

# The Framework Residency Certificate Specific Program Guidelines

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*May 2012*



**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**  
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## Why Quality Teacher Preparation Programs Are Important

The fundamental purpose of a teacher preparation program approved by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is to admit, prepare, and support candidates for the teaching profession who, upon graduation, have the knowledge, understandings, and skills to enable Pre K-12 students in Pennsylvania to achieve academic success. Pennsylvania's preparation of new teachers is one component of a standards-based instructional system.



The six components of the Standards Aligned System do not stand in isolation as supports for Pre K-12 student achievement in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Design and delivery of high quality teacher preparation programs are functions of an aligned instructional system; institutional success in producing new teachers with the knowledge, understandings, and skills to promote student learning is the ultimate outcome of the overall system. High quality teacher preparation programs are an essential part of Pennsylvania's efforts to build capacity for an aligned K-16 system.

## **Philosophy for Preparing Highly Effective Pennsylvania Teachers**

Six linked circles in the above standards-based system define core elements of Pennsylvania's emerging instructional system: standards, curriculum, instruction, materials and resources for instruction, fair assessments, and appropriate interventions. Together, these system components are intended to produce strong results for students. For this to happen, the work encompassed in each circle—such as instruction—must build capacity for the activities captured by the other five circles.

In the case of teacher preparation programs and their contribution to (1) instruction, all programs are expected to align their course content with (2) state standards. All teacher preparation programs are expected to provide all candidates with the knowledge and skills to teach a (3) standards-based curriculum effectively and successfully. Through university coursework and extensive, well-designed clinical experiences, all candidates for the profession are expected to learn how to use (4) materials and resources for instruction (including technology) to meet the individual needs of each student in their classroom. Each teacher preparation program is expected to give considerable attention to helping all candidates acquire and use (5) assessment skills, enabling them to understand and respond to pupil results on standardized tests (PSSA and others), local school or district assessments, and individualized assessments of the achievements and challenges of each pupil. Taken together, this set of knowledge, understandings, and teaching skills must enable every candidate for the teaching profession in the Commonwealth to implement (6) appropriate interventions in the classroom to improve student learning. Teacher preparation programs and the new teachers who complete them will be judged according to their success in achieving the six key goals described above.

Since program and candidate success do not happen by accident, program design, the components of that design, and the ongoing assessment of their effectiveness must all point in the same direction. The needs and interests of Pre K-12 students and their schools are at the center of the program. This means that Pre K-12 teachers and administrators must be involved in program assessment activities, decisions about selection and use of clinical sites, and asked regularly for their feedback on candidate and program performance. Program outcomes must include strong subject matter content preparation, more extensive clinical experiences for students, and the use of technology in curriculum and instruction.

Because teaching is a clinical profession, candidates for the profession should spend extensive time in school settings—beginning early in their teacher preparation program sequence—guided by university faculty and appropriately prepared Pre K-12 mentor teachers. Teacher preparation programs must be able to demonstrate how they use evidence about program graduates and evidence about the Pre K-12 students of their graduates to make continuous program improvements.

## **Introduction to Residency Program Guidelines**

Pennsylvania's Residency Certificate Program allows candidates with subject matter competency to fill a teaching position while completing a flexible and accelerated postbaccalaureate program focused on pedagogical training.

Program providers must offer the Residency Certificate Programs in subject areas having teacher shortages as identified by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) both statewide and at the local LEA level. This information is reported to the U.S. Department of Education and announced annually in December. Programs offered in shortage areas will facilitate placement of residency teachers into supervised classroom teaching experiences. Program providers must demonstrate the candidate has secured employment in a Pennsylvania public school setting prior to entry into the residency program.

School entities are encouraged to employ individuals holding a residency certificate in lieu of seeking an emergency permit for an uncertified individual because those holding a residency certificate have demonstrated subject matter competency via satisfactory achievement on the subject matter test and are highly qualified.

This document describes the professional knowledge, skills and competencies that residency teacher candidates are expected to obtain. In addition to specific requirements and competencies, these guidelines include: the Residency Certificate Program design; professional core rationale; candidate competencies; Pennsylvania Academic Standards and assessments in a standards aligned system; faculty; field experience; the supervised classroom teaching experience and new teacher support.

## **Needs Assessment and Recruitment Plan**

Residency programs can serve a critical function in meeting Pennsylvania's teacher shortage needs both regionally and in content areas statewide. In addition, the Residency Program may be used to encourage more diversity in the teaching force, especially among historically underrepresented minorities.

