediting Agency. The six regional accrediting agencies recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education are:

(a) Middle States Commission on Higher Education for institutions of higher education in Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

(b) New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education for institutions of higher education in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

(c) Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association for institutions of higher education in Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming, including schools of the Navajo Nation.

(d) Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities for institutions of higher education in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington.

(e) Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges for institutions of higher education in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

(f) Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Senior College and University Commission for institutions of higher education in California, Hawaii, the United States territories of Guam and American Samoa, the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

(45) Regionally Accredited. Refers to action taken by one of the regional accrediting agencies in Rule 290-3-3-.01(44) and is specific to the status of the institution at the time credit or degrees were earned.

(46) Remedial Courses. Other than remedial, these courses may be called compensatory, developmental, or basic skills. These courses are usually numbered below 100. Remedial courses cannot be used to meet approved program requirements. This requirement became effective for candidates admitted to Class B programs or Alternative Class A programs on or after August 1, 2009. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.02(6)(a)4.

(47) Specialized Professional Association (SPA). A member of CAEP that is a national organization of teachers, professional education faculty, and/or other school professionals who teach a content area (e.g., mathematics or social studies), teach students at a particular developmental level (i.e., early childhood, elementary, middle level, or secondary), or provide a specific instructional support service to students (e.g., librarian, counselor, instructional leader).

(48) State. Any state or commonwealth, the District of Columbia, or territory of the United States of America.

(49) Student Teaching. Information is provided in the definition of internship in Rule 290-3-3-.01(28).

(50) Students. Children and youth attending P–12 schools, as distinguished from teacher or instructional support personnel candidates.

(51) Survey of Special Education Course. All candidates for an initial Alabama Professional Educator Certification must complete a survey of special education course. The course should be designed to prepare candidates to demonstrate understanding of:

(a) Exceptionalities impacting individuals across the life span (early childhood, school age, adolescence, and adulthood) including definitions; eligibility criteria; distinguishing characteristics (learning style, behavioral patterns, educational strengths, and educational needs); etiology, incidence and prevalence; evaluation; assessment; instructional strategies; family and community values; cultural diversity; advocacy; resources; technology; and current research and issues.

(b) State and federal disabilities legislation (IDEA, Section 504, and ADA) and the importance of complying with those laws, including laws that relate to educating gifted students.

(c) Roles and responsibilities of members of different types of teams and appropriate collaboration strategies to enhance student learning and support.

(d) Appropriate practices related to the social and emotional development of gifted students and the individual, contextual, and relational aspects of students' lives as gifted or of high ability.

(52) Teaching Field. The specific discipline or concentrated area of study in a State-approved program that leads toward educator certification; e.g., elementary education, Grades K-6; middle-level English language arts, Grades 4-8; middle-level mathematics, Grades 4-8; secondary English language arts, Grades 6-12; secondary history, Grades 6-12; or choral music, Grades P-12. Additional information about requirements for an academic major is in Rule 290-3-3-.02(2) for Class B programs and in Rule 290-3-3-.44(2)(e) for Alternative Class A programs. Teaching field courses are typically unique to the discipline or area.

(53) Unit. When it was used by NCATE and the State, the institution, college, school, department, or other administrative body with the responsibility for managing or coordinating all programs offered for the initial and continuing preparation of teachers and other school personnel, regardless of where these programs are administratively housed. Also known as the professional education unit. With the creation of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, "unit" was replaced with Educator Preparation Provider (EPP).

(54) Upper-Division. Coursework designated by an institution of higher education to be at the junior or senior level of undergraduate study.

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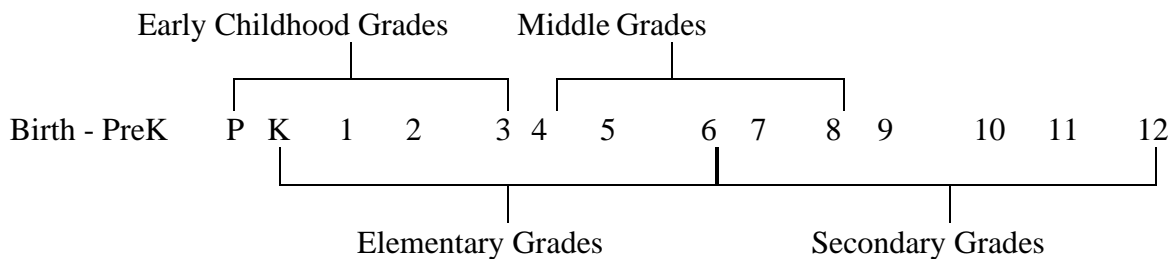
Statutory Authority: Ala. Code §§16-3-16, 16-23-14 (1975).

History: New 12-19-78; amended 12-13-90, effective 2-1-91; repealed and adopted new 01-09-97, effective 07-01-97; amended 06-14-99, effective 07-19-99; emergency rule to amend filed on 10-10-02; amended 12-12-02, effective 01-16-03; repealed and adopted new 09-11-03, effective 10-16-03; repealed and adopted new 07-13-04, effective 08-17-04; repealed and adopted new 04-14-05, effective 05-19-05; emergency amended rule adopted 04-14-05, effective 04-14-05; amended rule adopted 06-09-05, effective 07-14-05; repealed and adopted new 08-06-07, effective 09-10-07; repealed and adopted new 08-03-09; effective 10-1-09; amended 6-14-12, effective 7-19-12; repealed and adopted new 08-13-2015, effective 07-01-16; repealed and adopted new 9-13-18, effective 06-01-19; amended 06-11-20, effective 08-15-20.

290-3-3-.04 Class B (Bachelor’s Degree Level) Programs for Teaching Fields.

(1) **Overview of Educator Preparation Program Levels.** Formal preparation of educators occurs at two levels, undergraduate and graduate. Successful completion of an undergraduate program may qualify the candidate for Class B certification. Graduate programs are extensions of basic preparation and are divided into Class A and Class AA programs. Completion of an Alternative Class A program may qualify the candidate for initial certification at the graduate level. Advanced programs differ from basic programs not in general purpose but in the level of competence they seek to develop. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.01(30) and (31).

(2) **Relationship of Teacher Preparation Programs and Grade Placement.**



(3) **General Program Requirements.** The provision of Class B programs shall be limited to institutions that meet the standards for accreditation at the bachelor’s degree or higher level by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

(a) **Unconditional Admission to Class B programs.**

1. Admission to the institution does not qualify an individual for admission to an educator preparation program. An applicant must be notified in writing whether his or her application for admission to a specific educator preparation program has been accepted.

