

DATE:	December 3, 2020
SUBJECT:	Upcoming Deadline for Current Elementary and Middle School Teacher Certification Requirements
CATEGORY:	Teacher Certification
NEXT STEPS:	Share requirements and deadlines with affected elementary and middle school teachers working on an intern or probationary certificate

Teacher candidates seeking intern, probationary, or standard certification in any of the five certification fields listed below must successfully complete the new science of teaching reading exam for issuance of their teaching certificate beginning **January 1, 2021**:

- Early Childhood: Prekindergarten (Pre-K)-Grade 3
- Core Subjects: Early Childhood-Grade 6
- Core Subjects: Grades 4-8
- English Language Arts and Reading: Grades 4-8
- English Language Arts and Reading/Social Studies: Grades 4-8

Districts should identify any teachers teaching on a probationary certificate in one of the above certification fields and ensure they have met all current certification requirements and received a standard certificate prior to December 31, 2020. Additionally, districts should identify teachers with intern certificates in one of the affected fields that expire between November 2020 and February 2021. These teachers may work with their preparation program to see if they can receive their standard certification prior to the deadline. Any new teacher who does not meet all current certification requirements and does not receive their standard certification by December 31, 2020, will be required to take the science of teaching reading examination to receive their teaching certificate.

If a district has a vacancy for an elementary placement and is unable to find a certified teacher, additional information about certification assignment flexibility is available [here](#).

Background

House Bill 3, 86th Legislature, 2019, requires new teachers seeking a certificate to teach Pre-K to grade 6 to demonstrate proficiency in the science of teaching reading on a new, standalone certification examination, starting January 1, 2021. (Texas Education Code, Sec 21.048 (a-2)). Since the bill's passage in 2019, Texas Education Agency (TEA) staff have been communicating this new requirement to educator preparation programs, teacher candidates, and districts.

Although the science of teaching reading examination and the Reading Academies are both included in HB 3, they are different requirements. The science of teaching reading examination is a requirement for the issuance of a teaching certification. Completion of the Reading Academies is a requirement for all in-service teachers and administrators who teach students in grades Kindergarten to 3rd. Teachers who take and pass the science of teaching reading exam will still be required to participate in the Reading Academies once hired by a Texas school.

Teachers with standard certification in one of the impacted certificate fields do not need to take

the science of teaching reading examination for renewal of their standard certificate. Teachers seeking to add one of the impacted certificate fields through certification by examination will need to take the science of teaching reading examination, along with the appropriate content pedagogy exam, to add the certification field to their standard certificate.

Next Steps for Teachers Seeking Standard Certification Prior to December 31, 2020

Teachers on a one-year probationary certificate will need to take the following steps, in collaboration with the educator preparation program they completed, to ensure that their standard certificate is issued before the December 31, 2020, deadline:

- Pass all required certification exams: content pedagogy and Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) TExES exams;
- Apply for standard certification;
- Complete fingerprinting requirements;
- Pay all certification fees; and
- Obtain a recommendation from their EPP for a standard certification in ECOS.

Teachers with an intern certificate that is expiring between November 2020 and February 2021 will need to reach out to their educator preparation program to determine if they are eligible to receive a standard certificate prior to the December 31 deadline. They would also need to complete these steps.

Elementary and Middle School Teachers Seeking Certification in an Impacted Certification Field beginning January 1, 2021

Teacher candidates seeking intern, probationary, or standard certification in one of the five affected certification fields will be required to successfully complete the science of teaching reading exam for issuance of their teaching certificate beginning January 1, 2021. If a district has a vacancy for an elementary or middle school placement and is seeking a teacher on an intern certificate in an impacted certification field to fill the role, the district must complete the hiring process, and the individual must obtain their intern certificate prior to December 31, 2020, if they wish to avoid the science of teaching reading exam requirement. As results from the initial administration of the exam will not be available until early February, teachers pursuing intern certificates and not certified prior to December 31, 2020, will not be available to be hired and fill these roles in January 2021.

For Further Information

Please visit tea.texas.gov/str for additional information about the science of teaching reading exam timelines, requirements, and content. Teachers in the affected certification fields who are serving on a probationary certificate should contact their educator preparation programs for additional information.