

Florida Professional Educator's Certificates

Report on Direct Pathways and Renewal

March 2016

Professional Educator Certificates

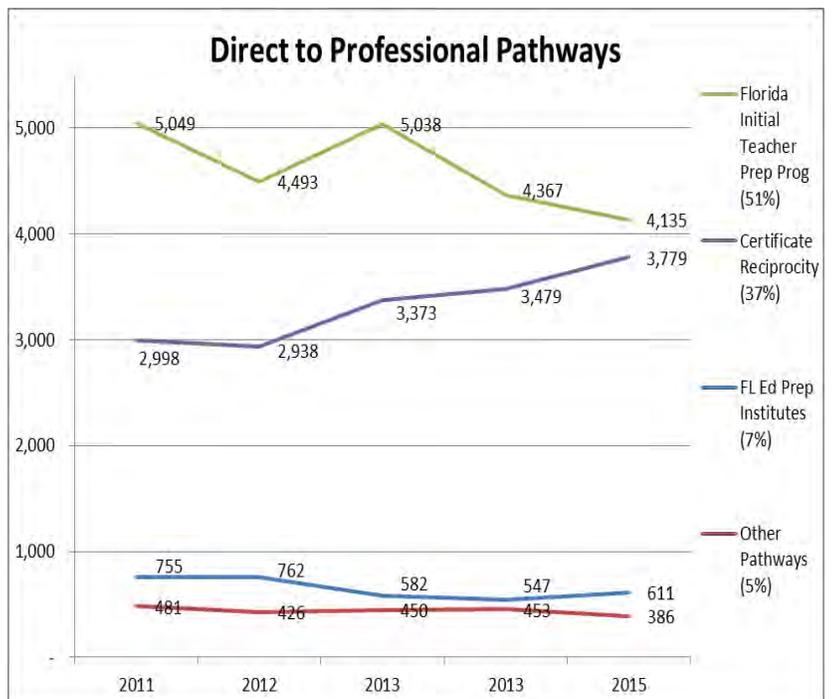
Florida's highest level certificate is a Professional Certificate. When applicants complete all certification requirements for the first time, they are awarded an initial Professional Certificate, which is valid for five (5) school years. A Professional Certificate may be renewed for each subsequent five-year period. A Professional Certificate may be issued covering one or more subject areas or endorsements for which an educator qualifies.

Direct Pathways to a Professional Certificate

On average, about 6 of every 10 Florida educators qualify for issuance of an initial Professional Certificate as their first Florida Educator's Certificate. These educators satisfy requirements to directly qualify for an initial Professional Certificate by following one of several varied preparation pathways authorized by Florida law. Data for all Professional Certificates from the past five school years (2011-2015) were collected and analyzed to distinguish between educator groups who followed each of the different direct pathways to a Professional Certificate (Exhibit 1). For years 2011 to 2015, this is the first certificate in Florida for each of these educators, as compared to nearly 6,000 other educators, on average, who first qualify for a Temporary Certificate based on satisfying subject content specialization. Though it is not renewable, the three-year validity of a Temporary Certificate provides instructional personnel employed in the school system the opportunity to satisfy the necessary mastery requirements to be issued a Professional Certificate.

Exhibit 1: Educator Groups Who Followed Different Direct Pathways to an initial Professional Certificate

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Florida Initial Teacher Prep Prog (51%)	5,049	4,493	5,038	4,367	4,135
Certificate Reciprocity (37%)	2,998	2,938	3,373	3,479	3,779
FL Ed Prep Institutes (7%)	755	762	582	547	611
Other Pathways (5%)	481	426	450	453	386
Total	9,283	8,619	9,443	8,846	8,911



Of the various direct pathways to an initial Professional Certificate, the data show that Florida programs produced almost 60% of these educators.

- Just over half (51%) were issued an initial Professional Certificate based on completion of an Initial Teacher Preparation program through a Florida postsecondary college or university.
- Another 7% were issued an initial Professional Certificate upon completion of a Florida program through an approved Educator Preparation Institute.

Though the overall volume is promising, the data trend suggests a decreasing number of completers from these Florida preparation pathways apply and qualify directly for an initial Professional Certificate.

Florida imports the other 40% of these educators who qualify directly for an initial Professional Certificate from beyond its borders.

- The second largest group – growing from 32% to 42% over this 5-year period – qualified based on Certificate Reciprocity, presenting a valid, standard certificate issued by another U.S. state or national credentialing organization.
- Others (3% to 4%) qualified having completed an Initial Teacher Preparation program through a postsecondary institution outside Florida.

Renewal of Professional Certificates

The total number of Florida Educator's Certificates has increased about 1% annually over the past five years – from nearly 293,000 certified educators in 2010 to over 308,000 in 2015. Data for all Professional Certificates from the past five school years (2010-2014) were collected and analyzed to identify possible trends in the rates of renewal versus certificate lapse.

All certificates are valid to align with the regular school year (July 1 to June 30) with an average of over 52,000 Professional Certificates expiring annually. All certified educators are required to complete professional learning requirements for renewal of their Professional Certificates.

- Most of these educators (79%) satisfied the requirements necessary for renewal of their Professional Certificates.
- However, 21% of these educators allowed their Professional Certificates to expire without completing renewal.

Though attrition may be expected to occur as a matter of course, these data prompt several questions about the reasons why educators allow their Professional Certificates to lapse. These questions about reasons for attrition and other population characteristics will certainly be a topic for future analysis.

Did You Know?

- Florida has over 308,000 certified educators
- 90% of certified educators hold Professional Certificates
- 25-30,000 new applicants seek Florida certification each year