2. The college or university shall have clearly defined criteria for admitting candidates to an educator preparation program which include the following:

(i) A criminal history background check. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.02(6)(d).

(ii) Effective September 1, 2013, and thereafter, the prescribed score on each of the three components of the Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators of the Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program (AECAP). Effective June 11, 2020, Praxis Core will no longer be required for unconditional admission to a Class B program.

(iii) A formal written application for admission to a specific educator preparation program.

(iv) A minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.50 overall in accordance with university policy, 2.50 in professional studies courses listed on the approved program checklist for the program, and 2.50 in the teaching field listed on the approved program checklist for the program. Effective July 1, 2017, and thereafter, a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.75 overall (and used as the basis for granting the degree) in accordance with university policy, 2.75 in professional studies courses listed on the approved program

checklist for the program, and 2.75 in the teaching field courses listed on the approved program checklist for the program.

(v) Remedial courses cannot be used to meet approved program requirements or calculated to meet GPA requirements. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.01(46).

(vi) Satisfactory interviews designed to provide information on whether the applicant's dispositions and interests are consistent with the requirements for successful teaching.

(vii) Experiences in the schools, designed to assist the candidate in making a wise career choice.

3. Each institution shall establish, publish and enforce a policy that specifies when the candidate must meet criteria to be unconditionally admitted to the program.

(b) Special education course requirement. A survey of special education course is required if not previously completed. [See Rule 290-3-3-.01(51).]

(c) Requirements for Class B certification.

1. An official transcript from a regionally accredited institution documenting an earned bachelor's degree.

2. Satisfactory completion of a State-approved program with a minimum GPA of 2.50 overall, 2.50 in the teaching field, and 2.50 in professional studies courses with no grade below a C in professional studies courses. Effective for candidates unconditionally admitted to a Class B educator preparation program July 1, 2017, and thereafter, satisfactory completion of a State-approved program with a minimum GPA of 2.75 overall (as confirmed on the transcript when the degree was granted), 2.75 in the teaching field, and 2.75 in professional studies courses with no grade below a C in professional studies courses.

3. An internship that complies with Rule 290-3-3-.02(6)(e)2.

(d) Testing for Class B Certification. Applicants unconditionally admitted to a Class B program prior to September 1, 2013, must meet the basic skills assessments requirements of the Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program (AECAP) as a prerequisite for certification. Applicants for initial certification must meet the Praxis subject assessment requirements and the pedagogical assessment requirement of the AECAP as a precondition for certification. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.01(3).

Author: Dr. Eric G. Mackey

Statutory Authority: Ala. Code §§16-3-16 and 6-23-14 (1975).

History: New 12-19-78; amended 12-13-90, effective 02-01-91; amended 06-01-94; repealed and adopted new 01-09-97, effective 07-01-97; amended 12-09-99, effective 01-13-00; amended 03-14-02, effective 04-18-02; emergency rule to amend filed on 10-10-02; amended 12-12-02, effective 01-16-03; repealed and adopted new 09-11-03, effective 10-16-03; repealed and adopted new 07-13-04, effective 08-17-04; repealed and adopted new 04-14-05, effective 05-19-05; repealed and adopted new 08-06-07, effective 09-10-07; repealed and adopted new 08-03-09; effective 10-01-09; amended 6-14-12, effective 7-19-12; repealed and adopted new 08-13-2015, effective 07-01-2016; repealed and adopted new 09-13-18, effective 06-01-2019; amended 06-11-20, effective 08-15-20.

290-3-3-.04.01 Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Education.

(1) Rationale. This rule brings attention to those elements that are distinctive to the pre-K program. These elements represent the unique nature of pre-K education encompassing the foundations of learning including play, developmentally appropriate practices, and integration within and across disciplines, which create a bridge between informal and formal learning environments. The standards are consistent with the standards for initial licensure programs from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). These standards build upon the Alabama Core Teaching Standards.

(2) Program Curriculum. In addition to meeting Rules 290-3-3-.02(6)(a)1.-4., 290-3-3-.02(6)(e)1.(i)-(iv), and 2.(i) and (v), 290-3-3-.03, and 290-3-3-.04, the pre-K curriculum shall require a teaching field of at least 30 semester hours with at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit, including at least 18 semester hours of courses specific to child development and/or early childhood education.

(a) Promoting Child Development and Learning. Candidates prepared in early childhood programs are grounded in a child development knowledge base. They use their understanding of young children's characteristics and needs, and of multiple interacting influences on children's development and learning, to create environments that are healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging for each child. Prior to program completion prospective early childhood teachers:

1. Know and understand young children's characteristics and needs, from birth through age 4.
2. Know and understand the multiple influences on early development and learning.
3. Use developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments for young children.

(b) Building Family and Community Relationships. Candidates prepared in early childhood programs understand that successful early childhood education depends upon partnerships with children's families and communities. They know about, understand, and value the importance and complex characteristics of children's families and communities. They use this understanding to create respectful, reciprocal relationships that support and empower families, and to involve all families in their children's development and learning. Prior to program completion prospective early childhood teachers:

1. Know about and understand diverse family and community characteristics.
2. Support and engage families and communities through respectful, reciprocal relationships.
3. Involve families and communities in young children's development and learning.

(c) Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families. Candidates prepared in early childhood programs understand that child observation, documentation, and other forms of assessment are central to the practice of all early childhood professionals. They know about and understand the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment. They know about and use systematic observations, documentation, and other effective assessment strategies in a responsible way, in partnership with families and other professionals, to positively influence the development of every child. Prior to program completion prospective early childhood teachers:

1. Understand the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment – including its use in development of appropriate goals, curriculum, and teaching strategies for young children.
2. Know about and use observation, documentation, and other appropriate assessment tools and approaches, including the use of technology in documentation, assessment and data collection.
3. Understand and practice responsible assessment to promote positive outcomes for each child, including the use of assistive technology for children with disabilities.
4. Know about assessment partnerships with families and with professional colleagues to build effective learning environments.