It is important that residency programs tailor their recruitment plan to meet these needs, as it can be challenging to attract high quality individuals who already possess bachelor's degrees to the field of teaching. Program incentives designed to meet the unique and specific needs of residency candidates are encouraged.

### **Residency Program Expectations – Needs Assessment and Recruitment Plan:**

- ✓ Programs must demonstrate that there is an effort to meet content area shortages as defined by the state, or fill an identified shortage in a geographical region.
  
- ✓ Programs should ensure that potential candidates can easily access information about the program through such tools as:
  - A clear website that is easy to navigate;
  - A public relations campaign;
  - Brochures, mailings, and pamphlets; and/or
  - Emails to prospective candidates.
  
- ✓ Programs must demonstrate the candidate has secured employment in a Pennsylvania public school prior to entrance into the program.

### **Admissions and Intake Process**

The bar a residency program sets for admissions standards is an important one. It can help to ensure that candidates are able to quickly master the competencies necessary to be an effective teacher. It is particularly important that the admissions process required by this streamlined curriculum results in high quality candidates that can successfully transition to teaching from an accelerated program design.

The intake process is just as important as the admissions process. A thorough and rigorous admissions and intake process must be completed. Candidates must enter the program with passing scores on the required subject matter tests required by Pennsylvania for certification. The program provider must demonstrate the need for residency certificate area in the program and ensure that the educator has obtained employment prior to entry into the program.

## **Residency Program Provider Expectations – Admissions and Intake Process**

- The residency candidate holds a Doctoral Degree or Master's Degree from an accredited college or university in the subject area of shortage.
- The residency candidate holds a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university in the subject area of shortage and has at least three years of work experience in the subject area or related field.
- The candidate presents evidence of satisfactory achievement on the appropriate subject area content test.
- Once the residency certificate is issued to the candidate, the candidate is required to be continually enrolled in a state approved Residency Program.
- The residency certificate expires at the end of three calendar years and cannot be renewed.

The residency certificate program must satisfy statutory based entrance requirements and include a supervised classroom teaching experience in order for its candidates to be recommended for an instructional certificate and maintain the residency certificate.

## **Program Design**

The residency certificate program must include oversight and monitoring which may include a supervised classroom teaching experience in a public school environment under the supervision of program provider personnel who are well trained and demonstrate competence in teaching. Other sequential field experiences may be included in the residency certificate program. The program also includes criteria and competencies for exit from the program that require candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and competence in fostering student learning. The professional core courses, competencies, and experiences for the residency teacher certificate program are expected to address the broad set of issues, knowledge, and competencies that are relevant to the grade band of the Residency certificate. The residency certificate program must prepare teachers who will be able to ensure students' mastery of academic standards.

The program design must describe clearly how the relevant set of knowledge, skills, and competencies inform the program design, and the application must also indicate how the program provider will assess whether candidates have acquired the required knowledge, skills, and competencies. All courses are expected to be grounded in child and adolescent development with the goal of enabling candidates to gain the knowledge and experience needed to work successfully with family members and the broader community.



## Professional Core

The program design for the residency certificate program's professional core component differs from other certificate programs. It is comprised of two parts. The first part addresses the professional core of the corresponding certificate area. The second part consists of professional competencies that are common to all residency certificate programs. Some form of monitoring and supervised classroom teaching experience is required of the residency certificate program. Regular observations should be made of the residency certificate holders. These observations must be documented.

Program providers have flexibility in how they address adaptations, accommodations, and cognitive development of diverse students in an inclusive setting (9 credits or 270 hours or equivalent combination embedded in coursework, activities or projects, and meeting the needs of English language learners (ELL) (3 credits or 90 hours or equivalent combination embedded in coursework, activities or projects

### **Professional Core for Residency teacher preparation must include:**

- I. Professional Certificate Core** (see specific grade band Certificate Guidelines)
- II. Residency Core**
- II. Adaptations and Accommodations for Diverse Students in an Inclusive Setting and Meeting the Needs of English Language Learners**  
§49.13(4)(i))

## Program Delivery

Teacher residency certification programs are expected to be comprehensive and delivered through a combination of classroom, school and other appropriate settings. While some online courses may be a component of the program, programs are expected to include face-to-face components. Field experiences and any supervised classroom teaching experience must be face-to-face. The residency certificate may be converted to an Instructional I Certificate upon the completion of all residency program requirements under the Department of Education Guidelines and the completion of three (3) years of satisfactory teaching in the public schools of this Commonwealth.

