

**OFFICE OF CHIEF ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER**  
**Summary of State Board of Education Item**  
**Consent Agenda**  
**September 25, 2025**

**OFFICE OF TEACHING AND LEADING**  
**OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION**

- M. Approval to revise Miss. Admin. Code: 7 - 4: Part 4: Licensure Guidelines K-12 to amend the Foundations of Reading assessment requirement by removing the assessment from being required as one condition for obtaining licensure in the endorsement area of Special Education Mild/Moderate (licensure codes: 221 (K-12) and 223 (K-8))  
(Has cleared the Administrative Procedures Act process without public comments)

Background Information: On December 16, 2021, the State Board of Education granted approval to require all candidates seeking to obtain initial licensure in the area of Special Education to earn a passing score on a rigorous test of scientifically research-based reading instruction, interventions, and data-based decision-making principles (i.e., Foundations of Reading). The MDE committed to monitoring impact of the new requirement and submitting recommendations for revisions, if warranted, based on concerns raised within the public comments received at the time of approval.

MDE's recent comprehensive policy review revealed increases in both structured literacy coursework requirements and statewide science of reading professional development since the policy went into effect. Specifically, candidates within all non-traditional Master of Arts in Teaching Special Education preparation programs are now required to complete structured literacy coursework. This is in addition to MDE's continued expansion of science of reading professional development for all K-8 special education teachers statewide.

To address the critical shortage area of Special Education through high-quality preparation and professional development, on July 11, 2025, at its regular meeting, the Licensure Commission granted approval of a request received from the Offices of Teaching and Leading and Special Education to revise Miss. Admin. Code 7 – 4: Licensure Guidelines K-12 to amend the Foundations of Reading assessment requirement for initial licensure in Special Education by removing the assessment from being required as one condition for obtaining licensure in the endorsement area of Special Education Mild/Moderate (licensure codes: 221 (K-12) and 223 (K-8)).

The public comment period was open from August 21, 2025, **through 5:00 p.m. September 22, 2025**. The MDE received no public comments.

Recommendation: Approval

Back-up material attached

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RESIDENT TEACHER LICENSE</b></p>
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Teacher License provides a statewide structure to organize procedures related to resident teachers once unconditionally admitted to a State Board of Education-approved Mississippi Teacher Residency program. Such procedures are designed to:

- (a) Protect the health, safety, and general welfare of students and educators;
- (b) Ensure resident teacher access to effective mentorship and extended clinical practice;
- (c) Provide opportunities for resident teachers to demonstrate knowledge and skills;
- (d) Assist resident teachers in understanding the Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics, Standards of Conduct, and hold them accountable under the Code;
- (e) Require a teaching commitment for those individuals receiving full tuition through federal, state, and/or local district funds;
- (f) Require attainment of the Resident Teacher License for anyone participating in residency programs in Mississippi schools; and
- (g) Standardize the criminal background check process across the state for resident teachers eliminating those who are not eligible or suited to the profession.

**Requirements.**

To qualify for the Resident Teacher License:

- (a) An applicant must be admitted to a State Board of Education-approved Mississippi Teacher Residency program through a rigorous process designed to positively impact student achievement, which meets the following requirements:
  - 1. Twenty-one (21) ACT (or SAT equivalent), or a qualifying passing score on the Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators examination, or minimum GPA of 3.0 on a minimum of 60-hours of course credit as established by the State Board of Education;
  - 2. Access to an effective mentor teacher, as evidenced by a summative Professional Growth System observation rating of 3.00 or higher via district assurance;
  - 3. Opportunities for resident teachers to demonstrate effective teaching knowledge and skills in a local school district placement throughout a one (1) year minimum teacher residency in either a teaching position, or a teaching assistant position, ***or other resident teacher category (if an assigned mentor serves as the teacher of record for the teaching assistant position or other resident teacher category)*** via district assurance;
  - 4. Training on the Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics, Standards of Conduct and hold Resident Teachers accountable under the Code throughout local school district placement via district assurance;

