

Current Illinois Administrative Code Offers Flexibility in Teacher Assignments



ISBE has partnered with stakeholders over the past five years to streamline the requirements for qualified teachers to earn short-term approvals and endorsements in high-demand areas. The short-term emergency approval allows individuals who have met some, but not all, of the requirements for the LBSI endorsement to begin teaching special education. Availability of the short-term emergency approval in special education has been extended twice since 2015 to allow districts to employ individuals when a fully-licensed teacher could not be found. Additionally, short-term approvals that were discontinued in 2013 reinstituted in 2015 per district feedback that emergency credentials were needed in all content areas to staff unfilled classrooms. The short-term approval is available in all areas and grade spans except driver's education and special education.

In addition to short-term approvals, districts also may utilize current requirements in Illinois School Code and Administrative Code to fill hard-to-staff classrooms. This document provides a summary of existing provisions that provide districts with flexibility in staffing classrooms.

Please note: If deemed previously qualified prior to April 21, 2021, the previous qualification is valid for the life of the Professional Educator License (PEL). Any educator seeking to be deemed previous qualified April 21, 2021, or after will need to meet the current previous qualification requirements.

Substitute Teacher (105 ILCS 5/21B-20[3])

One of the following is required:

1. Hold a [substitute teaching license](#).
2. Hold any other state-issued educator license, plus hold a bachelor's degree or higher degree.
3. Hold a [short-term substitute teaching license](#). (Valid for teaching five consecutive days only.)
4. Any individual who holds a valid career and technical educator, or provisional career and technical educator endorsement on an Educator License with Stipulations, but does not have a bachelor's degree may substitute teach in any Career and Technical Education classroom.

There is no limit on the number of days that a substitute teacher may teach in a single school district, provided that no individual holding a substitute teaching license teaches for more than 90 school days for any licensed teacher under contract in the same school year.*

Individuals who hold any of the other educator licenses listed above may substitute teach for up to 120 school days for any one licensed teacher under contract in the same school year.*

*Provision not applicable to Chicago Public Schools.

Self-Contained General Education in Birth-Grade 2 – (23 IAC 235.20)

To be assigned to teach [early childhood education \(self-contained general education\)](#), an individual must hold a PEL and meet one of the following qualifications:

1. Hold a PEL endorsed for [early childhood education \(self-contained general education\)](#) valid for the grades to be taught.
2. Hold a [short-term approval](#) valid for early childhood education (self-contained general education).
3. Hold a PEL endorsed for [early childhood special education \(self-contained general education\)](#) valid for the grades to be taught.

Note that grade ranges for early childhood education and elementary education overlap. An educator's license must be valid for the grade range to be served in self-contained general education.

Exceptions exist for assignments of reading teachers, reading specialists, library information specialists, and teachers in English as a second language (ESL), bilingual education, and special education. See requirements for these roles in each position's unique section within this document.

Self-Contained General Education in Grades K-9 or 1-6 – (23 IAC 1.710)

To be assigned to teach [elementary education \(self-contained general education\)](#), an individual must hold a Professional Educator License and meet one of the following qualifications:

1. Hold an [elementary education \(self-contained general education\)](#) endorsement for Grades K-9 or 1-6. The educator is qualified to teach within the grade range of the endorsement.
2. Hold a short-term approval valid for [elementary education \(self-contained general education\)](#).
3. Meet the predecessor requirements at a time when they were applicable.
 - a. If licensed prior to July 1, 2004, each educator must hold a valid certificate for the grade level assigned and have 16 semester hours of coursework in the required instructional areas. Note that grade ranges for early childhood education and elementary education overlap. An educator's license must be valid for the grade range to be served in self-contained general education.

Departmentalized Subjects for Grades K-5 – (IAC 1.710)

To be assigned to teach a specific departmentalized subject in any of the Grades K-5, an educator must hold a Professional Educator License endorsed in teaching for the grades to be served, plus have completed one course in the departmentalized subject to be taught.

Exceptions exist for assignments of reading teachers, reading specialists, library information specialists, and teachers in ESL, bilingual education, and special education. See requirements for these roles in each position's unique section within this document.

Departmentalized Subjects in Grades 6-8 – (23 IAC 1.720)

To be assigned to teach [departmentalized subjects in the middle grades](#), an individual must hold a Professional Educator License and meet one of the following qualifications:

1. For major teaching assignments (subjects taught for more time than any other subject), hold a junior high endorsement for the subject being taught and have completed five semester hours of coursework for any subject that is a minor teaching assignment.
2. Hold a middle school or middle grades endorsement for any major teaching subject (subject taught for the majority of the day) and have completed five semester hours of coursework for any minor teaching assignment (subject[s] that are not the major teaching assignment).

3. Hold a short-term approval valid for the grades and the subject to be taught.
4. Meet the predecessor requirements at a time when they were applicable, as confirmed by the employing district's verification of the individual's qualifications.

