



PECS

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEE CERTIFICATION SERVICE

The Professional Employee Certification Service (PECS) exists to elevate the quality of education by providing rigorous, reliable, and accessible certification services that equip educators to excel in the art of teaching. The Service provides objective standards for evaluating and recognizing the preparation and experience of current and prospective school employees. PECS also provides parents with the assurance that professional educators have examined the credentials of those to whom they entrust their children for academic training.

This service to schools and parents must not be misconstrued as a license to teach or to perform other duties in a school, and it should never be represented as such to parents or to governmental entities. The program simply provides a uniform procedure for appraising professional credentials.

Certificates may be revoked at any time if minimum professional or spiritual standards are not maintained. The employee will be notified and given 30 days to appeal to the PECS office, which, if necessary, may choose to hear further appeals.

Certificate Titles	<i>Provisional (3 year)</i>	<i>Professional (5 year)</i>	<i>Advanced Professional (7 year)</i>	<i>Permanent</i>
<i>Early Childhood</i>	No Degree No endorsement given 1 Year Experience <i>Renewal—45 hours</i>	AA/CDA/BA/BS Endorsement <i>Renewal—75 hours</i>	BA/BS/MA/MS Endorsement 5 Years Experience <i>Renewal—105 hours</i>	See page 3
<i>Elementary, Secondary, All-Level, Special Education, Specialist</i>	BA/BS No endorsement given 3-Year Certificate <i>Renewal—45 hours</i>	BA/BS Endorsement 5-Year Certificate <i>Renewal—75 hours</i>	MA/MS Endorsement 5 Years Experience 7-Year Certificate <i>Renewal—105 hours</i>	See page 3
<i>Administrator</i>	BA/BS 3 Years Experience 3-Year Certificate <i>Renewal—6 semester hours</i>	MA/MS Endorsement 5-Year Certificate <i>Renewal—75 hours</i>	Ed.S./Ed.D. Endorsement 5 Years Experience 7-Year Certificate <i>Renewal—105 hours</i>	See page 3

Seven Certification Categories

Category 1: Early Childhood Teacher (K4 and under only)

Provisional: This certificate is issued to applicants who have not earned a post-secondary degree or early childhood certification. Verification of high school graduation is required (diploma, transcript, or GED). Applicants must also have 1 year of experience in the preschool setting. The certificate is valid for three years and may be renewed upon completion of 45 contact hours of training or 3 semester hours toward an education degree. No endorsements available. Applicant must be current with all state regulated training.

Professional: This certificate is issued to applicants who have earned an AA/CDA in Early Childhood Education or a bachelor's degree and the completion of any state required childcare training. It is valid for 5 years and may be renewed upon completion of 75 contact hours (college coursework work, continuing education, or a combination of the two).

Advanced professional: This certificate is issued to applicants who have earned a BA/BS/MA/MS degree in Early Childhood Education, and who have at least 5 years of teaching experience. It is valid for 7 years and may be renewed upon completion of 105 contact hours (college coursework, continuing education, or a combination of the two).

Categories 2-5: Elementary, Secondary, All-Level (Music, Art, Speech, Physical Education), Special Education, Specialist (Bible, Computer, Technology, Counseling, Library)

Provisional: Issued to applicants who have earned a bachelor's degree, but who cannot qualify for an endorsement in the category; valid for 3 years and may be renewed upon completion of 45 contact hours or 3 semester hours toward an endorsement in the category.

Professional: Issued to applicants who have earned a bachelor's degree and who qualify for an endorsement in the category; valid for 5 years and may be renewed upon completion of 75 contact hours (college coursework work, continuing education, or a combination of the two).

Advanced Professional: Issued to applicants who hold a master's degree in endorsed area, who qualify for an endorsement in the category, and who have at least 5 years of teaching experience. Additionally, applicants must have met all requirements for a professional; valid for 7 years and may be renewed upon completion of 105 hours (college coursework work, continuing education, or a combination of the two).