5. Completion of a qualifying score on the applicable Specialty Area Test (i.e., Praxis Subject Assessment) and the reading assessment requirement which is currently applicable to Elementary Education ~~and Special Education~~ only (i.e., Foundations of Reading). *Please Note:* Attainment of the SBE-approved qualifying score must be achieved for all applicable licensure tests prior to institutional recommendation can be made for a standard five (5)-year license;

AND

6. Completion of a two (2) year teaching commitment subject to source of funding for residents pending successful program completion via district recommendation.

- (b) The educator preparation provider (EPP) shall request the Resident Teacher License on behalf of the applicant according to procedures outlined in the Mississippi Educator Licensure Guidelines compendium;

AND

- (c) An applicant shall submit appropriate documentation indicating cleared criminal background check.

**Validity.** The Resident Teacher License is valid for three (3) years, with the following exceptions:

- (a) Obtainment of a standard five (5)-year renewable license;

- (b) Rescinded if an individual withdraws, transfers or is removed from the Mississippi Teacher Residency:

1. Previously enrolled candidates who withdraw, transfer, or are removed from a Mississippi Teacher Residency program and are subsequently re-admitted to the program or admitted to a different Mississippi Teacher Residency program are eligible for the Resident Teacher License;
2. Under these circumstances the three (3)-year validity period begins again upon re-admission and issuance of the new license. Requirements listed above must be met after re-admission to a different Mississippi Teacher Residency program in order to reissue the Resident Teacher License;

- (c) May be extended at the request of the EPP.

**NOTE:** Resident Teacher License holders are in-field to participate in supervised field experience, clinical practice, or residency work consistent with the grade levels of certification sought. Individuals holding valid Mississippi Licenses in teaching fields are also in-field to participate in these activities. These experiences provide license holders with an intensive and extensive culminating activity. License holders are immersed in the learning community and provided opportunities to develop and demonstrate competence in the professional roles for which they are preparing. Holding a Resident Teacher License, even upon successful completion of an educator preparation program, does not automatically result in movement to the standard renewable license.

#### **Program Entrance Requirements.**

1. Admittance to a State Board of Education-approved Mississippi Teacher Residency program;

AND

2. Twenty-one (21) ACT (or SAT equivalent), or a qualifying passing score on the Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators examination, or minimum GPA of 3.0 on a minimum of 60-hours of course credit as established by the State Board of Education.

### **Requirements for a Three-Year Teacher Resident License.**

1. Verification of Twenty-one (21) ACT (or SAT equivalent), or a qualifying passing score on the Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators examination, or minimum GPA of 3.0 on a minimum of 60-hours of course credit as established by the State Board of Education;
2. Official, sealed academic transcript(s) from an institution of higher education that was regionally/nationally accredited at the time the degree was conferred;
3. Access to an effective mentor teacher, as evidenced by a summative Professional Growth System observation rating of 3.00 or higher via district assurance;
4. Opportunities for resident teachers to demonstrate effective teaching knowledge and skills in a local school district placement throughout a one (1) year minimum teacher residency in either a teaching position, or a teaching assistant position, ***or other resident teacher category (if an assigned mentor serves as the teacher of record for the teaching assistant position or other resident teacher category)*** via district assurance;
5. Training on the Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics, Standards of Conduct and hold Resident Teachers accountable under the Code throughout local school district placement via district assurance;

AND

6. Institutional recommendation documenting completion of initial requirements of a State Board of Education-approved Mississippi Teacher Residency program through a regionally/nationally accredited institution of higher education.

