



Georgia Department of Education

Policies and Procedures

Policy Title:	<i>Certification and Licensure, State Schools</i>		
Policy Number:	<i>SS-3003 Descriptor Code-GBBD</i>		
Release Date:	<i>09-01-02</i>	Last Revised:	<i>11-22-03</i>

Purpose

To ensure employees of the State Schools maintain current certification and licensure.

Applicability

This policy applies to all classified and unclassified employees of the Atlanta Area School for the Deaf, the Georgia Academy for the Blind, and the Georgia School for the Deaf in positions requiring professional certification or licensure. It also applies to employees whose duties and responsibilities may require maintenance of specific licenses or certifications such as a commercial or other drivers license, lifeguard certification, CPR certification, paraprofessional license, etc.

Definitions

Certificate: refers to any teaching, service, or leadership certificate, license, or permit issued by authority of the Professional Standards Commission.

Certificate/license/permit: may also include documentation awarded to an employee from a recognized entity for completing training, a series of classes, or for demonstrating competency in a specific area.

Policy

Employees of the State Schools in identified positions shall maintain certification, licensure, and applicable permits as needed to perform the duties and responsibilities of their positions. The employee is responsible for completing required training, meeting posted deadlines, and paying applicable fees related to acquiring, maintaining and renewing a certificate, license, and/or permit. Maintaining valid certification and licensure is a condition of employment for specific positions at the State Schools.

General Provisions

1. The Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC) is responsible for "certifying and classifying" professional employees in public schools. Title 20, Education, of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A.) requires professional employees of all Georgia public elementary and secondary schools to hold state certification.
2. In accordance with the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act and in order to be Highly Qualified at the State Schools, individuals possessing Georgia Professional Standards Commission certification shall have in-field content certification in the area(s) the educator is teaching as well as holding certification in the primary area of disability, i.e. hearing impairment or visual impairment.
3. Educators at the State Schools must obtain and maintain proper certification for the position held. Educators at the State Schools shall follow established certification renewal procedures to maintain valid, in-field professional certification.
4. Professional employees and contractors at the State Schools may also be required to maintain professional licensure in their specific area of expertise. Other professional licensure may include health occupations, social work, orientation and mobility, occupational/physical therapy, paraprofessional, instructional aide, etc.
5. Certain position responsibilities shall require acquisition and maintenance of licensure in specialized fields such as plumber, electrician, etc. Employees and contractors responsible for vehicle operation or student transport must maintain the appropriate Georgia Drivers License or Commercial Drivers License.
6. Employees in identified positions at the State Schools shall maintain certification/licensure in other areas such as First Aid, Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Life Guard, Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI), etc.

ProceduresCertification Renewal Professional Standards Commission

The Office of State Schools will facilitate PSC certificate renewals for employees of the State Schools. Prior to certificate expiration, the employee must submit an application for certificate renewal and other supporting documents to the School Director. The School Director must sign the application for renewal and submit the renewal package to the Office of State Schools. Upon approval, the Director of State Schools will renew the certificate through the PSC Automatic Certificate Renewal Entry System (ACRES) program.

Applications for initial certification, certification upgrades, and certification in additional fields must go through the School Director to the PSC. The PSC ACRES Program is limited to certificate renewals.

Licenses and Permits

Although, the State School may provide technical support, it is the responsibility of the individual employee/contractor to obtain and renew all required licenses and permits. The employee/contractor is strongly encouraged to take the appropriate steps to renew the certificate, license, or permit well in advance of the expiration date. The State School shall maintain a valid certificate/license/permit on file for specific employees/contractors.

Authority and/or Cross-Reference

- O.C.G.A. 505-2-.13