Category 6: Academic Specialist (Curriculum and Instruction)

Provisional: Issued to applicants who have earned a bachelor's degree, but who cannot qualify for an endorsement in the category; valid for 3 years and may be renewed upon completion of 45 contact hours or 3 semester hours toward an endorsement in the category.

Professional: Issued to applicants who have earned at least a graduate certificate that qualifies them for an endorsement in the category; valid for 5 years and may be renewed upon completion of 75 contact hours (college coursework work, continuing education, or a combination of the two).

Advanced Professional: Issued to applicants who hold a specialist's or doctor's degree in curriculum and instruction, who qualify for an endorsement in the category, and who have at least 5 years of teaching experience. Additionally, applicants must have met all requirements for a professional; valid for 7 years and may be renewed upon completion of 105 hours (college coursework work, continuing education, or a combination of the two).

Category 7: Administrator

Provisional: Issued to applicants who have earned a bachelor's degree but do not qualify for the endorsement in Educational Administration; valid for 3 years and may be renewed upon completion of 6 semester hours toward an Educational Administration degree. **(Note: only renewable with credit toward the degree).**

Professional: issued to applicants who have earned at least a master's degree that qualifies them for an endorsement in Educational Administration; valid for 5 years and may be renewed upon completion of 75 contact hours (college coursework work, continuing education, or a combination of the two).

Advanced Professional: Issued to applicants who hold a Specialist's or Doctor's degree in Educational Administration/Leadership and who have at least 5 years of educational experience; valid for 7 years and may be renewed upon completion of 105 contact hours (college coursework work, continuing education, or a combination of the two).

Endorsements (for Professional)

Early Childhood Education

An AA/CDA degree or certification in Early Childhood Education

OR

A bachelor's degree plus meeting any state required annual training requirements

Elementary Education

A major in Elementary Education

OR

A non-education bachelor's with

1. 4 hours or 2 methods classes OR 2 semester hours in methods classes and 20 contact hours in specified PECS-approved workshops
2. 3 semester hours in Educational Psychology, Growth & Development, or a similar course
3. 3 years of experience

Secondary Education

A major in a Secondary Education teaching field (such as Math Education)

OR

A major in Secondary Education with at least 18 semester hours in the endorsed academic discipline

OR

A non-education bachelor's with

1. 4 hours or 2 methods classes OR 2 semester hours in methods classes and 20 contact hours in specified PECS-approved workshops
2. 3 semester hours in Educational Psychology, Growth & Development, or a similar course
3. 3 years of experience

Special Education

A major in Special Education

OR

A non-special education major with

1. 18 hours in special education
2. 4 hours or 2 methods classes OR 2 semester hours in methods classes and 20 contact hours in specified PECS-approved workshops
3. 3 years of experience

All Level (Music, Art, Speech, Physical Education) & Specialist (Bible, Computer, Technology, Counseling, Library)

- A major in the teaching field or specialized field
1. 4 hours or 2 methods classes OR 2 semester hours in methods classes and 20 contact hours in specified PECS-approved workshops
 2. 3 semester hours in Educational Psychology, Growth & Development, or a similar course

Academic Specialist (Coursework examples include curriculum design or development, instructional methods, assessment and evaluation, differentiated instruction, instructional technology, academic supervision, or data-informed instructional improvement).

A graduate degree in Curriculum and Instruction

OR

An education graduate degree and 12 hours in curriculum and instruction-related coursework

OR

A non-education graduate degree and 18 hours in curriculum and instruction-related coursework

OR

A bachelor's degree with an 18-hour graduate certificate in curriculum and instruction

Educational Administration

A graduate degree in Educational Administration/Leadership

OR

An education graduate degree and 12 hours in educational administration/leadership

OR

A non-education graduate degree and 18 hours in educational administration/leadership

OR

A bachelor's degree with an 18-hour graduate certificate in administration/leadership

Note: PECS reserves the right to modify endorsement categories or add new endorsements should the need arise.