### **Requirements for a Five-Year License.**

1. Verification of a qualifying score on the applicable Specialty Area Test (i.e., Praxis Subject Assessment) and the reading assessment requirement which is applicable to Elementary Education ~~and Special Education~~ only (i.e., Foundations of Reading). *Please Note:* Attainment of the SBE-approved qualifying score must be achieved for all applicable licensure tests prior to institutional recommendation can be made for a standard five (5)-year license;
2. Institutional recommendation documenting completion of a State Board of Education-approved Mississippi Teacher Residency program through a regionally/nationally accredited institution of higher education;

AND

3. Completion of a two (2) year teaching commitment, including the one (1) year minimum teacher residency, to a geographical critical shortage area for those individuals receiving full tuition through any combination of federal and state funds, pending successful program completion, via district recommendation;

OR

4. Completion of a two (2) year teaching commitment, including the one (1) year minimum teacher residency, to the residency placement district for those individuals receiving full tuition through local district funds, pending successful program completion, via district recommendation.

OR

5. Completion of a two (2) year teaching commitment, including the one (1) year minimum teacher residency, as determined by the residency placement institution and district for those individuals receiving full tuition through any combination of funds, pending successful program completion, via institutional and district recommendation.

**Special Note:** Completion of the two (2) year teaching commitment shall not apply to those individuals who do not receive full tuition for completion of a State Board of Education-approved Mississippi Teacher Residency program.

**Master of Arts in Teaching  
Three-Year Alternate Route License  
Mild/Moderate (7-12) Certification Class A License  
Mild/ Moderate (K-12) Class AA License**

Prospective non-traditional educator preparation program candidates seeking licensure may be eligible to receive a three-year alternate route internship license upon the recommendation by a Mississippi Board of Education approved Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) for those candidates who have met all non-traditional program admittance criteria and successfully completed nine (9) hours of pre-teaching coursework consisting of three (3) hours of Classroom Management, three (3) hours of Introduction to Special Education, and three (3) hours of Data, Analysis, and Evaluation. During the three-year validity of the alternate route internship licensure period, candidates shall complete a year-long supervised teaching internship as the teacher of record whereby six (6) hours of course credit shall be earned. Upon successful completion of the one-year teaching internship as the teacher of record, the EPP may recommend candidates for a standard five-year Mild/Moderate (7-12) Class A license.

To earn the Mild/Moderate (K-12) Class AA license candidates must complete a Mississippi Board of Education (MBE) approved Master of Arts in Teaching Mild/Moderate (K-12) degree program. The Master of Arts in Teaching Mild/Moderate (K-12) shall include at a minimum 33 program hours consisting of three (3) hours of Classroom Management, three (3) hours of Introduction to Special Education, three (3) hours of Data, Analysis, and Evaluation, six (6) hours of Internship, three (3) hours of Language and Literacy for Students with Diverse Needs, three (3) hours of Literacy for Students with Disabilities, three (3) hours of Evidence Based Practices for Struggling Readers to include principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and High-Leverage Practices (HLPs), three (3) hours of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) methods, three (3) hours of Learning Disabilities, and three (3) hours of Special Education Law and Research Pedagogy. Upon successful completion of the degree, candidates may apply for Class AA five-year renewable Master of Arts in Teaching Mild/Moderate (K-12) license.

The three-year alternate route internship license is issued to prospective non-traditional teacher preparation program candidates who meet admission criteria and pre-teaching coursework requirements outlined in the subsequent section and other preconditions in effect at the time the complete application for licensure is received by the MDE Division of Educator Licensure:

- Candidates for licensure shall hold at least a bachelor's degree (non-education) from an institution of higher education that was regionally/nationally accredited at the time the degree was conferred.
- Candidates shall meet all requirements for the Special Education Mild/Moderate (7-12) Class A five-year standard alternate route license prior to the expiration of the three-year alternate route internship license.

