

TITLE 210. STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHAPTER 20. STAFF
SUBCHAPTER 9. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS: TEACHER EDUCATION
AND CERTIFICATION
PART 9. TEACHER CERTIFICATION

210:20-9-91. Application for new certificates

The application processes for individuals seeking new certificates are described separately for individuals completing requirements at an in-state college or an out-of-state college.

(1) **Graduates of Oklahoma colleges and universities.** The application process for graduates of Oklahoma colleges and universities is as follows:

(A) The completed application may be submitted to the director of teacher education at the recommending college or sent directly to the State Department of Education along with an official up-to-date transcript(s) and the appropriate processing fee. See 210:20-9-9 (d)

(B) The signature of the director of teacher education verifies that the applicant has met the requirements of the institution's approved teacher education program for the license/certificate sought and that the applicant possesses the character and general fitness to be a teacher. Application approval by the State Department of Education verifies that the applicant has met an approved program.

(i) Vocational certificate applicants: The director of teacher education at the recommending institution or the applicant will forward the application to the appropriate state supervisor at the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education. After approving the application the state supervisor will send it, along with supporting documents, to the State Department of Education.

(ii) Nonvocational certificate applicants: The director of teacher education at the recommending institution shall forward the approved application, along with supporting documents, to the State Department of Education.

(2) **Graduates of out-of-state colleges and universities.** The application process for graduates of out-of-state colleges and universities is as follows:

(A) The applicant will submit the following items to the State Department of Education as part of the application process:

(i) the completed application form

(ii) official up-to-date transcripts of all college course work

(iii) documentation the applicant has completed an accredited teacher preparation program

(iv) the appropriate processing fee for each class of certificate sought. See 210:20-9-9

(d)

(B) For vocational certificate applications, the applicant will submit all items in (2) (A) of this section directly to the State Department of Education.

(3) **Applicants who are certified out-of-state.** The State Board of Education shall issue a teaching certificate to an applicant who submits a valid out-of-state teaching certificate issued by a state or territory of the United States, a completed application for certification, and the applicable certification fee, and has on file with the State Department of Education a current Oklahoma criminal history record check from the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation and a national criminal history record check as defined in 74 O.S. § 150.9. The applicant shall be responsible for the costs of the criminal history record checks. The Oklahoma certificate shall be

valid only for the subject areas and grade levels most closely aligned to those recognized on the applicant's out-of-state certificate. An applicant who holds valid teaching certificates issued by more than one state is eligible for Oklahoma certification in the subject area(s) most closely aligned to any subject area(s) listed on any of the valid out-of-state certificates submitted to the State Department of Education. An applicant who is issued an Oklahoma teaching certificate under this subsection may be eligible for up to five (5) years of credit for documented and verified out- of-state teaching experience.

(4) **Applicants who are certified out-of-country.** The temporary certification of visiting teachers from outside the United States, who serve in teaching positions in Oklahoma schools as guest or exchange teachers under the provisions of 22 C.F.R. § 62.24, is governed not by this section but by OAC 210:20-9-98. The following provisions apply to applicants for Oklahoma teacher certification who hold a teacher certification issued in a country other than the United States:

(A) **Completed application and documentation.** To be eligible for consideration for an Oklahoma teaching certificate based on teaching credentials issued in a country outside the United States, an applicant must submit a completed application for certification, the applicable certification fee, and verifiable documentation of each of the requirements of this section to the State Department of Education. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain translation and any necessary analysis of documentation in a language other than English.

The applicant shall be responsible for the costs of any necessary translation and/or analysis.

(B) **Verification of lawful presence in the United States.** In accordance with 8 U.S.C. § 1621 and 56 O.S. § 71, an applicant for certification based on an out-of-country teacher certification must provide proof of lawful presence in the United States. Under federal and state law an applicant for a state benefit such as professional licensure is not required to be a U.S. citizen, but if the applicant is not a U.S. citizen they must document that they are a qualified alien under the federal Immigration and Nationality Act who is lawfully present in the U.S. Because lawful presence is distinct from work authorization under federal immigration and labor laws, an applicant who meets all criteria for teacher certification under this subsection may be eligible for certification prior to receiving authorization to work in the United States. The State Board of Education and the State Department of Education have no authority regarding an individual's eligibility for employment under federal law, and make no representation regarding the employment authorization status of an individual who is issued an Oklahoma teaching certificate under this subsection. A school district is responsible for verifying the work authorization status of every individual employed by the district.