(d) Using Developmentally Effective Approaches. Candidates prepared in early childhood programs understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children’s ages, characteristics, and the settings within which teaching and learning occur. They understand and use positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation for their work with young children and families. Candidates know, understand, and use a wide array of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families and positively influence each child’s development and learning. Prior to program completion prospective early childhood teachers:

1. Understand positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation of their work with young children.
2. Know and understand effective strategies and tools for early education, including appropriate uses of technology.
3. Use a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate teaching/learning approaches.
4. Reflect on their own practice to promote positive outcomes for each child.

(e) Using Content Knowledge to Build Meaningful Curriculum. Candidates prepared in early childhood programs use their knowledge of academic disciplines to design, implement, and evaluate experiences that promote positive development and learning for each and every young child. Candidates understand the importance of developmental domains and academic (or content) disciplines in early childhood curriculum. They know the essential

concepts, inquiry tools, and structure of content areas, including academic subjects, and can identify resources to deepen their understanding. Candidates use their own knowledge and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, challenging curriculum that promotes comprehensive developmental and learning outcomes for every young child. Prior to program completion prospective early childhood teachers:

1. Understand content knowledge and resources in academic disciplines: language and literacy (including evidence-based specialized instruction that is multi-sensory in nature); the arts – music, creative movement, dance, drama, visual arts; mathematics; science; physical activity and physical education; health and safety; and social studies.
2. Know and use central concepts, inquiry tools, and structures of content areas or academic disciplines.
3. Use their own knowledge, appropriate learning standards, and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate developmentally meaningful and challenging curriculum for each child.

(f) Becoming a Professional. Candidates prepared in early childhood programs identify and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession. They know and use ethical guidelines and other professional standards related to early childhood practice. They are continuous, collaborative learners who demonstrate knowledgeable, reflective and critical perspectives on their work, making informed decisions that integrate knowledge from a variety of sources. They are informed advocates for sound educational practices and policies. Prior to program completion prospective early childhood teachers:

1. Identify and involve themselves with the early childhood profession.
2. Know about and uphold ethical standards and other early childhood professional guidelines.
3. Engage in continuous, collaborative learning to inform practice; using technology effectively with young children, with peers, and as a professional resource.
4. Engage in informed advocacy for young children and the early childhood profession.

(3) Unique Field Experience and Internship Placement Requirements.

(a) For pre-kindergarten education programs, field experiences must span birth through age 4 in both child care and Office of School Readiness programs.

(b) For pre-kindergarten education programs, the internship must span birth through age 4 in both child care and Office of School Readiness programs.

(4) Faculty. The faculty must include at least three full-time persons with appropriate earned doctorates in early childhood education and teaching experience (preferably birth to Pre-K), one with a child development concentration; one with expertise in foundational reading; and one with expertise in numeracy or early intervention.

(5) NOTE. Information about an option for earning an Early Child Development Certificate is provided in the Educator Certification Chapter of the *Alabama Administrative Code*.

Author: Dr. Eric G. Mackey

Statutory Authority: Ala. Code §§16-3-16 and 16-23-14 (1975).

History: Adopted new July 11, 2017; effective August 25, 2017; repealed and adopted new 09-13-18, effective 06-01-2019; amended 08-13-20, effective 10-15-20.

290-3-3-.08 Secondary Teaching Fields (Grades 6-12).

(1) **Options.** In addition to meeting the standards in Rules 290-3-3-.02(6)(a)1.-4., 290-3-3-.02(6)(e)1. and 2.(i)-(iii), 290-3-3-.03, and 290-3-3-.04, there are three options for the preparation of secondary teachers:

(a) **A comprehensive teaching field** in English language arts, general science, or general social studies that includes both:

1. An academic major of at least 30 semester hours of credit with at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit. See Rule 290-3-3-.01(2).

2. At least one course in each of the specified areas included in the comprehensive teaching field. Coursework in other areas of the comprehensive teaching field may also be included. Additional information is provided in Rules 290-3-3-.02(6)(c)1.(i), 290-3-3-.10(2), 290-3-3-.15(2), and 290-3-3-.20(2).

(b) **A single teaching field** with an academic major that includes a minimum of 30 semester hours of credit with at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit. Additional information on the single teaching field option is provided in Rules 290-3-3-.02(6)(c)1.(ii), 290-3-3-.11, .12, .13, .16-.18, .21, and .22.

(c) **A single teaching field** in health education or an area of career and technical education that includes a minimum of 30 semester hours of credit with at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit. Additional information about specific teaching fields is provided in Rules 290-3-3-.12 and .24-.29. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.02(6)(c)1.(iii).

(d) **A teaching field** that combines health education (6-12) and physical education (P-12), includes a minimum of 30 semester hours of credit with at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.12.01.

(2) **Teaching Field Specific Methods Course.** Each Class B and Alternative Class A teaching field shall be supported by at least one methods course specific to the teaching field or to the general area of the teaching field (e.g., science methods or social studies methods). Methods courses for specific teaching fields or for the general area of the teaching field shall not be combined with methods courses of other teaching fields or general areas (e.g., mathematics and biology). Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.02(6)(c)2.

Author: Dr. Eric G. Mackey

Statutory Authority: Ala. Code §§16-3-16 and 16-23-14 (1975).

History: New 12-19-78; amended 12-13-90, effective 02-01-91; repealed and adopted new 01-09-97, effective 07-01-97; repealed and adopted new 09-11-03, effective 10-16-03; repealed and adopted new 07-13-04, effective 08-17-04; repealed and adopted new 04-14-05, effective 05-19-05; repealed and adopted new 08-06-07, effective 09-10-07; repealed and adopted new 08-03-09; effective 10-01-09; repealed and adopted new 08-13-2015, effective 07-01-2016; repealed and adopted new 09-13-18, effective 06-01-2019; amended and adopted 08-13-2020; effective 10-15-2020.

290-3-3-.30 Pre-School Through Grade 12 Teaching Fields.

(1) **Options.** P-12 programs include languages other than English; visual arts; dance; music (choral or instrumental); physical education; theatre; gifted (Class A, see Rule 290-3-3-.43) and some areas of special education. EPPs may provide collaborative special education programs for teachers of Grades K-6 and/or 6-12; or EPPs may provide combined programs that meet all rules applicable to the separate programs. In addition to meeting the standards in Rules 290-3-3-.02(6)(a)1.-4., 290-3-3-.02(6)(e)1. and 2.(i), (iv), and (vii), 290-3-3-.03, and 290-3-3-.04, an institution has three options for the preparation of P-12 teachers:

(a) A single teaching field with an academic major that includes a minimum of 30 semester hours of credit with at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit. Additional information on the single-teaching field option is provided in Rules 290-3-3-.31, 290-3-3-.31.01, 290-3-3-.31.02, 290-3-3-.32, and 290-3-3-.33.01.