The following shall be applied as appropriate:

- (1) The three-year alternate route internship license shall be invalidated upon the issuance of the five-year standard renewable license
- (2) The three-year alternate route internship license shall be rescinded if the candidate withdraws or is removed from or transfers to a different MBE approved non-traditional educator preparation program or Educator Preparation Provider (EPP). It is the responsibility of the EPP that made the initial recommendation for the three-year internship license to notify the MDE Division of Educator Licensure in writing by way of official letter, under the signature of the Dean of Education or Education Department

Chairperson, regarding any changes in the program enrollment status for a candidate that holds an active three-year alternate route internship license issued at the recommendation of that EPP.

- (3) A candidate previously unconditionally admitted to an MBE approved non-traditional educator preparation program that withdrew or was removed from or transferred to a different MBE approved non-traditional educator preparation program or Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) and is re-admitted to the non-traditional educator preparation program may be recommended by the admitting MBE approved EPP for one of the following, as appropriate:

- i. A second and final three-year alternate route internship license if the candidate transfers to a different MBE approved non-traditional educator preparation program or Educator Preparation Provider (EPP). The candidate shall meet all requirements in effect on the date the complete application for re-admittance is received by the MBE approved EPP. The three-year validity period will begin upon unconditional re-admission and the issuance of the second and final three-year alternate route internship license.

**OR**

- ii. A one-time one-year extension of the current or expired three-year alternate route internship license upon the request of the MBE approved Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) that made the initial recommendation. Under these circumstances the one time one-year extension will only be issued if the candidate meets all requirements in effect on the date the complete application for re-admittance is received by the MBE approved EPP and the individual has secured a teaching position for the purpose of completing the internship criterion. The one-year validity period will begin upon unconditional re-admission and the issuance of the one-time one-year extension of the three-year alternate route internship license.

**NOTE:** A candidate that was removed from a program shall not be eligible to receive the one-year one--time extension nor the second and final three-year alternate route internship license until justification for removal from the program is approved by the MDE Division of Educator Licensure.

**Specific restrictions apply:**

- The Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) shall only recommend the candidate for one licensure endorsement area for the three-year alternate route license unless the candidate has completed an approved supplemental endorsement area program that requires submission of a recommendation by the MBE approved EPP.
- Additional endorsements that may be added to the three-year alternate route license by way of the acceptable coursework credit hours option or obtaining a qualifying passing score on an MBE approved licensure subject assessment, shall be requested by the candidate only.

**NOTE:** Non-traditional educator preparation program providers shall ensure that candidates have met all requirements in effect at the time the complete application for admission to a Mississippi Board of Education approved non-traditional educator preparation program is received.

Requirements include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The candidate shall hold at least a bachelor's degree (non-education) from an institution of higher education that was regionally/nationally accredited at the time the degree was conferred; and
2. The candidate shall submit official score report(s) from the appropriate testing company documenting qualifying admittance scores on required non-traditional educator preparation program admission tests such as: Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators\*, or minimum score of Twenty-one (21) ACT or



SAT equivalent, or verification of 3.0 overall GPA on a baccalaureate transcript or last 60 hours course credit; and licensure tests such as: Praxis Subject Assessment(s)\*\* in the area in which the educator license is sought, ~~and Foundations of Reading Assessment (if applicable to area of certification sought)~~  
~~\*\*\*. The Foundations of Reading Assessment is required for the issuance of the Mild to Moderate (K-12) License type.~~

\*Candidates shall achieve the Mississippi Board of Education's approved minimum passing score requirement for Reading, Writing, and Mathematics prior to non-traditional program admission.

\*\*Candidates shall achieve the Mississippi Board of Education's approved minimum passing score requirement for test(s) in the area for which the educator license is sought prior to non-traditional program admission.

~~\*\*\*Candidates shall achieve the Mississippi Board of Education's approved minimum passing score requirement for Foundations of Reading assessment prior to being recommended for the five-year Mild to Moderate (K-12) certification.~~

Meeting testing requirements is one criterion for completing the multi-step educator licensure process for obtaining a five (5) year renewable license in the state of Mississippi.