Exceptions exist for teaching assignments of reading teachers, reading specialists, library information specialists, and teachers in ESL, bilingual education, and special education. See requirements for these roles in each position's unique section within this document.

Departmentalized Subjects in Grades 9-12 – (23 IAC 1.737)

To be assigned to teach a [specific subject in any of Grades 9-12](#), an individual must hold a Professional Educator License and meet one of the following qualifications:

1. Hold an endorsement valid for the grades and subject to be taught.
2. [Meet the predecessor requirements at a time when they were applicable, as confirmed by the employing district's verification of the individual's qualifications.](#)
3. Hold a [short-term approval valid](#) for the grades and subject to be taught.

Exceptions exist for assignments of reading teachers, reading specialists, library information specialists, and teachers in ESL, bilingual education, and special education. See requirements for these roles in each position's unique section within this document.

Bilingual Education – (23 IAC 1.780[a])

To serve as a bilingual education teacher, an individual must meet one of the following requirements:

1. Hold a Professional Educator License, plus [a bilingual endorsement](#), plus qualify to teach the subject and grade range to be taught. See specific subject in this document.
2. Hold an [Educator License with Stipulations endorsed for Transitional Bilingual Educator \(TBE\)](#) with a bilingual endorsement specific to the language of instruction.
3. Hold an Educator License with Stipulations endorsed for [Visiting International Educator](#) and the grade levels of the students served.

English as a Second Language – (23 IAC 1.780[b])

One of the following is required.

To teach in any of the grades 7-12:

1. Hold a PEL with an [English as a Second Language \(ESL\) or English as a Second Language \(ENL\) endorsement](#) for the grades to be taught.
2. Hold an [Educator License with Stipulations endorsed for Visiting International Educator](#) and the grade levels of the students to be served.

To teach in any of the Grades PK-6:

1. Meet either of the two requirements above, or
2. Hold a PEL endorsed for bilingual education, or
3. Hold a PEL endorsed for [ENL with a language designation](#) (e.g., ENL-Spanish.)

Library Information Specialist – (23 IAC 1.755)

To provide library and audio-visual services to students as a library information specialist, an individual must hold a Professional Educator License valid for the grade levels of students to be served and meet one of the below requirements:

1. Hold an endorsement for [library information specialist](#), media, or library science.
2. If licensed prior to July 1, 2004, have completed 16 semester hours of coursework in the content area.
3. Hold a [short-term approval](#) for library information specialist.

Reading Teacher and Reading Specialist – (23 IAC 1.745)

A reading teacher endorsement is only valid for teaching reading to students; a reading specialist endorsement is valid for teaching reading to students and providing technical assistance or professional development to other teachers.

To teach reading to students, an individual must hold a Professional Educator License valid for the grade levels of students to be served and meet one of the below requirements:

1. Hold an endorsement for [reading teacher or reading specialist](#), as appropriate for the assignment.
2. Meet the predecessor requirements at a time when they were applicable, as confirmed by the employing district's verification of the individual's qualifications.
 - a. If licensed prior to July 1, 2004, have completed 16 semester hours of coursework in the content area.
3. Hold a short-term approval for reading teacher or reading specialist.

Special Education for Grade Kindergarten through Age 21 – (IAC 226.800[b])

To serve as a special education teacher, an individual must meet one of the following requirements:

1. Hold a PEL endorsed for [LBSI, DHH, BVI, or SLP](#).
2. Hold a [short-term emergency approval for special education \(STE approval\)](#).
3. To teach cross-categorical special education in Pre-K, see the section below.

Cross-Categorical Special Education for Students Up Through Age 5 – (226.800[b]; 226.720) (where "age 5" is stipulated for early childhood special education)

One of the following is required:

1. Hold a PEL endorsed for [early childhood special education](#).
2. Hold a PEL endorsed in a [special education area or self-contained early childhood education](#), plus [the early childhood special education approval \(226.850\)](#).

Grades 9-12 Career and Technical Education – Skill Level Instruction – (IAC 1.737[c]); 23 IAC 1.Appendix A)

One of the following is required:

1. Hold a PEL endorsed for Grades 9-12 with the appropriate [Career and Technical Education endorsement](#). (The educator must complete 2,000 hours of work experience – (outside of his/her current teaching position) – within four years of assignment. The employing school district must maintain these records.)
2. Hold an Educator License with Stipulations endorsed for CTE that is valid for [teaching grades 7-12– \(ELS-CTE\)](#) –25.70
3. Hold an Educator License with Stipulations endorsed for provisional CTE that is valid for [teaching Grades 11-12– \(ELS-CTEP\)](#) –25.72.
4. Hold an Educator License with Stipulations endorsed for part-time provisional CTE (ELS-PCTE) that is [valid for teaching Grades 6-12](#) –25.80.