## Professional Core Rationale

Candidates for teaching in the Commonwealth are expected to learn and demonstrate certain knowledge and skills in their subject area. While this set of knowledge and skills is developed in classroom settings and clinical practice, the program curriculum should reflect this centrality to

the process of educator preparation. The candidate competencies detail specific assessable skills, concepts, and foundational understandings of the three areas overviewed below. This overview is meant to provide a context for the candidate competencies.

### **I. Professional Certificate Core**

PDE has content-specific and professional core-specific guidelines for all certification program areas approved by the Secretary of Education. Residency preparation programs are expected to follow the guidelines to ensure that the required content is completed prior to the completion of the program. Those guidelines are available on the PDE's website [Program Framework Guidelines and Rubrics](#) page.

### **II. Residency Performance Competencies**

The residency certificate program is designed with accelerated pedagogical training to meet the needs of persons who graduated from an accredited four-year degree granting institution wishing to enter the teaching field. The program focuses on professional and pedagogical areas to supplement the candidate's content area in which they received their degree. The competencies apply to all residency candidates in order to ensure the pedagogical and professional skills needed in the supervised classroom teaching experience.

### **III. Accommodations and Adaptations for Diverse Students in an Inclusive Setting and Meeting the Needs of English Language Learners**

Residency candidates need to be instructed on methods to deliver instruction to students with diverse needs. The Pennsylvania State Board of Education defines a diverse learner as a student who because of limited English language proficiency or disabilities may have academic needs that require varied instructional strategies to help the student learn (22 Pa. Code §49.13). Disabilities in a regular education classroom range from mild to severe and may include learning disabilities, physical, social, or emotional challenges. Students for whom English is not their first language may need accommodations to participate in general education classrooms. All teacher certification programs must include minimum credits (or hours) addressing these diverse populations. Refer to the [Accommodations and Adaptations and ELL Program Framework Guidelines](#) for the candidate competencies that must be addressed in the credits or hours that program providers will use to implement 22 Pa. Code §49.13.

## Residency Candidate Competencies

This section outlines the competencies required for certification. Generally, the preparing program shall ensure that candidates complete a well-planned sequence of learning and field experiences to develop an understanding of the structure, skills, core concepts, facts, methods of inquiry and application of technology related to each academic discipline in which the candidates plan to teach or in the academic disciplines related to the non-instructional certificate categories in which they plan to serve **Professional Certificate Core (pedagogy) (see certificate specific guidelines)**

### I. Residency Performance Competencies

#### A. Pedagogy

1. Managing the instructional environment including: creating a positive, inclusive learning environment; establishing and maintaining rapport with all students; communicating high learning expectations to all students; establishing and maintaining fair and consistent standards of classroom behavior; and creating a safe physical environment that is conducive to learning.
2. Planning of instruction based upon knowledge of the subject matter, learning theory, classroom environment, students, the community and the Pennsylvania Academic Standards including: alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment; multidisciplinary curriculum integration; multiculturalism; diversity; adaptations for special needs learners; and collaborating with appropriate subject area specialist.
3. Selecting, implementing and adapting effective instructional strategies, curriculum resources and technologies in collaboration with other educators to meet the needs of diverse learners including: assessment for proficiency in a receptive or performance skill; and selecting and using formal and informal assessment in modifying instructional practices.
4. Developing, utilizing, and communicating appropriate measurement and evaluation procedures in the instructional program.
5. Monitoring students' understanding of content, providing feedback to students and adjusting instructional strategies as needed.

**B. Professional:** The professional education program provides evidence that residency certification candidates demonstrate knowledge and competencies that foster professionalism in school and community settings including:

1. Professional organizations, publications, and resources.
2. Integrity and ethical behavior, professional conduct as stated in Pennsylvania's Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators, and local, state and federal laws and regulations.

3. Establishing and maintaining collaborative relationships with colleagues of the preschool, elementary, secondary and higher education levels to improve student learning.
4. Communicating effectively with parents/guardians, other agencies and the community at large to support learning by all students.

## **Alignment with Pennsylvania’s Academic Standards and Assessment Anchor Content Standards**

The grades Pre- K-12 teacher must have deep understanding and mastery of the Academic Standards and the Assessment Anchor Content Standards for those grade levels, including Alternate Academic Content Standards (See below). Section 49.14 (4) (iii) of Pennsylvania regulations identifies how the Academic Standards are included in certification programs: Program providers are able to demonstrate that educator candidates have participated in instructional activities that enable the candidates to provide instruction to students to meet the provision of Chapter 4 (relating to academic standards and assessment). Furthermore, preparation programs must be designed to enable candidates to integrate general, core, and professional coursework so the candidate can teach and assist public school students in achieving the academic standards under Chapter 4 (22 Pa. Code §354.25(b)).