Please visit the Educator Licensure Section of the MDE website to obtain the most accurate and up-to-date information at [www.mde.k12.ms.us/k12.org/OEL](http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/k12.org/OEL)

<b>FIVE YEAR EDUCATOR LICENSE SPECIAL EDUCATION - MILD/MODERATE DISABILITY K-12 (221)</b>			
<b>License</b>	<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Validity</b>	<b>Renewal</b>
Class A	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bachelor's degree in Special Education - Mild/Moderate Disability from a state approved or NCATE/CAEP approved program from a regionally/nationally accredited institution of higher learning</li> <li>2. Twenty-one (21) ACT (or SAT equivalent) or achieve a qualifying passing score on the Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators examination or minimum GPA of 3.0 on a minimum of 60-hours of course credit as established by the State Board of Education; and</li> <li>3. Praxis Subject Assessment (Principles of Learning and Teaching Test)</li> <li>4. Praxis Subject Assessment (Specialty Area Test for Special Education)</li> <li><del>5. Foundations of Reading Assessment</del></li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hold a valid three-year alternate route internship license or valid five-year license</li> <li>2. Praxis Subject Assessment (Specialty Area Test for Special Education)</li> <li><del>3. Foundations of Reading Assessment</del></li> </ol>	5 Years	<p>Ten (10) continuing education units (CEU's) in content or job/skill related area</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <p>Three (3) semester hours in content or job/skill related area</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>AND</b></p> <p>Five (5) continuing education units (CEU's) in content or job/skill related area</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <p>Six (6) semester hours in content or job/skill related area</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <p>Completion of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards process</p>

**FIVE YEAR EDUCATOR LICENSE  
SPECIAL EDUCATION - MILD/MODERATE DISABILITY K-12 (221)  
(CONTINUED)**

Class AA	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>EITHER</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meet the requirements for a Five-Year Class A License</li> <li>2. Master's degree in the endorsement area in which license is requested</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete an approved master's program for a degree in Special Education - Mild/Moderate Disability that includes a minimum of 18 semester hours in Special Education course work from a regionally/nationally accredited institution of higher learning</li> <li>2. Twenty-one (21) ACT (or SAT equivalent) or achieve a qualifying passing score on the Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators examination or minimum GPA of 3.0 on a minimum of 60-hours of course credit as established by the State Board of Education; and</li> <li>3. Praxis Subject Assessment (Principles of Learning and Teaching Test)</li> <li>4. Praxis Subject Assessment (Specialty Area Test for Special Education)</li> <li><del>5. Foundations of Reading Assessment</del></li> </ol>	5 Years	<p>Three (3) semester hours in content or job/skill related area</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <p>Five (5) continuing education units (CEU's) in content or job/skill related area</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <p>Completion of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards process</p>
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<b>FIVE YEAR EDUCATOR LICENSE SPECIAL EDUCATION - MILD/MODERATE DISABILITY K-12 (221) (CONTINUED)</b>			
Class AAA	1. Meet the requirements for a Five-Year A or AA License 2. Specialist Degree in Special Education	5 Years	Same as for AA
Class AAAA	1. Meet the requirements for a Five-Year Class A or AA license 2. Doctoral degree in Special Education	5 Years	Same as for AA

**APPENDIX A:  
SUPPLEMENTAL ENDORSEMENTS ADDED TO A VALID MISSISSIPPI  
LICENSE**

**Supplemental Endorsements that may be Added to a Three-Year or Five-Year License  
by obtaining a passing score on the appropriate Praxis Subject Assessment**