Permanent Certification

Issued to an applicant who holds an earned doctorate, upon renewal of an Advanced Professional certificate

OR

Issued to an applicant with a graduate degree who holds an Advanced Professional certificate for at least 7 years, upon renewal with at least 15 years of full-time teaching experience

OR

Issued to an applicant who holds a Professional certificate for at least 10 years, upon the second renewal with at least 20 years of full-time teaching experience

OR

Issued to an applicant if transferring a lifetime certificate from another PECS-approved agency and already meets degree and experience requirements. Transcript evidence may be required.

Note: Permanent must be maintained every 10 years by verifying information in PECS Connect and making the appropriate payment.

Application Instructions & Fees

All applications for certification are processed through the PECS Connect digital portal (pecsconnect.org). The following steps are involved when applying:

1. Teachers should request an application invitation through their administration.
2. Teachers that are not currently employed at a school can still receive an invitation to apply by emailing pecs@christianeducation.org.
3. Upon accepting the invitation, the teacher will create an account that includes entering profile information.
4. The option to “Add New Certificate” will be seen, directing the teacher to enter further information regarding educational background, certificate category requested, and desired endorsements.
5. The teacher will then follow the upload option to import their transcripts and any other verifying documentation.
6. The PECS office will review the application and documentation and issue the certificate. The school administrator will also have access to the certificate information and be able to track renewal progress.
7. The certificate can be accessed as a PDF in the portal and may be downloaded and printed if desired.
8. The renewal process is also conducted through the portal. As teachers complete continuing education through either contact hours or semester hours, verifying documentation can be uploaded for approval by the PECS office. Teachers can track their progress and simply select the option to renew the certificate and add any new endorsements they may qualify for.

Certification Fees

- Initial and Renewal Processing Fee \$75.00
- Late Renewal (Expired over a year) \$25.00 (additional)
- Permanent Renewal..... \$75.00 (every 10 years)
- Additional Endorsements (2 are included) \$15.00 each

Additional Information and Policies

College/Training Policy

To protect the credibility of the PECS program, all degrees and training credits must be issued from reputable sources with verifiable credentials. **Degrees and coursework taken at a college of questionable reputation will not be recognized; this includes credits earned primarily through correspondence work.** Institutions or programs which are not accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency will be considered on an individual basis after investigation and evaluation of the school’s program. Teachers seeking recertification and upgrades for their credentials should check with the PECS office before taking the coursework if there is any question of validity.

Renewal and Contact Hour Policies

In general, courses and contact hours taken for certificate renewal should relate to the appropriate teaching field or to the teaching/administration profession. No training in First Aid, CPR, BBP, etc., will count toward renewal. Non-educational instruction related to the teaching position should be approved by PECS before attending the workshop or course. On average, 15 contact hours per year are needed to renew a certificate.

A contact hour is one hour of instruction in an organized, continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction, and qualified instruction. Contact hours are generated or converted as follows:

- 1 Contact Hour = 50-60 minutes
- 1 Semester Hour = 15 Contact Hours
- 1 CEU = 10 Contact Hours

Contact hours may be accrued under the following criteria

1. Faculty may attend conventions, C-Net workshops, and other similar training sessions. One contact hour will be issued for each 50-60 minute workshop attended, and **no partial credit of less than 30 minutes will be granted.**
2. Faculty may also attend training sessions held by other credible organizations. Credit for 1 contact hour will be issues per 50-60 minute session attended. Official copy of work done must be submitted to the PECS office on appropriate company/college letterhead or form.
3. **CLEP work will not be accepted for renewal.**
4. Faculty may attend in-house training provided by a school as long as the following criteria are met:

- a. The trainer must have at least a bachelor's degree and five years teaching experience.
 - b. The courses must be given in at least 50-minute segments to earn 2 contact hours.
 - c. Online or video presentations related to teaching or specialized fields may be used. However, credit will still be issued according to the 50-minute rule. **Note: Audio recordings are not generally accepted as renewal credit.**
 - d. A preapproval form must be completed before the activity, and teachers should complete an attendance verification voucher. These forms are found in the appendix.
5. Audit courses on a college level may also receive 1 contact hour per 50-minute session. Documentation from the college must be furnished to PECS.
 6. A workshop leader earns twice the contact hour credit for each session presented. Since a leader must study and prepare for each presentation, extra credit is validated. For example, a workshop leader presenting a 50-minute session will earn 2 contact hours.
 7. **A maximum of 5 contact hours per 12-month period may be earned by viewing digital resources or using in-house personnel.**

Endorsement and Certificate Policies

1. **Endorsements:** Applicants may request an endorsement for multiple areas for which they can present adequate credentials. Typically, an endorsement in a specific subject area requires 18 semester hours of work.
2. **Adding Endorsements:** once an applicant is professionally certified, additional endorsements may be added either through additional coursework or the successful completion of the PRAXIS in the appropriate field. The PECS Office typically defers to the SCDE policies when adding endorsements through examination. Applicants should review the SCDE policies regarding the endorsement field before committing to specific exams.
3. **Experience Requirement:** Applicants that did not complete student teaching must complete 3 years of teaching experience.
4. **Expired Certificates:** Expired certificates can be renewed with appropriate documentation and a late fee. Renewals will be dated from the expiration date if renewed within a year. Certificates which have been expired for more than a year can only be renewed with an additional 15 hours of training above the required number for regular renewal.
5. **Early Renewals:** Should an applicant choose to renew early, the next 5-year period begins at that time (five years is not added to the future expiration of the current certificate).

Continuing Education Policies

While personal enrichment and professional development (reading, watching videos, travel, etc...) are great activities, the lack of a reasonable method for verification in active learning disqualifies them from counting as continuing education credit.

Continuing education credit, therefore, must meet the following requirements:

1. Be sponsored by a responsible agent (college, convention, school-approved professional development provider). These agencies both verify the instructional time (or its equivalent for online studies) and provide certificates or other verification of completion and contact hours
2. Be capably directed and supervised
3. Be taught by an instructor qualified by education and experience
4. Provide training in the teacher's endorsement area(s) or in general education topics such as classroom management, classroom technology, and teaching methods.
5. Be taught in a classroom or seminar setting, unless approved online instruction

Overall, an accepted activity must be verified, its value must be determined, and it must involve truly professional learning activity. The following examples do not count for continuing education credit:

1. Reading, study, and travel (unless part of an approved program)
2. Sunday school classes and church services
3. Staff meetings and in-service training (unless approved for onsite professional development)
4. Required training that is not related to improving instruction, such as child abuse prevention training, blood-borne pathogen training, training using your school's LMS, or CPR training
5. Exception: coaches, athletic directors, or teachers with a physical education endorsement may use CPR, first-aid, or Concussion Training as contact hours once in a renewal cycle (unless a more intense structured program is taken and valid documentation can be presented; preapprove with PECS office)

All continuing education credits fit into one of two categories:

Category A: Professional development that occurs outside of the school or is led by external qualified individuals

- Audited college course work
- Continuing education programs offered by colleges that are members of the American Association of Christian Colleges and Seminaries (AACCS)
- Other college continuing education programs may be approved. Verify with the PECS office in advance.
- Approved online professional development sources (Training Teachers Online and many other providers)
- Many state conventions and the SECS tri-state convention offer approved continuing education programs.
- Off-site (not provided at the school facility) professional development activities, upon approval.
- On-site (provided at the school facility) professional development provided by a qualified instructor who is not part of the ministry faculty or staff, upon approval.