### **Pennsylvania Academic Standards (22 Pa. Code § 4.12)**

- (1) Science & Technology<sup>\*a</sup>
- (2) Environment & Ecology<sup>\*a</sup>
- (3) Social Studies
  - (i)History
  - (ii)Geography
  - (iii)Civics & Government
  - (iv) Economics
- (4) Arts & Humanities
- (5) Career Education & Work
- (6) Health, Safety & Physical Education
- (7) Family & Consumer Science
- (8) Reading
  - (i) Reading<sup>\*a</sup>
  - (ii) Writing
  - (iii) Speaking & Listening
- (9) Mathematics<sup>\*a</sup>

<sup>\*</sup>Grade *level* Assessment Anchor Content Standards exist for these standards.

<sup>a</sup>Grade *span* Alternate Academic Content Standards exist for these standards.

The preparation program should enable candidates to identify the difference between the Academic Standards and the Assessment Anchor Content Standards. Candidates must also be able to demonstrate their awareness of standards for the earlier and later grades to ensure that there is a continuum of Pre-K-12 student academic growth. Knowing the continuum of grade level standards is especially important for the residency teacher, where Assessment Anchor Content Standards exist at all grade levels within the certificate. This knowledge will enable the candidate to address the needs of students who have not met the standards, including students with disabilities or English language learners in inclusive settings.

Candidates must demonstrate mastery beyond superficial levels in order to be able to prepare students to be successful on state and local assessments. This mastery will allow the candidate to guide and assist the public school student in achieving proficiency on all state assessments.

The preparation program requirements must function together so that candidates understand and make effective use of the academic standards, have the skills to develop and implement appropriate interventions to improve student learning, have the content and pedagogical knowledge to teach the curriculum effectively, understand and make regular use of standardized and curriculum-based assessment data, and use the instructional materials and resources necessary to support standards-based instructional practices.

Program providers must provide evidence that there is an alignment of the candidates' course work, clinical experiences, and assessments with the standards adopted by the Commonwealth.

### **Electronic Access to Standards**

The Pennsylvania Academic Standards, the Assessment Anchor Content Standards, the Alternate Academic Content Standards, the Early Learning Standards, and the Language Proficiency Standards for English Language Learners may be accessed on the [State Board of Education Academic Standards](#) website.

The [PDE SAS portal](#), is a tool for educators' use and is aligned to the proposed and voluntary standards, including the Alternate Academic Content Standards; Early Learning Standards; and the English Language Learning Standards.

### **Faculty**

Certification programs submitted for review to the Department must include the qualifications of faculty assigned to teach each course. Faculty who teach in the professional core must have demonstrated expertise in education methods appropriate to engaging the minds of all learners, and in the K-12 grade content they are teaching, as well as advanced degrees in disciplines appropriate to teaching in the program.

Additionally, program applications are expected to include evidence of collaboration between education faculty, as well as with current practicing Pre- K-12 level teachers and administrators in all content areas.

## **Field Experiences and Supervised Classroom Teaching Experience**

The supervised classroom teaching experience is similar to the student teaching requirement in Chapter 3545 and may include other field experiences. Field experiences benefit the candidates' preparation by providing opportunities to apply principles and theories learned from the program to actual practice in the classroom. Field experiences also provide opportunities to work with diverse populations, different ages, and various school settings before the supervised classroom teaching experience begins.

### **Supervised Classroom Teaching Experience**

The residency program should include three years working in a public school that includes a supervised classroom teaching experience. It is recommended that candidates participating in a supervised classroom teaching experience must be evaluated at least monthly.

The program must also provide evidence that the criteria and competencies required for exit from the residency's certification area are assessed through coursework, field experiences, and the supervised classroom teaching experience. In addition to incorporating a self-reflective focus, the program is expected to require candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and competence in fostering student learning and adolescent well-being. The PDE 430 form is completed at the mid-point of classroom teaching experience and at the final evaluation to support a recommendation for an Instructional I certificate to the Department of Education. If the residency candidate performs poorly or fails to meet on the content competencies, then extra course work may be required of the candidate by the program provider. Residency candidates receive support and guidance during the monthly meeting with the program provider in collaboration with the building principal.