

Level II Frequently Asked Questions from PDE

http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/commonly_asked_questions/8628/about_level_ii_certification

LEVEL II CERTIFICATION

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

These questions and answers are based on current regulations **22 PA Code Chapter 49, Certification of Professional Personnel** as of September 1999.

1. What do the terms "Level I" and "Level II" mean?

Pennsylvania currently has two levels of certification. The initial certificate, Level I, is valid for a specific number of service years, during which time you must complete established requirements. Upon completion of those requirements, the Level I may be converted to a Level II certificate. If not converted, the Level I lapses. You cannot be employed in a Pennsylvania public school with a lapsed certificate.

2. When will my Level I certificate expire?

Level I (provisional) certificates are valid for actual years of professional service as an educator in Pennsylvania. Service time earned outside Pennsylvania does not count towards Level II requirements, nor does it count against the service life of the Level I.

3. Can my initial Level I certificate be renewed?

No. Pennsylvania certificates are not renewable. An Instructional I or Educational Specialist I is valid for a maximum of 6 **service** years in Pennsylvania. If issued in accordance with 1987 regulations, Administrative I or Supervisory I is valid for a maximum of 3 **service** years in Pennsylvania. If not converted before the end of the applicable service period, the certificate becomes invalid. An emergency permit will not be issued to a person with an invalid certificate.

4. When should I convert my certificate to Level II?

After you have completed **all** requirements as specified on page 3, you may apply for Level II certification. It is the responsibility of each certificate holder to obtain the Level II certificate before the service life of the Level I expires. Failure to do so will result in a lapsed certificate and the certificate holder will be ineligible for employment.

5. What does it mean if my certificate lapses?

Instructional and Educational Specialist certificates are "valid" for six (6) years of service teaching in the area of the certificate. If an educator does not complete the requirements for conversion from Level I to Level II within the six (6) years, the certificate will "lapse" and become invalid for teaching. Requirements for conversion include completion of educational requirements, induction program and successful teacher evaluations. Refer to [Certification Staffing and Policy Guidelines \(CSPG\) #7](#) Level II (Permanent) Certification.

6. Once my certificate has lapsed, how do I reinstate the validity of the certificate?

Complete the requirements for Level II certification and submit the application for conversion from Level I to Level II to PDE. Once converted to Level II, the certificate will be permanently valid. Educators will need to complete the Act 48 Continuing Professional Education requirements every five (5) years to maintain an "active" certificate. Refer to [CSPG #7](#) for additional information.

7. I have more than one area of certification. Will I need three years of service in each area?

Not in all cases. All **Instructional** areas will be converted to Level II status simultaneously; however, Educational Specialist, Administrative and Supervisory certificates issued under 1987 regulations require three (3) years of satisfactory service in each area.

8. Will teaching experience outside of Pennsylvania count towards Level II?

No. Professional experience must be in Pennsylvania, on a valid Level I certificate, and in the curriculum area for which the certificate was issued.

9. Will service as a substitute count towards Level II?

Satisfactory service (including service as a long-term substitute) for a minimum of 70 days in a single assignment in areas for which a Level I certificate is held will be credited towards Level II. That experience shall be counted against the period of certificate validity.

Service as a day-to-day substitute in intermittent assignments will not count towards Level II requirements. Likewise, this service time is not charged against the validity period of the Level I certificate.

10. Is unsatisfactory service creditable towards meeting the experience requirements for Level II?

No. Unsatisfactory service is not creditable toward Level II certification, but it does count against the validity period of the certificate.

11. Will teaching experience outside my certificated area count towards Level II?

No. Service outside the certification area does not meet state requirements for attaining Level II.

12. Will service at a private or nonpublic school count towards Level II certification?

Service on a Level I certificate in the following types of schools may be credited toward Level II certification at the **option** of the certificate holder:

- Pennsylvania charter schools
- State Board of Private Academic Schools
- PDE registered non-public, non-licensed schools
- schools accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, Pennsylvania Association of Private Academic Schools, United Private Academic Schools Association or National Association for the Education of Young Children

13. Will service at a charter school count towards Level II?

Service on a Level I certificate in a charter school may be credited toward Level II at the option of the certificate holder.

14. What types of services will not count towards Level II certification?

Service in the following categories is not creditable toward Level II certification nor charged against the period of validity of a Level I Certificate:

- any Intern Certificate (Instructional, Vocational or Alternative Intern)
- an Emergency Permit
- an Act 97 Waiver of Certification
- a teacher of adult classes of persons 21 years of age or older
- outside the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
- a day-to-day substitute
- nonprofessional or paraprofessional positions.

15. Am I required to complete an Induction Program?

All persons who were issued their Instructional I or Vocational Instructional I Certificate on or after June 1, 1987 must present evidence of having successfully completed a PDE-approved induction program in order to qualify for an Instructional II or Vocational Instructional II Certificate. Educational Specialist I Certificates issued in accordance with September 1, 1999 regulations must also complete a PDE-approved Induction program. See [CSPG No. 7](#) for additional Level II certificate requirements.

16. How many credits do I need for Level II?

Instructional or Educational Specialist applicants must complete 24 semester credits (graduate or undergraduate level) or 24 PDE-approved IU credits beyond their initial bachelor's degree. Semester credits must be earned at a four-year degree-granting college/university. There are no credit requirements for conversion of Administrative or Supervisory certificates to Level II.

Note: Distance learning (i.e. video, online, etc.) courses are also acceptable as long as they are officially transcribed as stated above and appear as a passing grade on an official transcript of a state-approved baccalaureate degree-granting institution.

17. Are the 24 post-baccalaureate credits required to be a specific area for Level II?

Educators holding a Level I certificate, who were awarded their initial baccalaureate degree after October 1, 1963, must provide evidence of 24 semester hour post-baccalaureate credits, six (6) of which must be associated with the area(s) of certification and/or designed to improve the professional practice, to meet the education requirements for conversion to a Level II certificate.

18. Are community college credits and continuing education units (CEUs) accepted towards Level II certification?

No. Community college credits and continuing education units (CEUs) are not accepted towards Level II certification.

19. Will credits completed at an approved seminary, school of theology, medical school, law school, etc. be acceptable for Level II certification?

Credits in the fields of law, medicine, real estate and theology are **not** acceptable unless the certificate holder can demonstrate that these credits relate directly to the certification assignment.

20. Are quarter credit hours equivalent to semester credit hours?

No. A quarter credit hour is equal to two-thirds of a semester credit hour.

21. How do I apply for a name change on my certificate?

If your name has been legally changed, you should request a name change through the [Teacher Information Management System](#) (TIMS). There is no processing fee for a name change.

22. How do I apply for a duplicate certificate?

If you have lost your Pennsylvania certificate, you may print a copy directly through the [Teacher Information Management System](#) (TIMS). There is no processing fee for a duplicate.

23. How do I contact the Bureau of School Leadership and Teacher Quality?

You may contact us by mail at the following address:

Pennsylvania Department of Education

Bureau of School Leadership and Teacher Quality

333 Market Street

Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

Telephone: 717-PA TEACH (728-3224)