

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION	
EDUCATOR LICENSURE POLICY	5.502

Pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-1-302, the State Board of Education has the authority to adopt policies governing the qualifications, requirements, and standards of, and provide the licenses and certificates for, all public school teachers, principals, assistant principals, supervisors, and directors of schools. Additionally, T.C.A. § 49-5-101 provides that no person shall be employed as a principal, teacher, or supervisor of any public elementary or high school by any local school district, or receive any pay for such services out of the public school funds of the local school district, until the person presents to the director of schools a valid license as prescribed by the State Board. This policy along with State Board Rule 0520-02-03 Educator Licensure set the minimum standards and requirements for licensure to ensure that individuals who serve in Tennessee classrooms and schools are prepared and equipped to serve Tennessee students.

Policy Sections

1. Teacher and Occupational Teacher License Types
2. Endorsements
3. Specific Requirements for Select Endorsements
4. School Services Personnel
5. Instructional Leader License Types

(1) Teacher and Occupational Teacher License Types

- (a) Practitioner Licenses. The practitioner level license is the first license issued to the educator. There are three (3) types of practitioner licenses: Practitioner Teacher, Practitioner School Services Personnel, and Practitioner Occupational Teacher. Individuals applying for the practitioner license must meet the criteria defined in State Board Rule 0520-02-03 Educator Licensure.
- (b) Professional Licenses. The professional license is issued to educators who have completed an approved educator preparation program and meet licensure expectations at the practitioner level. There are three (3) types of professional licenses: Professional Teacher, Professional School Services Personnel, and Professional Occupational Teacher. Individuals applying for the professional license must meet the criteria defined in State Board Rule 0520-02-03 Educator Licensure.
- (c) Advancement of a License. An educator with a practitioner teacher or practitioner school services personnel license may seek to advance to a professional license. In order to advance from a practitioner license to a professional license, an educator must comply with requirements listed in State Board Rule 0520-02-03 Educator Licensure.
- (d) Additional Advancement Requirements for the Occupational Teacher License. In addition to the requirements for advancing from the practitioner license to the professional license, occupational teachers must complete additional requirements. The educator shall provide to the Department of Education documentation that the following expectations have been met:

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION	
EDUCATOR LICENSURE POLICY	5.502

1. Attendance during the first year of teaching for a total of five (5) days at new teacher training sponsored by the Department of Education;
 2. Four (4) days release time to observe three (3) experienced teachers within their endorsed teaching area and one (1) experienced teacher outside of their teaching area;
 3. Assigned teacher mentor during the first three (3) years of teaching; and
 4. Current and valid Industry Certification where required by teacher endorsement area.
- (e) Professional Development Points. Appendix A of this policy defines the options for professional development points (PDPs) that educators may accrue for licensure advancement.
- (f) License Reactivation. In order to reactivate a license and endorsements held, an educator shall submit to the Department evidence of completion of an approved educator preparation program and shall submit qualifying scores on all State Board-required assessments that are not more than five (5) years old. Duplicate information is not required. If the Tennessee Department of Education has evidence of completion of an approved educator preparation program and/or valid assessment scores that are not more than five (5) years old, the educator does not need to resubmit.
- (g) Licensure Requirements for Military Spouses. Licensure requirements for military spouses who hold an active license from a state other than Tennessee are listed in State Board Rule 0520-02-03. Licensure applications for military spouses shall be expedited.
- (h) Application Timeline. In most cases, advancement and renewal of a license must take place during the final year of the validity period of the license. For example, if a license expires on August 31, 2020, the educator may not apply for renewal until September 1, 2019. However, an educator who qualifies for advancement prior to the final year of the validity period of the license may advance as soon as criteria are met. Educators who hold an inactive license may apply to reactivate the license at any point.
- (2) Endorsements
- (a) Endorsements (Appendix B) indicate the areas for which a licensed educator is prepared to provide instruction, leadership, or services in schools and districts.
 - (b) Adding Endorsements on an Educator License. Licensed educators who have completed an approved preparation program for initial licensure may add additional endorsements in the following ways:

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION	
EDUCATOR LICENSURE POLICY	5.502

1. Complete a program offered by an approved educator preparation provider, receive a recommendation from the provider, and submit qualifying scores on all required content assessments; or
 2. Submit qualifying score(s) on all state-required content assessments for each endorsement an educator is seeking to add when the endorsement category (e.g., Core Academic, Fine Arts) and the grade span are similar. In limited instances, educators may be allowed to add endorsements in the same category that have narrower grade spans. To provide clarity and guidance, the Department of Education will publish a list of endorsements that may be added by submitting qualifying scores on the required content assessments.
- (c) Endorsements for Out-of-State Teacher Applicants. When an endorsement held by the applicant does not match the content area or grade span of an available Tennessee endorsement, the Office of Educator Licensure and Preparation will identify the most appropriate match.
- (3) Specific Requirements for Select Endorsements

Several endorsement types on an educator license have additional requirements as indicated below.

- (a) Speech Language Teacher. Candidates seeking licensure to serve as a school speech language teacher working under the direction of a school speech language pathologist are trained to supplement – not supplant – the services of a school speech language pathologist and must hold a minimum of a bachelor’s degree and:
1. Hold a current teacher license earned through an educator preparation program approved according to standards and guidelines established by the State Board, and complete an endorsement program of studies in speech language including 100 hours of supervised clinical practice. Candidates must be recommended by an educator preparation provider approved according to standards and guidelines established by the State Board. These candidates are eligible for a School Speech-Language endorsement (pre-K-12) (A);
 2. Complete an educator preparation program approved according to standards and guidelines established by the State Board for teachers of speech-language including 100 hours of supervised clinical practice. Candidates must be recommended by an educator preparation provider approved according to standards and guidelines established by the State Board. These candidates are eligible for a School Speech-Language endorsement (pre-K-12) (A); or
 3. Complete a bachelor’s level program of studies in speech language, speech language disorders, or communications disorders including 100 hours of

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION	
EDUCATOR LICENSURE POLICY	5.502

supervised clinical practice. Candidates must be recommended by an educator preparation provider with a bachelor level program and verification that the candidate meets the standards and guidelines of the Tennessee Teacher Licensure Standards: Special Education, School Speech Language Teacher (pre-K-12). These candidates are eligible for a Special Education, School Speech-Language endorsement (pre-K-12) (B). The (B) endorsement does not entitle the holder to teach courses other than those designated as part of a speech language program in a school based setting. If the (B) endorsement is the only endorsement an educator holds, no other teaching endorsement may be added to the license. Other teaching credentials may only be earned through a preparation program approved according to standards and guidelines established by the State Board.

- (b) Supervisor of Attendance. The applicant must hold a valid educator license. The applicant must complete eight (8) semester hours in areas such as: counseling and guidance, community and school relations, special education, social case work, or state and federal laws relating to school attendance.
- (c) Bible Teacher. A minimum of twelve (12) semester hours in literature of the Bible is required. For the purpose of fulfilling requirements for this endorsement, coursework in theology, doctrine, ethics, dogma, and other courses of a doctrinal nature will not be counted.
- (d) Driver Education Teacher. The applicant must hold an endorsement in another subject area, grades 6-12 or K-12, and shall complete at least ten (10) semester hours of driver and traffic safety education including the following areas:
 - 1. Basic driver and traffic safety education;
 - 2. Advanced driver and traffic safety education;
 - 3. General safety; and
 - 4. First aid and emergency medical services.
- (e) Reading Specialist. Candidates seeking licensure and endorsement as a reading specialist must complete advanced studies in a program approved by the State Board. Candidates must be recommended by an educator preparation provider approved according to standards and guidelines established by the State Board.
- (f) Library Information Specialist. Candidates seeking endorsement as a school library information specialist must complete a graduate program of studies in library information science that leads to a master's degree and is approved by the State Board. Candidates who already hold a master's degree must complete an approved course of study at the

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION	
EDUCATOR LICENSURE POLICY	5.502

graduate level meeting the appropriate knowledge and skills for a school library information specialist.