(b) A single teaching field in physical education or special education programs that includes a minimum of 30 semester hours of credit with at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit in the area. Additional information is provided in Rules 290-3-3-.33 and .34.

(c) A teaching field that combines health education (6-12) and physical education (P-12), includes a minimum of 30 semester hours of credit with at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.12.01.

(2) **Teaching Field Specific Methods Course.** Each Class B and Alternative Class A teaching field shall be supported by at least one methods course specific to the teaching field or to the general area of the teaching field. Methods courses for specific teaching fields or for the general area of the teaching field shall not be combined with methods courses of other teaching fields or general areas. A program for health education and physical education must require two separate methods courses, one for health education and one for physical education. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.02(6)(c)2.

Author: Dr. Eric G. Mackey

Statutory Authority: Ala. Code §§16-3-16 and 16-23-14 (1975).

History: New 12-19-78; amended 12-13-90, effective 02-01-91; repealed and adopted new 01-09-97, effective 07-01-97; amended 06-14-99, effective 07-19-99; repealed and adopted new 09-11-03, effective 10-16-03; repealed and adopted new 07-13-04, effective 08-17-04; repealed and adopted new 04-14-05, effective 05-19-05 ; repealed and adopted new 08-06-07, effective 09-10-07; repealed and adopted new 08-03-09; effective 10-01-09; repealed and adopted new 08-13-2015, effective 07-01-2016; repealed and adopted new 09-13-18, effective 06-01-2019; amended and adopted 06-11-2020, effective 08-15-2020.

290-3-3-.44 Alternative Class A Programs for Teaching Fields.

(1) **Purposes of Alternative Class A Programs.** The purposes of an Alternative Class A program shall be identical to the purposes for preparing teachers at the Class B level in the same teaching field, except that persons who complete the Alternative Class A program shall have acquired knowledge and skill above the level required for completion of a Class B program. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.03.

(2) **Unconditional Admission to Alternative Class A Programs.** Each institution shall establish and enforce a policy that specifies when the candidate must meet criteria for unconditional admission to the program. **Admission to the graduate school is not equivalent to unconditional admission to an approved program.** Requirements for unconditional admission shall include:

(a) **A criminal history background check.** Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.02(6)(d).

(b) **Testing requirement.** Effective September 1, 2013, successful passage of the three basic skills assessments became a precondition for unconditional admission to a Class B program or an Alternative Class A program. Effective for basic skills tests taken September 1, 2017, and thereafter the Educational Testing Services (ETS) Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators Tests replaced the ACT WorkKeys. Effective April 17, 2019, Praxis Core was rescinded as a requirement for unconditional admission to an Alternative Class A program.

(c) **Degree requirements.** A person who is eligible for admission to an Alternative Class A program shall have earned a bachelor's or higher degree with a minimum grade point average (GPA) overall of 2.50. This GPA must be documented on the official transcript of the degree granting institution and must be the GPA that was used as the basis for granting the degree. Effective July 1, 2017, and thereafter, a person who is eligible for unconditional admission to an Alternative Class A program shall have earned a bachelor's degree with a minimum grade point average (GPA) overall of 2.75 or a master's or higher degree with a GPA of at least 3.0. This GPA must be documented on the official transcript of the degree granting institution and must be the GPA that was used as the basis for granting the degree, not a GPA that includes post-degree courses.

1. Courses that were taken as part of the degree used to meet the admission requirement in Rule 290-3-3-.44(2)(c) for a bachelor's or higher degree with a minimum grade point average of 2.5 (2.75 if admitted based on a bachelor's degree or 3.0 if admitted based on a master's degree July 1, 2017, and thereafter) cannot be used again to meet Alternative Class A program requirements.

2. The person must meet one of the following options:

- (i) Earned a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university.
- (ii) Earned a bachelor's degree from a non-regionally accredited institution and an earned master's or higher degree from a regionally accredited institution, and has attained a passing score on the prescribed Praxis subject assessment of the Alabama

Educator Certification Assessment Program (AECAP). [See Rule 290-3-3-(3).] This option is permitted only when both of the following conditions are met:

(I) At the discretion of the administrative head of the EPP and in accordance with institutional policy.

(II) If there is a prescribed Praxis subject assessment of the AECAP.

3. Earned a bachelor's degree from a non-regionally accredited institution, holds a valid professional educator certificate from the state where the institution is geographically located, and has attained a passing score on the prescribed Praxis subject assessment of the AECAP. This option is permitted only when both of the following conditions are met:

(i) At the discretion of the administrative head of the EPP and in accordance with institutional policy.

(ii) If there is a prescribed Praxis subject assessment of the AECAP.

(d) General studies. Individuals applying for admission to an Alternative Class A programs in early childhood education, elementary education, early childhood special education, or collaborative special education teacher (K-6 or 6-12) shall have earned at least 12 semester hours of acceptable credit, as verified on official transcripts, in each of the following areas: English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies or earned the current passing score on the prescribed Praxis subject assessment of the AECAP. Effective for tests taken September 1, 2018, and thereafter, only passing scores on the following tests will be accepted to meet this requirement:

(i) In lieu of 12 semester hours in English language arts, Praxis 5002.

(ii) In lieu of 12 semester hours in mathematics, Praxis 5003.

(iii) In lieu of 12 semester hours in science, Praxis 5005.

(iv) In lieu of 12 semester hours in social studies, Praxis 5004.

(e) Teaching field. Prior to unconditional admission, a person who wishes to earn certification in a teaching field listed below shall have completed one of the options in Rule 290-3-3-.44(2)(e)1. through 5.

1. For any teaching field, in lieu of Rule 290-2-3-3-.44(2)(e)2. through 5., verification of a current passing score on the prescribed Praxis subject assessment of the Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program.

2. Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Early Childhood Special Education, Collaborative Special Education Teacher K-6 or 6-12. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.44(2)(d).

3. Single Teaching Field for Middle Level or Secondary: An academic major in the teaching field, or if an academic major is not on the official transcript, 30 semester hours appropriate to the teaching field including at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit.