Category B: Professional development activities that are conducted or led by the school. A **preapproval application is required before the activity occurs**. The following criteria must be met:

- The activity must be conducted by an instructor possessing at least a bachelor's degree in education or a field directly related to the activity.
- The activity must be conducted in a classroom or seminar setting.
- The activity must directly address the educational process (Bible studies, preaching services, and self-help workshops do not qualify) OR address topics appropriate to the endorsement area(s) of those receiving continuing education credit.
- The activity can be on-site (provided at the school facility) professional development provided by qualified faculty or staff (submit preapproval application and distribute attendance voucher for participants).
- On-site professional development provided by video is considered category B
- **For certificate renewal, no more than 1/3 of the contact hours may be from Category B. For example, if a professional certificate is renewable with 75 hours, then not more than 25 hours of Category B activities may be applied.**

Appropriate forms for preapproval and attendance verification are located at the end of the manual.

PECS Continuing Education/Staff Development Activity Preapproval Application

Directions: Submit one preapproval form per professional development activity. When the approval is returned, copy the preapproval form on the back of the attendance voucher (one per participant). To renew certification, teachers will submit the completed two-sided form and any other renewal paperwork. Activities must meet all continuing education requirements as described in the manual.

Check **one** of the following:

Category A

- ☐ Audit college course
- ☐ College-offered continuing education program
- ☐ Online professional development
- ☐ State Teacher's Convention – do not use this form:
use form/CEU provided at the convention
- ☐ Off-site professional development activity
- ☐ On-site professional development activity with
outside leader

Category B*

- ☐ On-site professional development activity led by
qualified ministry faculty or staff member
- ☐ On-site professional development activity
provided by video or audio instruction, supervised
by school administrative staff

**For certificate renewal, no more than 1/3 of the contact
hours may be from Category B.*

Class or Seminar Title: _____

Instructor Name: _____

Academic degree and/or other qualifications: _____

Educational topics or issues the activity will address (must be professional development): _____

Description of event: (e.g. college course, online, DVD, live instruction, etc. Will the event be part of a larger event? Will it be a group/classroom event? If it is on-site, who will be supervising?) _____

Date(s) and times of activity: _____

Number of direct instructional hours (Do not include breaks, homework, etc.): _____

Certification titles of those who will attend/receive continuing education credit:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| ☐ Preschool | ☐ Secondary | ☐ Specialist (Bible, CIT, |
| ☐ Kindergarten | ☐ All-Level (Music, Art, PE) | Counseling) |
| ☐ Elementary | ☐ Special Education | ☐ Administrator |

School Name _____ Email _____

City, State _____ Phone _____

Administrator's Signature _____ Date Request Filed _____

For Office Use Only

- ☐ Continuing education credit granted
- ☐ Continuing education credit denied. Explanation of denial:

Number of contact hours allowed for activity: _____

Conditions or limitations:

Signature of PECS official _____ Date of Reply _____

PECS Continuing Education Attendance Voucher

Directions

- This form is required when the professional development is in Category B OR when a certificate or attendance voucher is not issued by the provider of a Category A professional development activity.
- Upload the corresponding preapproval form into your PECS Connect account. Both the form and this voucher **must** be included.
- To renew certification, teachers will submit the completed two-sided form and any other renewal paperwork.
- For certificate renewal, no more than 1/3 of contact hours may be from Category B.
- Activities must meet all continuing education requirements as described in the policy section of the PECS Manual.

Participant Information

Name _____ Email _____

Certification Title(s)

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| ☐ Preschool | ☐ Secondary | ☐ Specialist (Bible, CIT, |
| ☐ Kindergarten | ☐ All-Level (Music, Art, PE) | Counseling) |
| ☐ Elementary | ☐ Special Education | ☐ Administrator |

Current Certificate Endorsement(s) (Elementary Ed, Music, Math, etc.) _____

Professional Development Activity Information

Class or Seminar Title _____

Instructor Name _____

Date(s) and times of class or seminar _____ Number of direct instructional hours _____

Location the class or seminar was held _____

School Information

School Name _____ Email _____

City, State _____ Phone _____

Administrator's Signature* _____

**Administrator's signature verifies the attendance of participant at class or seminar.*

Upload this voucher and the corresponding preapproval form into your PECS Connect account.