- (g) Health Science. The health science teacher must hold an associate or higher degree that is related to their health care license. The license, registration, or certification must be in an allied health occupation, or as a registered nurse, or in an appropriate medical profession in Tennessee that can be verified by the Tennessee Department of Health Licensure or a national license accreditation agency (e.g., Radiological Technologist, Nuclear Medicine, etc.).

The applicant shall have completed one (1) year of full-time or part-time successful employment within the past five (5) years in a related health occupation in a health care clinical setting having a current active healthcare license (e.g., hospital, long-term care facility, rehabilitation or athletic training facility, dental or medical office, home health, day surgery center, etc.).

- (h) Other Occupational Teacher (All Areas). Other occupational teachers shall be a high school graduate or higher and hold and maintain a current industry certification, where required by teacher endorsement area. This industry certification may be acquired prior to the practitioner occupational license, but must be presented at the time the teacher advances from the practitioner occupational license to the professional occupational license.

Endorsements for Other Occupational Teachers can be obtained through one (1) of five (5) pathways using work experience, industry certification, postsecondary training, and postsecondary teaching experience. The five (5) possible pathways include:

1. Applicants must have at least five (5) years of work experience in the endorsed area in the last eight (8) years. Credentialed (certificate or diploma) postsecondary training in the endorsed area, or associate degree, or industry certification may substitute for two (2) years of work experience.;
2. Applicants must have at least five (5) years of work experience in the endorsed area in the last eight (8) years. A combination of an associate degree related to the endorsed area and industry certification may be substituted for four (4) years of work experience.
3. A bachelor's degree or higher degree in the endorsed area may be substituted for partial or full credit of work experience depending on the endorsement and related industry;
4. Five (5) years of full-time work experience accrued in the occupational area of endorsement within the last eight (8) years; or

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION	
EDUCATOR LICENSURE POLICY	5.502

5. Two (2) years of full or part-time teaching experience as a postsecondary instructor within the endorsement area can be substituted for partial or full credit of work experience. This substitution can only substitute for work experience and cannot supersede all requirements for the endorsement.

(4) School Services Personnel

Several school services personnel license endorsements have additional requirements as indicated below.

- (a) School Food Service Supervisor. The applicant shall hold a bachelor’s degree and must be a licensed educator or have completed at least eighteen (18) semester hours in education, psychology, or sociology. The applicant shall have a field experience of six (6) semester hours or professional experience, supervised by a licensed school food service supervisor, of at least 120 clock hours including the following areas: procurement, quantity foods, design and layout, and sanitation and food safety. The applicant must also complete twelve (12) semester hours including course work in each of the following:

1. Personnel management;
2. Nutrition;
3. Accounting, cost analysis, or financial management of food systems; and
4. Spreadsheet applications.

- (b) School Educational Interpreter. Candidates seeking licensure and endorsement as an educational interpreter must hold a bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited college or university prior to obtaining the practitioner school service personnel license. Candidates must meet the employment standards and assessment requirements of the State Board. Candidates applying for a practitioner school service personnel license as an educational interpreter must also satisfy one of the following criteria:

1. A current, nationally recognized certification which includes a written examination related to ethics and practice; or
2. A passing score on the written portion of the Educational Interpreter Proficiency Assessment (EIPA) and a minimum score of 3.5 of the performance assessment portion of the EIPA.

(5) Instructional Leader License Types

- (a) There are three types of instructional leader licenses currently issued: the Instructional Leader License – Aspiring (ILL-A), Instructional Leader License (ILL), and Instructional

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION	
EDUCATOR LICENSURE POLICY	5.502

Leader License – Professional (ILL-P). Specific requirements for these licenses are set forth in State Board Rule 0520-02-03 Educator Licensure. The information below further defines and clarifies those rules.