<b><u>CODE</u></b>	<b><u>AREA</u></b>
155	Algebra I (7-12)
102	Art Education (K-12)
181	Biology Education (7-12)
105	Business Education (7-12)
185	Chemistry (7-12)
153	Child Development* (PreK-K)
933	Computer Science** (7-12)
193	Economics (7-12)
119	English (7-12)
177	English as a Second Languages (K-12)
130	French (K-12)
132	Chinese (Mandarin) (K-12)
156	Geometry (7-12)
134	German (K-12)
207	Gifted (K-12)
143	Health Education (K-12)
208	Hearing Disability (K-12)
322	Home Economics (7-12)
135	Latin (K-12)
440	Library/Media (K-12)
318	Marketing (7-12)
154	Mathematics (7-12)
901	Mathematics (7-8)
902	Language Arts (7-8)
903	Social Studies (7-8)
904	Science (7-8)
166	Music Education (K-12)
144	Physical Education (K-12)
189	Physics (7-12)
192	Social Studies (7-12)
140	Spanish (K-12)
221	Special Education ( <i>Mild/Moderate K-12</i> ) <del>and Foundations of Reading Assessment</del>
910	Special Education Fundamental Subjects
196	Speech Communications (7-12)
218	Visually Impaired (K-12)

*\*Can only be added to a valid license in Elementary Education (116, 152, 120) or select areas of Special Education (221, 222, or 223) that includes Kindergarten.*

*\*\*Can only be added to a valid three-year alternate or five-year standard secondary (7-12) license.*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>APPENDIX A:</b>  <b>SUPPLEMENTAL ENDORSEMENTS ADDED TO A VALID MISSISSIPPI</b>  <b>LICENSE</b>  <b>(CONTINUED)</b></p>
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**Supplemental Endorsements that may be Added to a Three-Year or Five-Year License**  
**by**  
**Completion of an Approved Program**  
**(Institutional Program Verification required)**

<u>CODE</u>	<u>AREA</u>
103	Media Arts (K-12)
111	Computer Applications (K-12)
114	Driver Education (7-12)
120	*Elementary Education (K-6) (added to Valid Five (5)-year Standard License Only + Three (3)-Years Successful Teaching Experience + Foundations of Reading Assessment)
143	Health Education (K12)
146	Wellness and Physical Activity (K-6)
150	Nursery-Grade 1 (N-1)
154	Mathematics (7-12)
174	Reading (K-12)
177	English as a Second Language (K-12)
182	Physical Science (7-12)
193	Economics (7-12)
206	Emotional Disability (K-12)
207	Gifted (K-12)
208	Hearing Impaired (K-12)
218	Visually Impaired (K-12)
221	Mild/Moderate Disability (K-12) <del>and Foundations of Reading Assessment</del>
222	Severe Disability (K-12) added to 221 only
223	Mild/Moderate Disability (K-8) added to elem. only
224	Mild/Moderate Disability (7-12) added to secondary or special subject license only
314	Career Technical Guidance (added only to 436)
405	Business Management (7-12)
411	Business Technology (7-12)
440	Library/Media (K-12)
901	Mathematics (7-8)
931	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) (K-12)
940	Online Instruction (K-12)

**\*Elementary Education K-6:** Added to Valid Five (5)-Year Standard License Only; Requires Three (3)-Years of Successful Teaching Experience; and Foundations of Reading Assessment

**The following may be added by completion of MDE-approved Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Course:** 929 – SREB Math Ready (7-12); 930 – SREB Literacy Ready (7-12)

**The following may be added to a valid standard license only by completion of MDE-approved CTE program**

937 – Computer Science (K-6)

933 – Computer Science (7-12)

935 – Exploring Computer Science\* (7-12) (added to 933 Computer Science (7-12) Only)

983 – Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics\* (7-12) (added to 933 Computer Science (7-12) Only)

**\*Can only be added to 933 Computer Science endorsement that was obtained by completion of MDE-approved CTE program in the area of Computer Science (7-12)**

**The following may be added to a valid standard license by completion of MDE-approved Mississippi Council on Economic Education (MCEE) Course:** 193 – Economics (7-12); 941 – Personal Finance (7-12); 942 – College and Career Readiness (7-12)

**The following may be added to a valid standard license only by completion of MDE-approved Middle School Mathematics Institute:** 901 – Mathematics (7-8)