

To ensure that all Uplift students receive high caliber instruction, Uplift Education requires all Uplift teachers of record to hold a Texas certificate or be able to show that the certification process is underway as defined by Every Student Succeeds Acts (ESSA) and the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC). All teachers must meet applicable State certification and licensure requirements, including any requirements for certification obtained through alternative routes to certification as defined by Every Student Succeeds Act.

“Teacher of record” is defined as a teacher who provides direct instruction to students in any core academic subject area, as designated in ESSA.

## **1. Certification Requirements**

### **A. New Teachers without Certification**

Beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, any new employee hired to teach in an Uplift school prior to the start of the school year who has not received a recognized Texas teaching certificate shall be required to complete an alternative certification program designated by Uplift. Failure to enroll and complete the designated alternative certification within one year of hire may result in termination or non-renewal of teaching position. Late hires will have until the end of the following school year to complete the designated alternative certification.

New teachers who have begun but not completed a certification program should make arrangements to transfer into the designated Uplift alternative certification program.

Exceptions must be approved. Formal written request for exceptions must be submitted and approved by the Managing Director and the Human Resources Senior Director.

A “new teacher” is defined as those new to the teaching profession or new to the Uplift network.

A “late hire” is defined as those hired during a school year (on or after the first day of New Teacher Training generally held the middle of July) for a teaching placement in that same school year.

### **B. Paraprofessionals or Non-Core Area Teachers without Certification**

If a paraprofessional hired by Uplift assumes a teacher-of-record position, s/he will be required to attain certification as outlined above for “new” teachers within time frame required for new teachers.

Non-core teachers new to Uplift are required to attain certification as outlined above for “new” teachers IF the TEA-approved course specific to their subject area is offered through the designated certification program. Exceptions shall be requested in writing for approval by the Managing Director and Senior Director of Human Resources.

Paraprofessional’s are required to be “highly qualified” as defined by ESSA.

## **2. Additional Certification by Examination**

Definition: “Certified individuals with a bachelor’s degree, assigned to another classroom area that can be added by exam, must register for the next practicable examination in lieu of a certification plan.

### **A. New Teacher Placement**

Senior Management shall ensure that all teachers are placed in a teaching assignment for which they have passed the associated state subject and content tests. Teachers must provide proof of qualifications upon hire, or by the designated Uplift deadline.

If a teacher has not completed the necessary course work, or experience requirements as defined by ESSA, passing the appropriate subject or content tests shall be necessary by spring of second semester. Failure to pass state subject and content tests shall initiate an Individualized Certification Deficiency Plan. The Individualized Certification Deficiency Plan will cease upon completion of at least one of the following actions and upon review by the teacher’s Senior Management, Managing Director, and Senior Director of HR:

- 1) Reassignment to a teaching placement for which the teacher is highly qualified as demonstrated by documented state subject and content test results.
- 2) Receiving passing results on the failed subject test within period established by Senior Management, Managing Director, and Senior Director of Human Resources.

Continued failure to demonstrate passing results, or obtaining Texas certification by the deadline given in the Individualized Certification Deficiency Plan may result in termination of teaching position.

### **B. Current Teacher Placement**

Current Uplift teachers hired prior to the 2016-2017 school year who have been placed in a teaching position for which they have not demonstrated they are highly qualified shall be submitted to the Managing Director for review.

Senior Management shall establish a timeline for the teacher to complete the designated content and subject tests, or provide proof of highly qualified status. If these requirements are not met, the teacher shall be reassigned to a placement for which they are qualified or may result in termination of teaching position.

Notwithstanding the above, the Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”) or CEO designee(s), may elect to waive the teacher certification, certification process, and any related licensure requirement so long as such waiver adheres to law and any other applicable board policy. The option to waive the teacher certification, certification process, and any related licensure requirement expires on the last day of October 2024.