(C) **Baccalaureate degree or equivalent.** To be eligible for consideration for an Oklahoma teaching certificate, an applicant must submit documentation verifying that the individual has received a baccalaureate college degree (4-year undergraduate degree), or the equivalent of a baccalaureate degree in the higher education system of the country where the degree was conferred. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain any necessary translation and analysis of their foreign education credentials from a reputable educational credential evaluation service approved by the State Department of Education, including but not limited to services approved by the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES). The applicant shall be responsible for the costs of any necessary translation and/or analysis.

(D) **Out-of-country teaching certification and statement of good standing.**

(i) An applicant for Oklahoma certification under this subsection must submit a copy of their valid current teacher certification issued outside the United States. An applicant who holds teaching credentials issued in more than one country may submit each valid current teaching certification, but is only required to submit the most recently issued out-of-country certification. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain any necessary translation and analysis of the certification(s) from a reputable educational credential evaluation service. The applicant shall be responsible for the costs of any necessary translation and/or analysis.

(ii) An Oklahoma teaching certificate issued under this subsection shall be valid only for the subject areas and grade levels most closely aligned to those recognized on the applicant's out-of-country teaching certificate. For an applicant who holds teaching certifications issued by more than one licensing jurisdiction, the Oklahoma teaching certificate may include the grade level(s) or subject area(s) most closely aligned to the grade level(s) or subject area(s) recognized on any of the applicant's currently valid certifications. If the applicant's out-of-country teaching certification does not specify subject areas, the applicant may provide verification of teaching experience in one or more subjects that correspond to Oklahoma certification areas, plus documentation of a passing score on the Oklahoma Subject Area Test (OSAT) in the subject area(s).

(iii) The applicant must also submit written verification, on the letterhead of the licensing authority that issued their out-of-country teaching certification, or the school system where they were most recently employed, indicating their good standing as a member of the teaching profession whose teaching certification has not been revoked or suspended. If the applicable entity does not use an official letterhead, an alternative verification method such as notarization or apostille may be acceptable subject to the approval of the State Department of Education Office of Certification. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain any necessary translation and analysis of the statement of good standing from a reputable educational credential evaluation service, or a reputable translation service, subject to the approval of the Office of Certification. The applicant shall be responsible for the costs of any necessary translation and/or analysis.

(E) **Verification of teaching experience.** An applicant must submit documentation confirming that they were employed as a teacher for at least two (2) of the five (5) years preceding the application for Oklahoma certification. Teaching experience may be confirmed with a properly completed and verified "Proof of Teaching Experience" form upon approval of the State Department of Education Office of School Personnel Records. An applicant who is issued an Oklahoma teaching certificate under this subsection may be eligible for up to five (5) years of credit for documented and verified out-of-country teaching experience.

(F) **Recommendation by school administrator or education official.** An applicant must submit a letter of recommendation from a national, regional, or local education official or school administrator who has worked with or evaluated the applicant in a professional capacity. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain any necessary translation of the letter of recommendation from a reputable educational credential evaluation service, or a reputable translation service, subject to the approval of the Office of Certification. The applicant shall be responsible for the costs of any necessary translation and/or analysis.

(G) **Criminal history record check and statement of eligibility for certification.** An applicant shall have on file with the State Department of Education a current Oklahoma criminal history record check from the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation and a

national criminal history record check as defined in 74 O.S. § 150.9. In addition to the criminal history record checks required by state law, an applicant for Oklahoma certification under this subsection must affirm that they have not been convicted in any jurisdiction, and have not received a suspended or deferred sentence in any jurisdiction, for a crime or attempted crime which would make an individual ineligible for teacher certification under 70 O.S. § 3-104(6)(a) if committed or attempted in Oklahoma.

(H) **English proficiency.** So that they may adequately instruct and communicate with students, an applicant for Oklahoma certification based on a teacher certification issued in another country must be proficient in spoken and written English. By submitting an application for certification under this subsection, an applicant affirms that their command of spoken and written English is equivalent, at a minimum, to competence under the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) oral and written English proficiency assessments, or a similar reputable English language competence examination, subject to the approval of the Office of Certification.

(5) Technology center teaching certificate applicants. Pursuant to 70 O.S. § 6-189, the State Board of Education may issue a technology center teaching certificate to an individual who meets the requirements established by the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education (ODCTE) at Oklahoma Administrative Code 780:20-3-4(a)(2), including a current criminal history record check, and is recommended by ODCTE for technology center teaching certification. The technology center teaching certificate shall be valid only for the subject area(s) aligned to the applicant's degree, credential, and/or work experience, and credit earned by students shall be awarded in accordance with 70 O.S. § 11-103.6.