4. Comprehensive Middle Level or Secondary Teaching Fields:

(i) English Language Arts: An academic major in an area included in English language arts—e.g., English, speech, drama/theatre, and print or broadcast journalism—and at least one course in each of the other listed areas of English language arts. If an academic major is not on

the official transcript, then the admission requirement shall be 30 semester hours of credit appropriate to English language arts, including at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit. At a minimum, coursework must include courses in literature, grammar, reading skills, writing, speech, theatre, and print or broadcast journalism.

(ii) **General Science:** An academic major in an area included in the sciences—e.g., biology, chemistry, Earth or space science, and physics—and at least one course in each of the other listed areas of general science. If an academic major is not on the official transcript, then the admission requirement shall be 30 semester hours of credit appropriate to general science including at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit and at least one course in each of following areas: biology, chemistry, Earth or space science, and physics.

(iii) **General Social Studies:** An academic major in an area included in the social studies—e.g., economics, geography, history, and political science—and at least one course in each of the other areas listed in the social studies. If an academic major is not on the official transcript, then the admission requirement shall be 30 semester hours of credit appropriate to the social studies with at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit and at least one course in each of the following areas: economics, geography, history, and political science.

(iv) **Career and Technical Education:** At least 30 semester hours appropriate to the teaching field including at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit.

5. **P-12 Programs:** An academic major in the teaching field or, if an academic major is not on the official transcript, 30 semester hours of credit appropriate to the teaching field including at least 18 semester hours of upper-division credit.

(3) Curriculum of Alternative Class A Programs. A program in a given teaching field shall be designed to develop teaching competencies above the level required for Class B program completion. In addition, a program shall:

(a) Include a **teaching field** of at least one-third of the total number of graduate hours in the program. English language arts, general science, and general social studies programs shall require at least one course in two areas within the broader field.

(b) Meet the **Alabama Core Teaching Standards** in Rule 290-3-3-.03.

(c) Include a **methods course** specific to the teaching field or to the general area of the teaching field (e.g., science methods or social studies methods). Methods courses for specific teaching fields or for the general area of the teaching field shall not be combined with methods courses of other teaching fields or general areas (e.g., mathematics and biology).

(d) Extensive **field experiences**. The field experiences must comply with Rule 290-3-3-.02(6)(e)1.

(e) **An internship.**

1. The internship shall equal at least a full semester, full-time in the teaching field for which certification is sought and may include more than one classroom or grade level, with experiences of the intern progressing to the full responsibilities of the teacher.
2. The internship must comply with Rule 290-3-3-.02(6)(e)2. regarding dividing the internship.
3. Entry and exit criteria shall be clearly identified for the internship.

(f) A **survey of special education course** is required unless that course was previously completed. [See Rule 290-3-3-.01(51)]. An individual who completed a survey of special education course prior to meeting requirements for unconditional admission to an Alternative Class A program July 1, 2017, and thereafter, must take a course focused primarily on one of the following categories: methods of accommodating instruction to meet the needs of students with exceptionalities in inclusive settings, multicultural education, teaching English language learners, rural education, or urban education. A course used to meet this requirement for one level of certification may not be used to meet the requirement for a higher level of certification.

(4) Requirements for Class A Certification. Readiness to serve as a teacher shall include:

- (a) An official transcript from a regionally accredited institution documenting an earned master's degree.
- (b) Satisfactory completion of a State-approved program with a minimum GPA of 3.0 on all courses in the Alabama State Board of Education approved educator preparation program. For candidates who meet requirements for unconditional admission to an Alternative Class A program July 1, 2017, and thereafter, a minimum GPA of 3.25 on all courses used to meet the requirements on the approved program checklist for Alabama State Board of Education educator preparation program.
- (c) Competence to teach students as demonstrated in an internship as described in Rule 290-3-3-.02(6)(e)2.

(5) Testing for Class A Certification. Applicants unconditionally admitted to an Alternative Class A program prior to September 1, 2013, must meet the basic skills assessments requirements of the Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program (AECAP) as a prerequisite for certification. Applicants for initial certification through the completion of an Alternative Class A program must meet the Praxis II requirements of the AECAP as a precondition for certification. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.42(6).

(6) Interim Employment Certificate.

(a) An Interim Employment Certificate (IEC) allows a superintendent or administrator to employ an applicant who is completing requirements for Class A certification in a teaching field through a State-approved Alternative Class A program at an Alabama institution. Additional information, including requirements and restrictions, is provided in Rule 290-3-2-.06.

(b) Special provisions for holders of Interim Employment Certificates.

1. A teacher who is employed based on holding a valid Interim Employment Certificate for early childhood education (or early childhood special education) and is teaching above the kindergarten level may, at the discretion of the unit, complete a three semester hour practicum at the preschool and/or kindergarten level to meet the divided internship requirements applicable to the early childhood education program (or early childhood special education program). Similarly, a teacher who is employed based on holding a valid Interim Employment Certificate for early childhood education (or early childhood special education) and is teaching at the kindergarten level or below may, at the discretion of the unit, complete a three semester hour practicum in Grades 1, 2, and/or 3 to meet the divided internship requirements applicable to early childhood education (or early childhood special education) programs.

2. A teacher who is employed based on holding a valid Interim Employment Certificate for elementary education (or collaborative special education K-6) and is teaching at the lower elementary level (grades K, 1, 2, and/or 3) may, at the discretion of the unit, complete a three semester hour practicum at the upper elementary level (grades 4, 5, and/or 6) to meet the divided internship requirements applicable to the elementary education (or collaborative special education K-6) program. Similarly, a teacher who is employed based on holding a valid Interim Employment Certificate for elementary education (or collaborative special education K-6) and is teaching at the upper elementary level may, at the discretion of the unit, complete a three semester hour practicum at the lower elementary level to meet the divided internship requirements applicable to the elementary education (or collaborative special education K-6) program.

3. A teacher who is employed based on holding a valid Interim Employment Certificate for a teaching field that spans Grades P-12 and is teaching at the elementary level (K-6) may, at the discretion of the unit, complete a three semester hour practicum at the secondary level (6-12) to meet the divided internship requirements applicable to the P-12 program. Similarly, a teacher who is employed based on holding a valid Special Alternative Certificate for a teaching field that spans Grades P-12 and is teaching at the secondary level (6-12) may, at the discretion of the unit, complete a three semester hour practicum at the elementary level to meet the divided internship requirements applicable to the P-12 program.

