



## **Teacher Licensure Policy (Including LEA-Specific Licenses)**

### **References:**

UTAH CODE ANN. § 53E-6-201  
UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-214  
UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-301  
UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-515

### **PURPOSE**

Under UTAH CODE ANN. § 53E-6-201, an individual employed in a position that requires licensure by the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) must hold the license appropriate to that position. The USBE has designated the following licenses: (1) Associate Educator License; (2) Professional Educator License, and (3) LEA-Specific Educator License. Requirements for a Professional Educator License and an Associate Educator License are found in UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-301. Consistent with that law, this policy identifies requirements for a Merit Preparatory Academy LEA-specific license.

### **DEFINITIONS**

- I. LEA: Local Education Agency. Merit Preparatory Academy is an LEA.
- II. Professional Educator License: Individuals who follow the traditional route of attending an educator preparation program, receiving a degree in education, and attaining what was formerly a level 1, 2, or 3 license by the USBE.
- III. Associate Educator License: Individuals who have a bachelor's degree or higher, or who are enrolled in an educator preparation program that will result in a bachelor's degree or higher, or who have a skill certification in a specific CTE area as established by the USBE. Before 2020 individuals could pursue an alternative route to licensure (ARL) or an academic pathway to teaching (APT) and teach on a letter of authorization (LOA). As of 2020 these processes are discontinued. In their place, an individual may pursue an associate educator license. An associate educator license is valid for two years (with a possible one-year extension) and may be upgraded to a professional educator license in accordance with Utah law.
- IV. LEA-specific license: An individual who does not meet the criteria for a professional or associate educator license but meets the criteria set forth in this policy may be issued an LEA-specific educator license, license area, or endorsement. An LEA-specific license, license area, or endorsement is valid only at Merit Preparatory Academy.
- V. Candidate: An individual for whom an LEA-specific license is sought. A candidate may be a current employee seeking an LEA-specific license in a new area of concentration or an individual not yet employed by the school.

## **POLICY**

### **I. APPLICATION**

- A. An LEA-specific license is issued by the USBE. A request for an LEA-specific license must be made to the USBE by the school's Director on behalf of the candidate. The Director must use the LEA-Specific License Application form.
- B. Administration, including the Administrator over teacher licensure, will determine whether the requirements listed in Section IV have been met.
  - 1. If Administration determines that the candidate satisfies the requirements of Section IV, the Director recommends the candidate to the Board of Merit Preparatory Academy for approval.
  - 2. The application must receive approval from the Board in a public meeting no more than 60 days before it is submitted to the USBE. The request for Board approval must include the rationale for the appointment of an LEA-specific license.

### **II. EXPIRATION**

- A. An LEA-specific license or endorsement is valid for three years; thereafter the renewal of the license is subject to the approval or denial by the USBE.
- B. An LEA-specific license expires immediately if the educator's employment with the school ends.

### **III. REQUIREMENTS**

- A. An LEA-specific license must include general, content knowledge, and pedagogical requirements.
- B. An educator license must include at least one area of concentration.
- C. A candidate for an LEA-specific license must demonstrate pedagogical knowledge as determined by the USBE committee.
- D. A candidate must complete a criminal background check including review of any criminal offenses and clearance in accordance with UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-214.
- E. A candidate is not required to have a bachelor's degree; however, if the candidate does not have a bachelor's degree the candidate must have at least six years of directly related professional experience within the 10 years prior to the application.
  - 1. Periods of employment lasting less than one month and periods of employment before the candidate was 18 years old are not accepted for purposes of calculating the professional experience requirement.
  - 2. An associate's degree in a related area may be counted for up to two years of professional experience.
  - 3. The professional experience requirement may be waived by the USBE committee if the candidate has passed a recognized competency examination within the past five years or holds a license directly related to the teaching assignment issued by the Utah State Department of Commerce, Division of Occupational, or Professional Licensing.

#### IV. EDUCATOR TRAINING AND SUPPORT

- A. An employee with an LEA-specific license must participate in an Educational Preparation Program (EPP) from a USBE credible organization or institution, APPEL program, or an equivalent.
- B. Within the first year of employment, the employee must complete the following training:
  - 1. Educator ethics;
  - 2. Classroom management and instruction;
  - 3. Basic special education law and instruction; and
  - 4. Utah Effective Teaching Standards described in UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-530.

#### V. LICENSE AND ENDORSEMENT AREAS

- A. An LEA-specific license is limited to the following licensing areas:
  - 1. Early Childhood;
  - 2. Elementary;
  - 3. Secondary;
  - 4. Career and Technical Education (CTE);
  - 5. Speech-Language Pathologist;
  - 6. Speech-Language Technician;
  - 7. School Social Worker; and
  - 8. Communication Disorders.
- B. The school is not authorized to provide an LEA-specific educator license in the areas of Special Education or Preschool Special Education.

#### VI. MENTORING PROGRAM

- A. For at least the first three (3) years of employment, the candidate shall participate in a mentoring program for a LEA-specific license. The mentoring program shall include a mentor educator who holds a professional educator or administrative license and, *where possible*,
  - 1. performs substantially the same duties as the educator, with release time to work as a mentor; or
  - 2. is assigned as an instructional coach or equivalent position.
- B. The mentor does not evaluate the educator; however, all employees, including mentors, must promptly report educator misconduct in violation of school policy.
- C. The mentor will help the employee meet the Utah Effective Educator Standards found in UTAH ADMIN CODE. R277-530 by:
  - 1. assisting the educator with a self-assessment;
  - 2. ensuring that the educator has a formal professional learning plan; and
  - 3. meeting regularly with the educator for coaching observations and feedback.
- D. The mentoring program shall include:
  - 1. a formal professional learning plan;
  - 2. support in meeting the requirements of a professional license area; and
  - 3. ongoing training on educator ethics and special education.

## VII. NOTICE

- A. Each school where an educator holding an LEA-specific license works shall post the following on its website:
1. disclosure of the fact that the school employs individuals holding LEA-specific educator licenses, license areas, or endorsements;
  2. the percentage of the types of licenses, license areas, and endorsements held by educators employed in the school based on the employees' FTE in CACTUS; and
  3. a link to the Utah Educator Look-up tool provided by the USBE in accordance with UTAH ADMIN. CODE R277-515-7(6).

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