

Overview

Under [ACT 99](#) of the 2023 Regular Legislative Session and BESE policy, the State of Louisiana now allows elementary and secondary schools to hire candidates holding an associate's degree who are enrolled in a teacher education preparation program to serve as teachers of record. **The authorization for the associate teacher to be a teacher of record is issued by the LEA, not by the LDOE Certification Division.**

Eligibility

To be eligible for the Associate Teacher Program, the candidate must:

- Have an associate's degree from an accredited college or university.
- Be continuously enrolled in an undergraduate teacher education program at an [accredited college or university](#) for the purpose of obtaining a bachelor's degree.
- Be at least twenty-five years of age.

Additional Information

- Associate teachers shall be employed to teach only in the content area related to the participant's associate's degree.
- An associate teacher permit shall remain in effect for not more than five years, during which time the holder shall be enrolled in a teacher preparation program.
- The salary paid shall not exceed seventy-five percent of the average classroom teacher's yearly salary for such school system.
- The holder of an associate teacher permit may not provide special education services.
- The holder of an associate teacher permit shall participate in weekly teacher collaboration meetings and work with any mentor assigned by the LEA.
- No more than ten percent of the teaching staff of a school system shall hold an associate teacher permit.
- The system must ensure compliance with parental notification provisions under 20 USC 6312 (ESEA Section 1112).
- For an associate teacher enrolled in a [BESE-approved teacher preparation program](#), hours spent teaching by an associate teacher shall count toward the required student teaching hours.

Process

The process for enrolling in the Associate Teacher Program is outlined below.

1. The applicant applies for a teaching position in a school system.
2. The school system verifies the following:
 - a. Applicant's age (e.g., driver's license, birth certificate)
 - b. Associate's degree (copy of official transcripts)
 - c. Alignment of degree with course(s) being taught by applicant
 - d. Enrollment in an [accredited teacher preparation program](#) (plan of study)
3. The school system conducts a criminal background check.
4. The school system then issues an associate teacher [permit](#).
5. During the time of employment, the school system will provide a mentor, subject to funding, and ensure that the applicant participates in weekly teacher collaboration.
6. The school system will include the participant in EdLink in the staff collections.

- a. The participant will be coded by the data manager as a teacher (Object Code 112, Function Code 1***) with an Ed_Level_Code of "06" (Associate degree) in the staff_ext extract.
 - b. The school system shall track the length of time the teacher has taught on an associate teacher permit, and the department shall also maintain records of teachers reported in the reported staff data.
7. Upon completion of the program, the preparation provider applies for initial certification.

Coming Soon: Guidance from the Louisiana Board of Regents to assist school systems in teacher placement based on earned Associate Degrees.

The LDOE has also provided a sample of the program's application [template](#). School systems may use the template as is, modify it, or create their own. However, the same information as listed in the LDOE template should be collected and included.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

If a candidate is participating in the Associate Educator Program and decides to work in another school system, will the program transfer?

The permit is only valid for the employing system in which the permit was issued. The candidate must work with the next school system (if that system is participating) to apply for a new permit.

If a candidate's associate's degree is not a complete match to a certification area (e.g., an associate's degree in psychology and the candidate wants to teach middle school ELA), is this allowable?

The candidate and the employing school system will work together to determine the transferability of the degree to the grade level and content area.

Please reach out to arthur.joffrion@la.gov with questions.