FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DPS: 2014-12
Date: March 7, 2014

Pam Stewart
Commissioner of Education

Technical Assistance Paper
Renewal Credit in Teaching Students with Disabilities

Summary: This technical assistance paper is intended to assist Florida educators with implementation for one of the amendments passed by the 2013 Florida Legislature in Senate Bill 1108, related to exceptional student education (ESE). This legislation made changes to the process for renewal of professional certificates (section 1012.585, Florida Statutes (F.S.)).

On August 28, 2013, the department issued DPS Memo 2013-105, *2013 Legislation – Senate Bill 1108*, to summarize key provisions of this legislation and provide general questions and answers addressing implementation issues.

Section 1012.585, F.S., was amended to include:

Beginning July 1, 2014, an applicant for renewal of a professional certificate must earn at least one college credit or equivalent inservice points in teaching students with disabilities;

An applicant must earn a minimum of six semester hours of ce a a6 ¦- âü

implementation of this section.

Subsequent to legislative enactment, the department initiated the formal rule development process to adopt necessary changes to rules impacted within Chapter 6A-4, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), for administration and implementation of the changes by Educator Certification.

Chapter 6A-4.0051, F.A.C. revisions were adopted by the State Board of Education at its meeting on January 21, 2014. These rule revisions became effective on February 25, 2014.

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Status: New Technical Assistance Paper
Revises and replaces existing Technical Assistance:

Issued by the
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TAP:

TAP: Renewal Credit in Teaching Students with Disabilities (DPS 2014-12)

courses or activities aligned to the Council for Exceptional Children Professional Standards may also be acceptable if the content focuses on the instruction of SWD.

17. Will courses appropriate to satisfy specialization requirements for an ESE subject coverage be acceptable?

Yes, when earned within appropriate timeframes for certificate renewal and if the content focuses on the instruction of SWD. However, courses or inservice activities in gifted education are not acceptable.

18. Will credit earned to add an ESE endorsement to the professional certificate be acceptable?

See response to question 17.

19. Will courses or inservice activities in gifted education be acceptable?

No. Courses or inservice activities in an ESE area not classified as a disability, such as gifted education, are not acceptable.

20. May I use credit from an ESE course I took as part of my degree to satisfy the SWD credit requirement?

No. College courses taken to satisfy requirements for the initial Florida professional certificate may not be used for renewal of the certificate. Renewal requirements must be completed during the last validity period of the certificate and prior to its expiration.

21. Will a college course or equivalent inservice earned from training prior to July 1, 2014, be acceptable?

Yes, when earned within appropriate timeframes for certificate renewal and if the content focuses on the instruction of students with disabilities.

<u>SWD Credit Equivalencies and Offerings:</u>

22. Will a passing score on an exceptional student education subject area test satisfy the SWD credit requirement?

A passing score on a Florida exceptional student education subject area exam (i.e., Exceptional Student Education K-12, Hearing Impaired Ke4t(e4tw 020.004 Tw 0.3320.01.92.30 Tw 1.92 0 Td2 0 Td2 00(-4(

SWD credit, when the Florida professional certificate includes a subject coverage in instructing students with disabilities. An NBPTS certificate without an Exceptional Needs Specialist area does not satisfy the new renewal requirement for SWD credit.

24. Will there be a single course that everyone must take to satisfy the SWD credit requirement?

No. See responses to questions that follow.

25. Will an online course be developed to meet the SWD credit requirement?

A 20-hour, non-facilitated online PDA module is under development. The Bureau of Exceptional Student Education and Student Services anticipates state-wide availability of this online course offering sometime in summer 2014. Once available, this module may be adopted by school districts or other entities to award inservice points through an approved Florida MIP.

26. Will additional courses or professional learning activities be developed to satisfy this SWD credit requirement?

There are many opportunities funded by the department that are currently available to assist educators in meeting the SWD credit requirement for certificate renewal. Some of these courses appear in the Professional Development Portal for Educators of Students with Disabilities which can be accessed at http://pdportal.florida-ese.org/. Some courses available through the portal have already been identified in district Master Inservice Plans under ESE component numbers.

For example, Associate Centers of the FDLRS have made sure, whenever possible, that

30. What will be acceptable to document SWD credit earned to satisfy this requirement?

For Florida public and charter school employees who submit application for renewal to the district, the district must retain appropriate documentation of each educator's inservice record clearly indicating the dates earned and points awarded for inservice completed through its approved Master Inservice Plan, including the acceptable SWD credits earned to satisfy this requirement.

For individuals who submit application for renewal to the Bureau of Educator Certification (BEC), the educator is required to submit official documentation to satisfy requirements, including the SWD credit requirement. Acceptable documentation shall be one or both of the following:

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34. When is an educator eligible to apply for renewal of the professional certificate?

Educators may submit applications for renewal during the last year of the validity period of the Florida professional certificate. An application for renewal is valid for one year from the date received, but requirements must be completed during the validity period and before expiration of the certificate. Florida school employees should contact their employers regarding local policies and procedures for submission of the application for renewal.

35. When must credit be completed to satisfy requirements for renewal or reinstatement of the professional certificate?

Renewal requirements must be completed during the last validity period of the Florida professional certificate and prior to its expiration. An educator may, however, use excess or "banked" inservice training points earned in teaching students with limited English proficiency or teaching reading during subsequent validity periods.

Credit for reinstatement of an expired Florida professional certificate must be completed within the five-year period immediately prior to issuance of the reinstated certificate. If not earned within this five-year timeframe, excess or "banked" inservice points are not appropriate to satisfy the credit required for reinstatement.

36. What amount of total credit is required to renew the professional certificate?

Educators with a Florida professional certificate are required to earn a minimum of six (6) semester hours of college credit or an equivalent 120 inservice points for renewal or reinstatement.

37. What grade must be earned for a college course to be acceptable?

A grade of at least "C" must be earned in each college course used for renewal or reinstatement. A grade of "pass" or "satisfactory" is an acceptable grade.

38. What institutions are appropriate to earn acceptable credit?

College level credits used for certificate renewal or reinstatement must be completed at an accredited or approved institution. College level credits awarded by the American Council on Education are also acceptable.

39. How do I document college course or inservice credit earned?

Only official transcripts may be used to document college course credit for renewal or reinstatement. Grade reports, internet printouts or photocopies of transcripts are not acceptable.

A Verification of Inservice Points form (CT116 or CT116-E) completed by a school board or other entity with an approved Master Inservice Plan may be used to document Florida inservice credit for renewal or reinstatement. The form must clearly indicate the specific dates earned and number of points awarded for inservice completed.

Note: It is the responsibility of each applicant to obtain current information regarding renewal requirements from the employing Florida school district, nonpublic school or the Bureau of Educator Certification.