

# **Continuing Professional Education (CPE) Information for Educators**

## **Who is required to earn CPE credit?**

All educators with a standard teacher or professional certificate such as superintendent, principal, counselor, school librarians, educational diagnosticians, reading specialists, and master teachers are required to earn CPE credit.

## **Are aides required to earn CPE credit?**

No.

## **Is a candidate in an educator preparation program eligible for CPE credit?**

No, a candidate in an educator preparation program can only receive credit for training provided by the school district or campus that has hired him/her as a teacher of record. This training must be documented in some way to the educator preparation program. Many school districts maintain transcripts of training completed or may issue a certificate of completion with a CPE number on it. The CPE number is for the convenience of the teachers who need the hours for certificate renewal not for educator preparation coursework.

## **If I have a lifetime professional or provisional certificate issued before September 1, 1999, do I need to accrue CPE clock hours?**

If you hold a professional certificate issued prior to Sept 1, 1999 and decide to opt into the Standard Certificate, you must complete 200 clock hours of continuing professional education every five years. If you hold a Provisional Certificate issued prior to September 1, 1999, and you opt into the Standard Certificate must complete 150 clock hours of continuing professional education every five ears. If you decided not to opt into either one, accruing continuing professional development clock hours is voluntary.

## **What is the period of time that I must accrue CPE hours?**

All certificates issued after 1999 must be renewed every five years. The CPE hours must be accrued during the active period of the certificate.

## **How many hours do I need to accrue during the active period of my certificate?**

For classroom teachers, one hundred and fifty (150) clock hours must be accrued.

For superintendents, principals, school counselors, school librarians, educational diagnosticians, reading specialists and all master teachers, supervisor, special education supervisor, vocational supervisor, visiting teacher, and special education visiting teacher two hundred (200) clock hours must be accrued.

## **I am certified in multiple areas, what type of CPE hours do I need to accrue?**

If you have multiple certificates, you should complete a minimum of five CPE clock hours each year in the content area knowledge and skills for each certificate being renewed.

## **What is the active period of my certificate?**

The certificate is activated for a period of five years. The expiration date can be found on your certificate and in your TEA educator profile.

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## Why does my certificate expire in fewer than 5 years?

All standard certificates expire on the same date. When you apply, all certification areas will renew for one fee. This allows you to count all CPE hours toward renewal of all your certificates

## What type of activities are accepted for CPE clock hours?

1. institutes, workshops, seminars, conferences, in-service or staff development activities given by an approved provider or sponsor.
2. completing the following from an accredited institution of higher education
  - undergraduate courses in the content area knowledge and skills related to the certificate being renewed
  - graduate courses
  - training programs
3. interactive distance learning, video conferencing, or on-line activities or conferences
4. independent study not to exceed 20% of the required clock hours [30 hours for classroom teachers and 40 hours for professional class certificates] (which may include self-study of relevant professional materials (books, journals, periodicals, video and audio tapes, computer software, and participation in on-line programs), or authoring a published work
5. developing curriculum or CPE training materials
6. teaching or presenting a CPE activity not to exceed 10% of the required clock hours [15 clock hours for classroom teachers and 20 clock hours for professional certificates]
7. providing professional guidance as a mentor to another educator [such as cooperating teacher, mentor to a candidate who is preparing for standard or professional certification], not to exceed 30% of the required clock hours [30 clock hours for a classroom teacher and 40 clock hours for the professional certificate]

## If I am taking college/university courses, how do the semester credit hours translate into CPE clock hours?

One semester credit hour earned at an accredited institution of higher education is equivalent to 15 CPE clock hours. For example, a three-semester credit hour course would be equivalent to 45 CPE clock hours.

## I am employed as a teacher now. How do I accrue my CPE hours?

Check with the following for opportunities: professional organizations, regional education service centers, any county department of education. If you have not started working on your Master's degree, begin to take courses toward that goal. Many non-profit organizations offer staff development opportunities such as the ballet, opera, symphony, ecological organizations, zoos, museums, etc.

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## What topics are appropriate for CPE clock hour credit?

At least 80% of the CPE activities should be related to the certificate(s) being renewed. Topics should include content and knowledge skills, your district and campus priorities, child development, classroom management, diversity and special needs of student populations, integrating technology, reading in all content areas, new content methodology, areas identified in the educator's appraisal as needing improvement. If you are in doubt, ask yourself "Will this make me a better teacher? Will my students benefit from this training?"

## I just added a professional certification to my other certificates and the expiration date is in two years when the rest of my certifications renew. How does this impact my CPE clock hours?

You may renew professional certificates issued for less than the full five-year period by completing a prorated number of the required CPE hours. You must complete a minimum of one-fifth of the additional CPE hours for each full calendar year that the additional class of certificate is valid. So, if you have just been issued a principal certificate that will renew in two years, you need to add 80 CPE clock hours.

## I don't live in Texas now but I want to maintain my Texas teaching certificate. What can I do?

Staff development activities completed through accredited public and private schools in other states, United States territories, and countries outside of Texas may be accepted. Keep documentation of completion of activities.

## What if I have let my certificate expire?

Your certificate can be reactivated by completing the required clock hours for teacher or professional certificate. Be sure to maintain documentation.

## Where do I send my proof of my CPE clock hours?

Do not send your documentation to TEA. You are required to maintain your documentation in case you are audited by TEA. If you are selected for audit, you will be asked to provide your documentation.

## What type of documentation should I keep?

1. institutes, workshops, seminars, conferences, in-service or staff development activities given by an approved provider or sponsor: certificates of completion, school district staff development records
2. undergraduate courses, graduate courses, training programs: transcripts, certificates of completion
3. interactive distance learning, video conferencing, or on-line activities or conferences: Logs of time spent, certificates of completion
4. independent study: Logs of time spent including date, amount of time spent, activity, URL source, summary of knowledge gained

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5. developing curriculum or CPE training materials: Time logs including date, amount of time spent, activity, verified by School District or Campus Administration (for curriculum development);
6. teaching or presenting a CPE activity: Agenda, Outline of activity; attendance records, evaluations from participants
7. providing professional guidance as a mentor to another educator: Time logs including date, amount of time spent, activity, verified by School District or Campus Administration; Certificate from educator preparation program

### **What if I do not know if the provider is approved as a CPE provider?**

It is the responsibility of the educator to verify the approval status of any CPE provider prior to completion of the CPE activities.

### **I have completed the required CPE, but I do not have any documentation. Can I still renew my certificate?**

No. You are required to have documentation of all CPE completed during a five-year period in the event you are audited. By signing the affidavit when you renew your certificate, you are affirming that you have completed the required CPE hours and that you have the documentation to support the hours in case your certificate is audited. If you renew without having completed the required CPE hours, your certificate will be inactivated until you complete the requirement.

### **What is a certificate audit?**

A certificate audit occurs when TEA randomly selects educators to review their documentation of CPE hours. Any educator who holds a standard can be selected for a certificate audit. Selected educators will be contacted by TEA and provided instructions on how to submit their documentation. Once the audit review is completed the educator will be notified via email of the findings of the audit.

### **Will TEA consider requests for hardship exemptions from my CPE hour requirements?**

The TEA staff will consider hardship exemptions to the CPE requirements for catastrophic illness or injury of the educator or immediate family member, or military service of the educator.

### **How long should I keep my CPE records?**

Five years.