



Project Håtsa

Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant
Guam Public School System
In Partnership with the University of Guam
Center for Excellence in Developmental
Disabilities Education, Research, & Service
(Guam CEDDERS)



INITIAL EDUCATOR (Third Draft – As of 5/4/2006)

The recommendation is for the adoption of standards-based certification articulating what beginning educators should know and be able to do as the basis for revising the rules for preparation and licensure of education professionals in Guam.

This decision, we believe, will bring three advantageous results:

1. a clear conception of what education professionals should know and be able to do, based on a common set of standards;
2. a teacher preparation continuum that is linked to Guam's goals for pre-K through grade 12 education; and
3. a focus on the student's knowledge and ability to apply that knowledge rather than on prescriptive curriculum expectations.

This standards-based model is consistent with "the view that underpins the new paradigm for school reform that starts with the assumption that students are not standardized and that teaching is not routine." (Darling-Hammond, Linda, "Reframing the School Reform Agenda: Developing Capacity for School Transformation," *Phi Delta Kappan*, June 1993)

In addition to the desired linkages among student achievement, teacher preparation, teacher performance, and continued professional growth, through the redesigned system, we seek to:

1. Produce a simpler licensing configuration, which has fewer and broader licensing areas;
2. Produce clear and understandable rules for licensure candidates, those who prepare them, and those who hire them; and
3. Encourage innovative and diverse preparation programs by moving the focus from required courses and credit hours to the competence of the candidates they produce.

Standard-based model differs from the current system. Limitations of the current model include problems such as no provision for life experience; students "jump through the same hoops" irrespective of their abilities; and it focuses more on inputs (specific course, credit hours) rather than on outcomes. Because the new system will be standards-based, the focus is on what the teacher will be able to do rather than on the number of courses and credit hours completed. The current model is narrow and prescriptive. The shift to a standards-based licensing model enables the GPSS to permit greater innovation and diversity in how teacher education programs operate by assessing their outcomes rather than merely regulating their inputs or procedures.

Initial Educator License. An initial educator license may be issued to an individual who meets the requirements, including the completion of an approved program with institutional endorsement or as demonstrated by a state superintendent approved assessment program that meets the standards.

The initial educator license shall be issued for a period of 3 years and is a non-renewable license unless the individual has not been employed as an educator for at least 2 years within the 3-year period.

Three major changes accompany the new licensure rules:

- Teacher preparation moves from a course and credit orientation to a performance and competency orientation requiring that teaching skills be developed and demonstrated throughout the teacher preparation program. To be certified for licensure, teacher candidates need to demonstrate or exhibit the five Guam Professional Teacher Standards.
- License renewal will have a career-long focus of self-directed, planned professional development that is guided by the Guam Professional Teacher Standards.
- License levels or categories will be broader in that they will be based on students' developmental levels: early childhood, early middle, early adolescence and adolescence

Professional Teacher Standards. The five Guam Professional Teacher Standards will guide existing teacher preparation, determine the acceptability of out-of-state certification for Guam licensing, and serve as career-long guidelines for teacher evaluation, license renewal and professional development. To receive a license to teach in Guam, an applicant shall complete an approved program and demonstrate proficient performance in the following standards:

GUAM PROFESSIONAL TEACHER STANDARDS

Standard 1: Planning: A teacher will plan based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.

Standard 2: Instruction: A teacher will deliver content while involving students in learning activities.

Standard 3: Management: A teacher will organize learning environments and maintain appropriate student behavior.

Standard 4: Reflection and Professional Development: A teacher will enhance their capacity to improve student achievement through reflective practices and participation in professional development.

Standard 5: Learning Communities: A teacher will collaborate with colleagues, parents/guardians and community members to improve student learning.

Setting system standards for initial educator license assure teacher performance relative to an acceptable set of professional standards and that teachers possess minimal knowledge and skills to improve teaching quality. Below are established set of prerequisites for an initial educator license:

College/University Educator Preparation Program. Earns a Bachelor's degree from a state-approved college/university program for the degree and field desired.

Passing score on Praxis I: 173 (reading), 170 (writing), and 170 (math)

Passing score on the subject matter knowledge test(s) i.e. Praxis II or completion of an approved program by the university.

Field-based experiences in varied settings and integrated into courses or seminars that address the Guam Professional Teacher Standards.

Supervised practicum or student teaching equivalent in the field and at the grade level for the license sought. The practicum or student teaching should be at least two semesters or 12 – 15 weeks.

Receiving a satisfactory recommendation from the student's program of study (i.e. early childhood, elementary etc.) as a result of the student teaching experience.

Coursework are aligned with the Guam Professional Teacher Standards. **Grade point average** 2.7 or higher.

Mentorship. All beginning teachers must successfully complete a minimum of a one-year mentorship program to be eligible for full certification. The Mentorship Program must focus on competencies for beginning teachers in planning, management, instruction, professional development and learning communities. Successful completion of the program shall be documented and shall be maintained in each teacher's licensure file.

Professional Development Plan. As part of the process of earning a license, a candidate must design and complete a personal professional development plan (PDP) that demonstrates competency in the 5 Guam Professional Teacher Standards. A teacher's PDP will reference two or more standards as the focus for professional development work. The initial educator controls their PDP throughout the entire process. Portfolio of evidence shall be included indicating that progress has been made in reaching the goals of the professional development plan.

Each initial educator will have a three-member team responsible for reviewing and approving the initial educator's professional development goals identified in the PDP.

The team consists of an administrator on-site, department chairperson, and a teacher of the same subject or at the same grade level who is not the mentor will review and approve the professional development plan.

The professional development team is responsible for verifying the initial educator's successful completion of the **Professional Development Plan (PDP)**. Once a majority of the team verifies that the initial educator has successfully completed his/her **PDP**, the educator will receive a Professional Educator License.

The PDP shall consist of the following components:

- Learning Goals
- Identified Activities
- Timelines
- Evidence of Collaboration
- Assessment Plan

Finally, some sort of approval mechanism needs to be in place for teacher education institutions, often based on standards such as those of the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) or the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Currently, the Guam Public School System, Board Policy 1000.113, 1000.119, 1000.1321 and 1000.1322 establishes such a mechanism.

Approved Preparation Program. Candidates who have completed an educator approved preparation program outside Guam seeking licensure shall meet the following requirements: Evidence of one of the following:

1. Completion of an educator preparation program from a college or university which awards a baccalaureate or higher degree from any of the fifty states in the United States or any of its administrative jurisdictions, and whose degree had been awarded by an institution accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).
2. Completion of a state-approved educator preparation program in a state with which Guam has signed the NASDTEC Interstate Contract.
3. Completion of an educator preparation program sponsored by a college or university outside Guam that has been accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).