- (b) Additional Requirements. Principals, assistant principals, and supervisors serving as instructional leaders who hold a Professional Administrator License (PAL) will be eligible for an ILL-P upon recommendation by the TASL director and certification of successful completion of the TASL requirements at the professional level based on the Tennessee Instructional Leadership Standards (TILS).
- (c) Beginning July 1, 2022, principals, assistant principals, and supervisors serving as instructional leaders in Tennessee must hold an ILL or an ILL-P. However, effective September 1, 2009, individuals with a PAL may elect to transition to an ILL-P any time they meet the licensure requirements. Individual administrators who hold a PAL are required to complete TASL requirements, unless exempted by T.C.A. § 49-5-5703. Completion of the TASL requirements will include both participation in training aligned with the TILS and the evidence documenting that participants have applied the TILS at the professional level in their work.
- (d) Individuals with a current Tennessee administrator license issued before the required licensure assessment stipulated in the professional assessment policy was required will not be required to take the assessment to transition to the new licensure system.
- (e) Renewal of Professional License for Administrators. Because administrators are expected to maintain professional development related to their role, administrators in a Tennessee Academy for School Leaders (TASL)-mandated position or serving as a director of schools may use this experience in lieu of submitting professional development points toward renewal of their professional teaching license. In order to qualify, individuals must hold an active administrator license (PAL, ILL-A, ILL-B, ILL, or ILL-P), be serving in either a TASL-mandated role or as a director of schools during the school year in which the professional license is expiring, and be current in required TASL credit hours (if applicable).

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION	
EDUCATOR LICENSURE POLICY	5.502

Appendix A
Professional Development Points for Licensure Advancement or Renewal

Educators must earn a total of thirty (30) professional development points (PDPs) to advance¹ or a total of sixty (60) PDPs to renew a teacher license, including professional, professional occupational, and professional school services personnel licenses². Individuals employed by an LEA must have the LEA approve the accrued PDPs for advancement or renewal. Individuals employed by a public charter school must have the charter school leader approve the accrued PDPs for advancement or renewal.

At the time of advancement or renewal, if the educator is not employed in a Tennessee public school, appropriate documentation for all activities for which PDPs are requested must be provided to the office of educator licensure and preparation at the Tennessee Department of Education. Reasons for PDP denial include, but are not limited to: activity not related to improving educator effectiveness; activity conducted outside the validity period of the license; activity lacks adequate documentation; or duplicate activity. At the time of advancement or renewal, if the educator is employed in a Tennessee public school, the LEA or public charter school must retain documentation for each completed activity for which the educator is awarded PDPs.

Activities used for PDPs must be completed within the validity period of the license being advanced or renewed and must be related to improving educator effectiveness by:

1. Developing content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, or pedagogical content knowledge; or
2. Enhancing educator effectiveness (e.g., world language courses for those working with students for whom English is a second language, coursework that supports understanding and use of data, training to teach students who require specific behavioral or other exceptional needs in the classroom).

Activities not related to improving educator effectiveness do not qualify for PDPs. This includes training activities such as sessions on blood borne pathogens and suicide prevention. While these training opportunities are highly valuable and often mandated, they do not explicitly focus on educator effectiveness.

¹ Not required for advancement if educator obtains the signature of the director of schools.

² Educators who hold a Speech Language Pathologist or School Audiologist endorsement on a School Services Personnel license and also hold a valid license issued by Tennessee or an out-of-state licensing Board of Communications Disorders and Sciences or hold the Certificate of Clinical Competence from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association may use this license or certificate in lieu of PDPs for the purpose of licensure advancement or renewal.

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION	
EDUCATOR LICENSURE POLICY	5.502

**Appendix A
(continued)**

Acceptable PDP options, number of PDPs awarded, and required documentation:

Option	PDPs Awarded	Required Documentation
Professional Learning ³	1 clock hour = 1 PDP Approved Micro-credentials = 6 PDPs	Certificate, transcript, or verification signed by the director of schools (or designee) or charter school leader
Continuing Education ⁴	1 continuing education unit (CEU) = 5 PDPs	Certificate or transcript
College/University Coursework ⁵	1 semester hour credit = 10 PDPs 1 semester hour audit = 5 PDPs	Transcript; Audit verification form
Level of overall effectiveness (LOE) rating (approved TN model)	Overall Score of 5 = 20 PDPs Overall Score of 4 = 15 PDPs Overall Score of 3 = 10 PDPs	Information is maintained by the Department. No additional documentation is required; points may be accrued annually
National Board Certification	Initial Certification = 30 PDPs Renewal Certification = 15 PDPs	Official documentation from NBPTS

³ Professional learning may consist of school, district, state activities; or academy, institute, seminar, conference attendance.