4. A teacher who is employed based on holding a valid Interim Employment Certificate for collaborative special education teacher (K-6) or (6-12) and who is enrolled in a collaborative special education program for both K-6 and 6-12 but whose employment is limited to the grade span for which certification is held may, at the discretion of the unit, complete a three semester hour practicum at the level for which certification is not held to meet the divided internship requirements applicable to both programs.

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Statutory Authority: Ala. Code §§16-3-16; 16-23-1; 16-23-2 (1975).

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290-3-3-.48 Instructional Leadership.

(1) Unconditional Admission to an Instructional Leadership Program. In addition to a valid Class B Professional Educator Certificate in a teaching field or a valid Class A Professional Educator Certificate in a teaching field or instructional support area, the applicant shall:

(a) Have a minimum of three full years of full-time, satisfactory professional educational work experience in a P-12 setting, which must include P-12 teaching experience if admitted prior to August 2010 or have a minimum of three full years (or six full semesters) of full-time, acceptable professional educational experience in a P-12 setting, which must include at least one full year of full-time P-12 classroom teaching experience if admitted on or after August 1, 2010.

(b) Submit an admission portfolio before an interview. The portfolio must contain the following:

1. Three letters of recommendation to include the applicant's principal or supervisor. Each local superintendent will establish requirements for recommendations from the principal and/or supervisor.

2. Completed copy (all forms) of the most recent performance appraisal to include the professional development component, if available.

3. Evidence of ability to improve student achievement.

4. Evidence of leadership and management potential, including evidence of most recent accomplishments in the area of educational leadership.

5. Summary of candidate's reasons for pursuing instructional leadership certification.

6. Summary of what the candidate expects from the preparation program.

(c) Pass an interview conducted by a program admission committee that includes both P-12 instructional leaders and higher education faculty.

(d) Individuals must be unconditionally admitted to the Class A instructional leadership program before enrolling in any instructional leadership courses in the program.

(2) Curriculum of an Instructional Leadership Program. The curriculum for instructional leaders builds on candidate knowledge and abilities acquired through preparation for and employment as a teacher. The standards are based on the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL) prepared by the Council of Chief School Officers with support from numerous professional associations to update the former Interstate School Leader Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards.

(a) Mission, Vision, and Core Values. Effective instructional leaders develop, advocate for, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high-quality education and academic success and well-being of each student. Prospective instructional leaders will be prepared and able to:

1. Develop an educational mission for the school to promote the academic success and well-being of each student.
2. In collaboration with members of the school and the community and using relevant data, develop and promote a vision for the school focused on the successful learning and development of each child and on instructional and organizational practices that promote such success.
3. Articulate, advocate, and cultivate core values that define the school's culture and stress the imperative of child-centered education; high expectations and student support; equity, inclusiveness, and social justice; openness, caring, and trust; and continuous improvement.
4. Strategically develop, implement, and evaluate actions to achieve the vision for the school.
5. Review the school's mission and vision and adjust them to changing expectations and opportunities for the school, and changing needs and situations of students.
6. Develop shared understanding of and commitment to mission, vision, and core values within the school and the community.
7. Model and pursue the school's mission, vision, and core values in all aspects of leadership.

(b) Ethics and Professional Norms. Effective instructional leaders act ethically and according to professional norms to promote each student's academic success and well-being. Prospective instructional leaders will be prepared and able to:

1. Act ethically and professionally in personal conduct, relationships with others, decisionmaking, stewardship of the school's resources, and all aspects of school leadership.
2. Act according to and promote the professional norms of integrity, fairness, transparency, trust, collaboration, perseverance, learning, and continuous improvement.
3. Place children at the center of education and accept responsibility for each student's academic success and well-being.
4. Safeguard and promote the values of democracy, individual freedom and responsibility, equity, social justice, community, and diversity.
5. Lead with interpersonal and communication skill, social-emotional insight, and understanding of all students' and staff members' backgrounds and cultures.
6. Provide moral direction for the school and promote ethical and professional behavior among faculty and staff.

(c) Equity and Cultural Responsiveness. Effective instructional leaders strive for equity of educational opportunity and culturally responsive practices to promote each student's academic success and well-being. Prospective instructional leaders will be prepared and able to:

1. Ensure that each student is treated fairly, respectfully, and with an understanding of each student's culture and context.
2. Recognize, respect, and employ each student's strengths, diversity, and culture as assets for teaching and learning.

3. Ensure that each student has equitable access to effective teachers, learning opportunities, academic and social support, and other resources necessary for success.
4. Develop student policies and address student misconduct in a positive, fair, and unbiased manner.
5. Confront and alter institutional biases of student marginalization, deficit-based schooling, and low expectations associated with race, class, culture and language, gender and sexual orientation, and disability or special status.
6. Promote the preparation of students to live productively in and contribute to the diverse cultural contexts of a global society.
7. Act with cultural competence and responsiveness in their interactions, decision making, and practice.
8. Address matters of equity and cultural responsiveness in all aspects of leadership.

(d) Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment. Effective instructional leaders develop and support intellectually rigorous and coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to promote each student's academic success and well-being. Prospective instructional leaders will be prepared and able to:

1. Implement coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment that promote the mission, vision, and core values of the school, embody high expectations for student learning, align with academic standards, and are culturally responsive.
2. Align and focus systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment within and across grade levels to promote student academic success, love of learning, the identities and habits of learners, and healthy sense of self.
3. Promote instructional practice that is consistent with knowledge of child learning and development, effective pedagogy, and the needs of each student.
4. Ensure instructional practice that is intellectually challenging, authentic to student experiences, recognizes student strengths, and is differentiated and personalized.
5. Promote the effective use of technology in the service of teaching and learning.
6. Employ valid assessments that are consistent with knowledge of child learning and development and technical standards of measurement.
7. Use assessment data appropriately and within technical limitations to monitor student progress and improve instruction.

(e) Community of Care and Support for Students. Effective instructional leaders cultivate an inclusive, caring, and supportive school community that promotes the academic success and well-being of each student. Prospective instructional leaders will be prepared and able to:

1. Build and maintain a safe, caring, and healthy school environment that meets the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of each student.
2. Create and sustain a school environment in which each student is known, accepted and valued, trusted and respected, cared for, and encouraged to be an active and responsible member of the school community.

