

Frequently Asked Questions Concerning the Probationary Principal and Superintendent Certificates

1. What is the Probationary Certificate and when should it be used?

Answer: The Probationary Certificate is a type of credential, valid for one calendar year, issued to an individual who is enrolled in an educator preparation program, employed as an assistant principal, principal, or superintendent, and is serving in a supervised internship to satisfy the field experience requirements of the certificate. The holder of a Probationary Certificate must be employed by an accredited Texas public or private school in a position appropriate for the certificate sought.

2. What was the purpose of the temporary five-year administrator certificates?

Answer: The Temporary Assistant Principal, Principal, and Superintendent certificates were available to persons who were enrolled in Texas college programs for administration and met minimum requirements to serve in these positions. The certificates were issued for five calendar years to allow the individual time to complete all certification requirements. Employment was not required to obtain the temporary five-year certificates; however, the candidate must have been recommended by an approved university program.

3. Why are the temporary five-year administrator certificates being eliminated?

Answer: The rules for the temporary five-year administrator certificates have been in place since 1972, and were based on standards that no longer exist. Requirements for the temporary five-year certificates were not aligned with the current Principal and Superintendent standards, and do not require supervision or mentoring of the beginning administrator.

4. When will the temporary administrator certificates be eliminated?

Answer: Persons seeking a Temporary Assistant Principal, Temporary Principal, or Temporary Superintendent must meet all requirements by May 31, 2005, and must apply and be recommended online by an approved Texas university program no later than July 30, 2005.

Effective June 1, 2005, persons seeking a temporary credential for administration must qualify and be recommended for a Probationary Certificate.

5. If an individual holds a valid five-year temporary certificate for assistant principal, principal, or superintendent, can they continue to be employed as an administrator in a Texas school?

Answer: Yes. A five-year temporary certificate issued with an effective date prior to June 1, 2005 will be valid until the expiration date stated on the certificate.

6. When **must** an individual hold a Probationary Principal or Superintendent Certificate?

Answer: Effective June 1, 2005, if an individual is employed in a Texas public school as an assistant principal, principal, or superintendent, and is not yet eligible for a Standard Certificate, he or she must hold a Probationary Certificate.

7. Can the Probationary Certificate be issued for more than one year?

Answer: Yes: The Probationary Certificate is initially issued for one calendar year, but can be reissued for two additional calendar years, provided the individual is enrolled in a program and is employed in an appropriate administrator position. Mentoring and supervision are required throughout the validity period of the Probationary Certificates.

8. How do I qualify for the Probationary Principal Certificate? Are there specific degree or semester hour requirements?

Answer: To be eligible for the Probationary Principal Certificate, a person must hold, at minimum, a bachelor's degree, meet admission requirements of the program, and qualify for an internship as defined by the educator preparation program. SBEC does not stipulate semester hours requirements for the Probationary Certificate. It is the responsibility of the educator preparation program to establish academic requirements for the Probationary Certificate.

9. How do I qualify for the Probationary Superintendent Certificate? Are there specific degree or semester hour requirements?

Answer: To be eligible for the Probationary Superintendent Certificate, a person must hold a Standard Principal Certificate, or its equivalent, in Texas or in another state or country provided the individual performed satisfactorily on a principal certificate examination similar to and at least as rigorous as that required in Texas. Since the standard principal certificate requires a master's degree, the Probationary Superintendent Certificate will also require a master's degree.

10. Will there be a Probationary Certificate for Assistant Principal?

Answer: No. There is no longer a class of certificate for Assistant Principal.

11. Can the holder of the Probationary Principal Certificate be assigned as a principal or assistant principal?

Answer: Yes. The holder of the Probationary Principal Certificate may be assigned in either role.

12. If employment as an administrator is required for issuance of a Probationary Certificate, how can a candidate be hired if the district is requiring that the certificate be issued?

Answer: The Probationary Certificate cannot be issued unless employment has been secured. Educator preparation programs and employing districts must work closely together to communicate the candidate's eligibility for certification and employment. A letter or statement of eligibility for a probationary certificate written by the educator preparation program could be used to assure the employing school district that the candidate is eligible for and will be recommended for a probationary certificate upon employment in an appropriate position.

13. What is required for a Standard Principal Certificate?

Answer: To be eligible for a Standard Principal Certificate, an individual must a) successfully complete the required examination, b) hold a master's degree, c) have two years of creditable classroom teaching experience, and d) successfully complete an approved principal preparation program.

14. What is required for a Standard Superintendent Certificate:

Answer: To be eligible for a Standard Superintendent Certificate, an individual must a) satisfactorily complete the required examination, b) successfully complete an SBEC-approved superintendent preparation program, c) hold a master's degree from an accredited institution of higher education.

15. How do I apply for a certificate?

Answer: Educators must apply through the SBEC website at www.sbec.state.tx.us, creating an online account, and requesting the certificate through the "Applications" menu. The educator preparation program will recommend the candidate online for the appropriate certificate. The educator must pay the required fee for the recommended certificate.

16. For questions not addressed above, please contact an educator preparation program or SBEC at 1-888-863-5880.