⁴ Continuing education consists of activities provided by institutions of higher education or professional associations which do not result in academic credit leading to a degree. Certificate/transcript must indicate number of CEUs awarded.

⁵ College/University coursework consists of activities whose credit may be transferred/applied to a program that may result in the award of a degree. College/University coursework used for PDPs must be completed at regionally accredited institutions.

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION	
EDUCATOR LICENSURE POLICY	5.502

**Appendix B
Active Endorsements**

This table outlines endorsements available in the State of Tennessee. The **effective date** represents the first date that an endorsement may be issued. All endorsements are issued for the first time on September 1 of the indicated year. The **superseded date** represents the last day on which the endorsement may be issued. All endorsements are issued for the last time on August 31 of the indicated year.

Endorsements that have ceased being issue within the last five (5) years are shaded in gray. Active educators may still hold these license endorsement or other endorsements issued at the time they were licensed. In some cases, two similar endorsements (e.g., Elementary Education K-6 and Elementary Education K-5) may overlap. This overlap allows time for educators already enrolled in programs designed for the older endorsement to complete requirements prior to the superseded date.

ENDORSEMENT AREA	Effective Date (September 1)	Superseded Date (August 31)
Early Childhood Education		
Early Development and Learning pre-K-K	2009	2025
Early Childhood Education pre-K-3	2008	2025
Integrated Early Childhood Education Birth-K	2020	
Integrated Early Childhood Education pre-K-3	2020	
Elementary Education		
Elementary Education K-5	2015	
Elementary Education K-6	2007	2017
Elementary Education K-8	2001	2007
Middle Grades – Core Academic		
English/Language Arts 6-8	2015	
Mathematics 6-8	2015	
Science 6-8	2015	
Social Studies 6-8	2015	
Middle Grades Education 4-8	2008	2018
Middle and Secondary Grades – Core Academic		
English 6-12	2015	
English 7-12	2001	2017
Mathematics 6-12	2015	
Mathematics 7-12	2001	2017
Biology 6-12	2015	
Biology 7-12	2001	2017
Chemistry 6-12	2015	

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

EDUCATOR LICENSURE POLICY

5.502

ENDORSEMENT AREA	Effective Date (September 1)	Superseded Date (August 31)
Chemistry 7-12	2001	2017
Earth Science 6-12	2015	
Earth Science 7-12	2001	2017
Physics 6-12	2001	
Physics 7-12	2001	2017
Economics 6-12	2015	
Economics 7-12	2001	2017
History 6-12	2015	
History 7-12	2001	2017
Geography 6-12	2015	
Geography 7-12	2001	2017
Government 6-12	2015	
Government 7-12	2001	2017
Psychology 9-12	2001	
Sociology 9-12	2001	
Speech Communication 6-12	2015	
Speech Communication 7-12	1995	2017
Middle and Secondary Grades – World Languages		
American Sign Language pre-K-12, 6-12	2018 (February 1)	
Arabic pre-K-12, 6-12	2015	
Chinese pre-K-12, 6-12	2015	
Chinese pre-K-12, 7-12	2012	2017
French pre-K-12, 6-12	2015	
French pre-K-12, 7-12	2001	2017
German pre-K-12, 6-12	2015	
German pre-K-12, 7-12	2001	2017
Greek pre-K-12, 6-12	2015	
Japanese pre-K-12, 6-12	2015	
Latin pre-K-12, 6-12	2015	
Latin pre-K-12, 7-12	2001	2017
Russian pre-K-12, 6-12	2015	
Russian pre-K-12, 7-12	2001	2017
Spanish pre-K-12, 6-12	2015	
Spanish pre-K-12, 7-12	2001	2017
Other World Languages pre-K-12, 6-12	2015	
Other Foreign Languages pre-K-12, 7-12	2001	2017