3. Provide coherent systems of academic and social supports, services, extracurricular activities, and accommodations to meet the range of learning needs of each student.
4. Promote adult-student, student-peer, and school-community relationships that value and support academic learning and positive social and emotional development.
5. Cultivate and reinforce student engagement in school and positive student conduct.
6. Infuse the school's learning environment with the cultures and languages of the school's community.

(f) Professional Capacity and School Personnel. Effective instructional leaders develop the professional capacity and practice of school personnel to promote each student's academic success and well-being. Prospective instructional leaders will be prepared and able to:

1. Recruit, hire, support, develop, and retain effective and caring teachers and other professional staff and form them into an educationally effective faculty.
2. Plan for and manage staff turnover and succession, providing opportunities for effective induction and mentoring of new personnel.
3. Develop teachers' and staff members' professional knowledge, skills, and practice through differentiated opportunities for learning and growth, guided by understanding of professional and adult learning and development.
4. Foster continuous improvement of individual and collective instructional capacity to achieve outcomes envisioned for each student.
5. Deliver actionable feedback about instruction and other professional practice through valid, research-anchored systems of supervision and evaluation to support the development of teachers' and staff members' knowledge, skills, and practice.
6. Empower and motivate teachers and staff to the highest levels of professional practice and to continuous learning and improvement.
7. Develop the capacity, opportunities, and support for teacher leadership and leadership from other members of the school community.
8. Promote the personal and professional health, well-being, and work-life balance of faculty and staff.
9. Tend to their own learning and effectiveness through reflection, study, and improvement, maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

(g) Professional Community for Teachers and Staff. Effective instructional leaders foster a professional community of teachers and other professional staff to promote each student's academic success and well-being. Prospective instructional leaders will be prepared and able to:

1. Develop workplace conditions for teachers and other professional staff that promote effective professional development, practice, and student learning.
2. Empower and entrust teachers and staff with collective responsibility for meeting the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of each student, pursuant to the mission, vision, and core values of the school.

3. Establish and sustain a professional culture of engagement and commitment to shared vision, goals, and objectives pertaining to the education of the whole child; high expectations for professional work; ethical and equitable practice; trust and open communication; collaboration, collective efficacy, and continuous individual and organizational learning and improvement.

4. Promote mutual accountability among teachers and other professional staff for each student's success and the effectiveness of the school as a whole.

5. Develop and support open, productive, caring, and trusting working relationships among leaders, faculty, and staff to promote professional capacity and the improvement of practice.

6. Design and implement job-embedded and other opportunities for professional learning collaboratively with faculty and staff.

7. Provide opportunities for collaborative examination of practice, collegial feedback, and collective learning.

8. Encourage faculty-initiated improvement of programs and practices.

(h) Meaningful Engagement of Families and Community. Effective instructional leaders engage families and the community in meaningful, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial ways to promote each student's academic success and well-being. Prospective instructional leaders will be prepared and able to:

1. Be approachable, accessible, and welcoming to families and members of the community.

2. Create and sustain positive, collaborative, and productive relationships with families and the community for the benefit of students.

3. Engage in regular and open two-way communication with families and the community about the school, students, needs, problems, and accomplishments.

4. Maintain a presence in the community to understand its strengths and needs, develop productive relationships, and engage its resources for the school.

5. Create means for the school community to partner with families to support student learning in and out of school.

6. Understand, value, and employ the community's cultural, social, intellectual, and political resources to promote student learning and school improvement.

7. Develop and provide the school as a resource for families and the community.

8. Advocate for the school and district, and for the importance of education and student needs and priorities to families and the community.

9. Advocate publicly for the needs and priorities of students, families, and the community.

10. Build and sustain productive partnerships with public and private sectors to promote school improvement and student learning.

(i) Operations and Management. Effective instructional leaders manage school operations and resources to promote each student's academic success and well-being. Prospective instructional leaders will be prepared and able to:

1. Institute, manage, and monitor operations and administrative systems that promote the mission and vision of the school.

2. Strategically manage staff resources, assigning and scheduling teachers and staff to roles and responsibilities that optimize their professional capacity to address each student's learning needs.

3. Seek, acquire, and manage fiscal, physical, and other resources to support curriculum, instruction, and assessment; student learning community; professional capacity and community; and family and community engagement.
4. Be responsible, ethical, and accountable stewards of the school's monetary and nonmonetary resources, engaging in effective budgeting and accounting practices.
5. Protect teachers' and other staff members' work and learning from disruption.
6. Employ technology to improve the quality and efficiency of operations and management.
7. Develop and maintain data and communication systems to deliver actionable information for classroom and school improvement.
8. Know, comply with, and help the school community understand local, state, and federal laws, rights, policies, and regulations so as to promote student success.
9. Develop and manage relationships with feeder and connecting schools for enrollment management and curricular and instructional articulation.
10. Develop and manage productive relationships with the central office and school board.
11. Develop and administer systems for fair and equitable management of conflict among students, faculty and staff, leaders, families, and community.
12. Manage governance processes and internal and external politics toward achieving the school's mission and vision.

(j) School Improvement. Effective instructional leaders act as agents of continuous improvement to promote each student's academic success and well-being. Prospective instructional leaders will be prepared and able to:

1. Seek to make school more effective for each student, teachers and staff, families, and the community.
2. Use methods of continuous improvement to achieve the vision, fulfill the mission, and promote the core values of the school.
3. Prepare the school and the community for improvement, promoting readiness, an imperative for improvement, instilling mutual commitment and accountability, and developing the knowledge, skills, and motivation to succeed in improvement.
4. Engage others in an ongoing process of evidence-based inquiry, learning, strategic goal setting, planning, implementation, and evaluation for continuous school and classroom improvement.
5. Employ situationally-appropriate strategies for improvement, including transformational and incremental, adaptive approaches and attention to different phases of implementation.
6. Seek to make school more effective for each student, teachers and staff, families, and the community.
7. Use methods of continuous improvement to achieve the vision, fulfill the mission, and promote the core values of the school.
8. Seek to make school more effective for each student, teachers and staff, families, and the community.
9. Use methods of continuous improvement to achieve the vision, fulfill the mission, and promote the core values of the school.

10. Prepare the school and the community for improvement, promoting readiness, an imperative for improvement, instilling mutual commitment and accountability, and developing the knowledge, skills, and motivation to succeed in improvement.

