

Florida Temporary Educator’s Certificates

Report on Preparation Pathways to the Professional Certificate

January 2017

Temporary Educator Certificates

Florida’s highest level educator certificate is a Professional Certificate. Applicants who do not complete all requirements for the Professional Certificate may first be issued a Temporary Certificate, which is valid for three (3) school years. Applicants may qualify for a Temporary Certificate covering one or more subject areas or endorsements for which they:

1. earn a bachelor’s or higher degree from an accredited or approved institution,
2. satisfy subject specialization requirements with a minimum 2.5 grade point average,
3. acquire full-time employment, and
4. clear the fingerprint-based background screening process.

Unlike a Professional Certificate, the Temporary Certificate may not be renewed for a subsequent period.

Preparation Pathways from a Temporary Certificate to a Professional Certificate

On average, about 4 of every 10 Florida educators qualify for issuance of an initial Temporary Certificate as their first Florida Educator’s Certificate. Though it is not renewable, the three-year validity of a Temporary Certificate provides instructional personnel employed in the school system the opportunity to satisfy the requirements to be issued a Professional Certificate. These educators work while satisfying mastery requirements in general knowledge, subject area knowledge and education competence based on one of several varied preparation pathways authorized by Florida law. Data for all Temporary Certificates from the four school years (2008-09 through 2011-12) were collected and analyzed to distinguish between educator groups who followed each of the different pathways from a Temporary Certificate to a Professional Certificate (Exhibit 1). For years 2008-09 to 2011-12, an average of over 5,000 educators qualified for a Temporary as their first certificate in Florida, as compared to the nearly 9,000 educators annually, on average, who first qualified for a Professional Certificate.

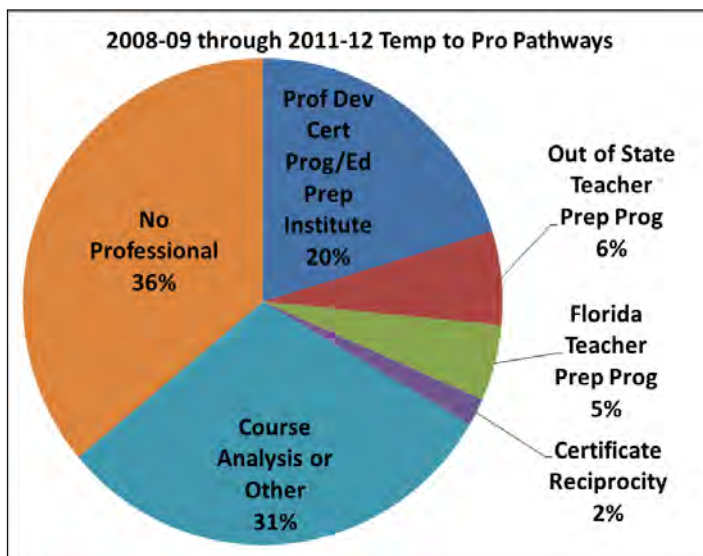


Exhibit 1: Educator Groups Who Followed Different Pathways from a Temporary to a Professional Certificate

	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12
Prof Dev Cert Prog/Ed Prep Institute	1,157	900	1,183	862
Out of State Teacher Prep Prog	299	268	380	314
Florida Teacher Prep Prog	243	223	278	275
Certificate Reciprocity	95	64	116	94
Course Analysis or Other	1,777	1,282	1,770	1,337
No Professional	1,881	1,510	2,163	1,727
Total	5,452	4,247	5,890	4,609

Of the various approved pathways, the data show that 64% of educators successfully move from an initial Temporary Certificate to Florida's standard, renewable Professional Certificate.

Based on this data, approved Florida pathways prepare the majority of temporarily-certified educators for their professional qualifications.

- Just over one-quarter satisfied requirements for a Professional Certificate based on completion of a Professional Development Certification Program administered by a Florida school district (10%), an Educator Preparation Institute (10%), or an Initial Teacher Preparation program through a Florida postsecondary college or university (5%).
- Nearly 31% satisfied requirements for a Professional Certificate by completing college coursework to demonstrate professional preparation competencies.

Contrary to the data increases reported previously regarding direct pathways to a Professional Certificate, Florida imports only a small percentage of educators who first receive a Temporary Certificate before moving on to a Professional Certificate. Primarily these educators completed an Initial Teacher Preparation program through a postsecondary institution outside Florida (6%) with limited others (2%) presenting a valid, standard certificate issued by another U.S. state or national credentialing organization (i.e. Certificate Reciprocity).

No Professional Certificates for Some Educators

The data for this four-year period reveal that almost 7,300 of over 20,000 educators (36%) who received an initial Temporary Certificate failed to qualify for a subsequent Professional Certificate. To be clear, the approximately 7,300 educators who received a Temporary Certificate but not a Professional Certificate started teaching in a Florida public school. During the three-year term of the Temporary Certificate, these educators did not satisfy the necessary requirements to remain certified to teach in a Florida public school immediately beyond the term of their initial Temporary Certificate.

Earning passing scores on Florida Teacher Certification Examinations (FTCE) is required to transition from a Temporary Certificate to a Professional Certificate. The department analysis of assessment records found that no examinee records existed for a notable percentage (15.6%) of educators who did not transition to a Professional Certificate. Since the General Knowledge Test must be completed within the first full year of teaching under a Temporary Certificate, not taking the exam may be an indication of no intent to remain teaching beyond the first year.

A subsequent department analysis found that 1,303 (18%) of the educators who were initially ineligible to remain teaching were teaching in 2015-16. Several scenarios may occur. Educators whose Temporary Certificates expired must observe a gap year before another Temporary Certificate can be issued per Florida laws and rules. During this break in continuity, educators may serve as substitute teachers or other temporary personnel in school districts while completing remaining requirements. Educators who hold a second Temporary Certificate may also account for a portion of the educators in the cohort who have yet to earn their Professional Certificate. Furthermore, an educator can continue working on satisfying mastery requirements for a Florida Professional Certificate after the three-year Temporary Certificate's validity period, and if successful, apply and meet eligibility requirements for a Professional Certificate during the gap year.

Florida Temporary Certificate Trends

Florida data indicate a majority of individuals who earned a Temporary Certificate completed requirements for a Professional Certificate within the three-year validity period. Although a significant number of teachers did not complete requirements during that period, data show that a substantial number were successful in meeting eligibility requirements for a Professional Certificate beyond the initial validity period. Further study is needed to address the causes for individuals not completing requirements and to determine if additional support is needed.

Did You Know?

- 9,575 educators were issued Temporary Certificates in 2015-16.
- 68% of educators who began teaching in 2010-11 remained in teaching positions in Florida five years later.
- 6,453 educators completed a state-approved teacher preparation program in 2014-15.