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

EDUCATOR LICENSURE POLICY

5.502

ENDORSEMENT AREA	Effective Date (September 1)	Superseded Date (August 31)
Career and Technical Education		
Agricultural Education 6-12	2015	
AgriScience 6-12	2015	
Business Education 6-12	2015	
Business Technology 6-12	2015	
Business Technology 7-12	2004	2017
Computer Science K-12	2018	
Early Childhood Care and Services 6-12	2015	
Early Childhood Care and Services 9-12	2008	2017
Family and Consumer Sciences 6-12	2015	
Family and Consumer Sciences 5-12	2008	2017
Food Production & Management Services 6-12	2015	
Food Production & Management Services 9-12	2008	2017
Health Sciences Education 6-12	2015	
Health Sciences Education 9-12	2002	2017
Marketing Education 6-12	2015	
Marketing Education 7-12	2010	2017
Technology Engineering Education 6-12	2015	
Technology Engineering Education	2005	2017
Trade and Industrial Education 6-12	2015	
Trade and Industrial Education 9-12	2002	2017
Visual and Performing Arts		
Dance K-12	2009	
Instrumental/General Music K-12	2009	
Theatre K-12	1995	
Visual Arts K-12	2009	
Vocal/General Music K-12	2009	
Special Populations		
English as a Second Language pre-K-12	1999	
Gifted Education pre-K-12	2009	
Special Education Comprehensive Program K-12	2008	
Special Education Hearing pre-K-12	1995	
Special Education Interventionist K-8	2015	
Special Education Interventionist 6-12	2015	
Special Education Modified Program K-12	2006	2018
Special Education Preschool/Early Childhood pre-K-3	2008	2025

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION	
EDUCATOR LICENSURE POLICY	5.502

ENDORSEMENT AREA	Effective Date (September 1)	Superseded Date (August 31)
Special Education Vision pre-K-12	2009	
Speech/Language Therapy Associate* pre-K-12	2008	
Health and Physical Education		
Health and Wellness Education K-12	2009	
Physical Education K-12	2009	
Literacy Specialists		
Reading Specialist pre-K-12	2005	
Library Information Specialist pre-K-12	2000	
School Services Personnel		
School Counselor pre-K-12	1996	
School Social Worker pre-K-12	1996	
School Psychologist pre-K-12	2001	
School Audiologist pre-K-12	2006	
Educational Interpreter pre-K-12	2016	
Speech/Language Pathologist pre-K-12	2006	

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION	
EDUCATOR LICENSURE POLICY	5.502

**Appendix C:
Assessment Requirements for Initial Licensure**

Enrollment Status	Content Knowledge Verification	Testing Requirements and Timeline
Currently Enrolled (primarily job-embedded clinical pathway)	Major in Content Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 years to submit qualifying scores on required content assessments. Qualifying scores on required content assessments must be submitted prior to renewing or advancing the Practitioner License. • 3 years to submit qualifying scores on required pedagogical and literacy assessments. Qualifying scores on required pedagogical and literacy assessments must be submitted prior to renewing or advancing the Practitioner License.
Currently Enrolled (primarily job-embedded clinical pathway)	Qualifying Scores on Required Content Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 years to submit qualifying scores on required pedagogical and literacy assessments. Qualifying scores on required pedagogical and literacy assessments must be submitted prior to renewing or advancing the Practitioner License.
Completed Preparation	Major in Content Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 years to submit qualifying scores on required content assessments. Qualifying scores on required content assessments must be submitted prior to renewing or advancing the Practitioner License. • Upon application, submit qualifying scores on required pedagogical and literacy assessments.
Completed Preparation	Qualifying Scores on Required Content Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon application, submit qualifying scores on required pedagogical and literacy assessments.

Note:

For additional information regarding required content, pedagogical, and literacy assessments, refer to *Professional Assessments for Tennessee Educators Policy 5.105*.