11. Engage others in an ongoing process of evidence-based inquiry, learning, strategic goal setting, planning, implementation, and evaluation for continuous school and classroom improvement.

12. Employ situationally-appropriate strategies for improvement, including transformational and incremental, adaptive approaches and attention to different phases of implementation.

13. Assess and develop the capacity of staff to assess the value and applicability of emerging educational trends and the findings of research for the school and its improvement.

14. Develop technically appropriate systems of data collection, management, analysis, and use, connecting as needed to the local school system office and external partners for support in planning, implementation, monitoring, feedback, and evaluation.

(3) Requirements for Certification in Instructional Leadership. Readiness to serve as an instructional leader shall include:

(a) An official transcript from a regionally accredited institution documenting an earned master's degree.

(b) A survey of special education course is required unless that course was taken for prior level certification. [See definition (51)]. An individual who completed a survey of special education course prior to meeting requirements for unconditional admission to a Class A program July 1, 2017, and thereafter, must take a course focused primarily on one of the following categories: methods of accommodating instruction to meet the needs of students with exceptionalities in inclusive settings, multicultural education, teaching English language learners, rural education, or urban education. A course used to meet this requirement for one level of certification may not be used to meet the requirement for a higher level of certification. This rule is applicable to the Special Option described in Rule 290-3-3-.48(6).

(c) Satisfactory completion of a State-approved program with a minimum GPA of 3.0 in all courses in the Alabama State Board of Education approved program in instructional leadership. Effective for candidates unconditionally admitted to a Class A instructional leadership program July 1, 2017, and thereafter, satisfactory completion of a State-approved program with a minimum GPA of 3.25 on all courses in the Alabama State Board of Education approved program.

(d) A valid Alabama Class B Professional Educator Certificate in a teaching field or a valid Alabama Class A Professional Educator Certificate in a teaching field or instructional support area.

(e) An internship that allows candidates to benefit from purposeful hands-on experiences designed to prepare them to lead the essential work of school improvement and higher student achievement.

1. Components: Candidates in Alabama instructional leadership preparation programs must experience an internship in which the following occur:

(i) Collaboration between the university and LEAs that anchors internship activities in real-world problems instructional leaders face, provides for appropriate structure and support of learning experiences, and ensures quality guidance and supervision.

(ii) An explicit set of school-based assignments designed to provide opportunities for the application of knowledge, skills, and ways of thinking that are required to effectively perform the core responsibilities of an instructional leader, as identified in Alabama standards and research and incorporated in the preparation programs' design.

(iii) A developmental continuum of practice progresses from observing to participating in and then to leading school-based activities related to the core responsibilities of instructional leaders, with analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of real-life problems at each level.

(iv) Field placements provide opportunities to work with diverse students, teachers, parents, and communities.

(v) Handbooks or other guiding materials clearly define the expectations, processes, and schedule of the internship to participants, faculty supervisors, directing P-12 instructional leaders (principals and central office staff), and LEA personnel.

(vi) Ongoing supervision provided by program faculty who have the expertise and time to provide frequent formative feedback on interns' performance that lets them know how they need to improve.

(vii) Directing instructional leaders (principals and central office staff) model the desired leadership behaviors and know how to guide interns through required activities that bring their performance to established standards.

(viii) Rigorous evaluations of interns' performance of core school leader responsibilities based on clearly defined performance standards and exit criteria and consistent procedures.

2. Design. Universities and LEAs collaborate to insure that candidates have meaningful and practical experiences in actual school settings during the course of the instructional leadership preparation program. The internship is designed to place candidates in the cooperating schools during critical times of instructional planning. This collaborative model requires that LEAs provide release time for candidates and for universities to work with LEAs so that the candidate's experiences are comprehensive and valuable. The internship experiences are the total sum of practical experiences, either field or clinical, as part of every course taken for preparation, plus a residency. The residency is uninterrupted service in an active school with students present for the equivalent of ten full days. The residency allows interns to experience leadership in as many of the Alabama Leadership Standard indicators as possible. Candidates shall prepare and maintain a comprehensive portfolio which indicates the level of experiences and knowledge gained in instructional leadership during the intern experiences. The portfolio shall be juried by a committee of university and cooperating school staff before the candidate is recommended for certification.

(4) Testing for Certification in Instructional Leadership. Applicants for initial certification in instructional leadership through the completion of a Class A program must meet the Praxis requirements of the Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program (AECAP) as a precondition for certification. Additional information is provided in Rule 290-3-3-.47(5).

(5) Faculty. An institution shall meet the following criteria.

(a) At least two faculty members who are full-time to the instructional leadership program shall hold earned doctorates in instructional leadership (educational administration) or related fields.

(b) A minimum of two full-time faculty members in instructional leadership (educational administration) shall each have a minimum of three years of experience as a practicing assistant principal, principal, central office supervisor, assistant superintendent, or superintendent, or any three years combination thereof.

(c) Instructional leadership faculty with recent experience in instructional leadership shall supervise interns. The institution shall have and follow a written policy pertaining to teaching load credit for supervising candidates in field experiences and residencies.

(d) In order to ensure recency of exemplary instructional leadership in a P-12 setting(s), an EPP may request permission from the State Superintendent of Education to meet one of the two required faculty positions by combining the work of no more than two part-time faculty members whose combined workload equals one full-time position. The request to do so must be supported with evidence that each of the two individuals to be employed part-time meets the doctoral degree and experience requirements indicated in Rule 290-3-3-.48(5)(a) and (b).

(6) Special Option Effective July 1, 2014. A person who holds a Class A Professional Educator Certificate and meets the program admission requirements in Rule 290-3-3-.48(1)(a) and (b) may be able to complete a reduced-hour program to be recommended for a Class A Instructional Leadership Certificate. Although the number of semester hours of required credit for instructional leadership courses may vary by EPP, depending on the courses needed to document compliance with program approval standards, at least 18 semester hours of credit for instructional leadership courses are required for this option. EPPs may choose to require additional courses or set a higher GPA requirement. Every instructional leadership course required for the reduced-hour option must include either field or clinical experiences.

(7) Interim Employment Certificate. An Interim Employment Certificate (IEC) allows a superintendent or administrator to employ an applicant who is completing requirements for Class A certification in instructional leadership through a State-approved Class A program at an Alabama institution. Additional Information is provided in the Educator Certification Chapter of the *Alabama Administrative Code*.

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