

# ALTERNATE PATHWAY TO PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR LICENSE (APPEL) DIRECTOR HANDBOOK



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Utah State  
Board of  
Education

Educator  
Licensing

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## **Introduction**

The Utah Constitution grants authority to the Utah State Board of Education to establish standards for educator preparation programs, as defined in Board Administrative Rules. Educator Preparation Programs are required to operate in compliance with Board rule. All standards and policies established in this handbook will be referenced by the applicable Board rule. Direct links to applicable Board rules are provided below:

[R277-301: Educator Licensing](#)

[R277-303: Educator Preparation Programs](#)

[R277-304: Teacher Preparation Programs](#)

[R277-330: Utah Effective Educator Standards](#)

## **Program Overview**

The Alternative Pathway to Professional Educator License (APPEL) program is an educator preparation program as defined by Utah State Board of Education (USBE) Administrative Rule [R277-303-2](#). Educator preparation programs prepare individuals to meet the requirements for a Utah professional license or license area of concentration. APPEL programs may be developed by or associated with an individual Local Education Agency (LEA) or a consortium of LEAs or the Board.

APPEL programs administered by LEAs can prepare individuals to meet the requirements for a Utah professional license in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Secondary Education, and Career and Technical Education. Candidates seeking a professional license through an alternative pathway in Special Education or a Preschool Special Education must enroll in the APPEL-Sped program administered by the Utah State Board of Education. For more information on the APPEL-Sped program, see <https://usbe.instructure.com/courses/1301/>

## **Program Approval**

All educator preparation programs including APPEL programs, must be approved by The Superintendent before they can start working with candidates towards professional licensure. USBE Administrative Rule [R277-303](#) states an educator preparation program applying for approval by the Superintendent shall demonstrate how it will ensure all candidates:

- are prepared to meet the Utah Effective Teaching Standards established in [R277-330](#);
- are prepared to complete a pedagogical performance assessment meeting Utah Pedagogical Performance Assessment Standards created by USBE;
- have met the specific educator and clinical experience competencies in the license area being earned as required in Board Rule [R277-304](#), and
- have sufficiently demonstrated the ability to work in the applicable license area and subject area before being recommended for a professional license or license area.

The Superintendent has established a model educator preparation program, called the [APPEL Model Program Framework](#), which outlines all requirements of all applicable Board rules. To assist the application process, an LEA may adopt the model preparation program framework developed by the Superintendent or adapt the model program framework or create a custom educator preparation program and have it approved by the Board under Board Rule [R277-303](#). For more information on how to apply for program approval, visit the USBE's APPEL Program Approval [website](#). Applications that do not meet these minimum expectations will not be approved.

Once a program is approved, the USBE will need to be notified of any changes to the program's approved application. Significant changes to a program may need to be reviewed and approved by USBE as amended. For questions about submitting program changes for approval, contact [appel@schools.utah.gov](mailto:appel@schools.utah.gov). Changes could include change in program leadership, change in coursework offered, pedagogical performance assessment supported, etc.

If the program is approved but does not have any candidates enrolled, the program may remain open if the program leadership team agrees to stay up to date on USBE policy changes regarding APPEL programs and licensing requirements. This could include attending the monthly APPEL Directors meetings or watching the recordings of these meetings and reviewing newsletters and email communications sent from USBE. Programs that remain open but do not have candidates enrolled are still subject to Program Review and are required to submit Annual Reports.

### **Program Leadership**

The success of an APPEL program largely depends on having a strong leadership team. The APPEL leadership team should consist of a variety of individuals who assume various roles and responsibilities. Multiple roles may be assigned to one

leadership team member. Please review the suggested leadership titles and their roles/responsibilities and qualifications/skills on the [LEA APPEL Leadership Team](#) page.

USB E will support APPEL Program Directors and Leadership Teams by fostering collaboration, sharing resources, strengthening personnel practice, and providing support for programs. Program Directors will need to intentionally provide opportunities to build and maintain the capacity of their program's personnel in their duties and responsibilities through professional development or other learning opportunities. Directors should consider program-specific needs of training and monitoring personnel effectiveness as well as ensuring seamless personnel staff changes.

## **Program Enrollment**

### **Program Entry Requirements**

Each program will establish a policy that includes program entry requirements and criteria for maintaining enrollment in the program. USB E Administrative Rules do not specify program enrollment criteria for APPEL programs. However, candidates need to be officially 'enrolled' in an approved program before the program can start working with candidates in meeting professional educator license requirements. APPEL programs will share their program's enrollment policies with USB E upon request.

Examples of enrollment criteria that have been adopted by approved APPEL programs include the following:

- Employed in a partnership LEA (either as a teacher of record or in some capacity)
- Have an Associate Educator License (AEL) or has applied for an AEL
- Have a Bachelor's degree or CTE industry equivalent
- Signed a written agreement to complete program requirements in a specified time
- Program has reviewed transcripts and a professional learning plan is established
- Had an assigned mentor

### **Maintaining Enrollment**

Once candidates are officially enrolled in an APPEL program, candidates should be making 'adequate progress' towards earning a professional educator license. USB E

Administrative Rules do not define what constitutes 'adequate progress' towards licensure. Each program should establish policies on how candidates will maintain enrollment in their programs. Once these policies are established, APPEL Programs may unenroll candidates from their programs if they determine the candidate is not making adequate progress.

The following are examples of approved APPEL program policies on maintaining enrollment in their programs:

- Candidates are expected to meet certain benchmarks (regular meetings, check-ins, evaluations, complete courses, meet competencies, etc.)
- Programs may unenroll a candidate if they are no longer employed in the LEA
- Programs may allow a 'leave of absence' if the candidate plans to return to employment in the LEA; some programs have established guidelines are complete paperwork, regular check-ins or communication with candidate, and maximum timeline for leave of absence

### **Transferring Programs**

Candidates may transfer from one APPEL program to another due to changes in employment status or other circumstances. Programs who accept candidates who were previously enrolled in another APPEL program are expected to contact the previous program's director and request the candidate's program files and any pertinent information about the candidate's progress towards licensure. It may be necessary to contact the candidate's previous school/LEA's HR Department to obtain the candidate employment records. Programs should treat candidate files as if they contain sensitive information and follow USBE Data Privacy Rules regarding sharing sensitive information when they share candidate files both within a program and between programs. For more information, visit [Utah Data Governance & Student Privacy Guidebook](#).

At their own discretion, programs may accept candidates' approved coursework, observations, evidence of demonstrated competency, PPA scores, and any other evidence completed in previous APPEL programs. Regardless of how many times a candidate may have been evaluated in their previous APPEL program, the candidate must be formally evaluated at least once by the APPEL program that recommends them.

## **Program Fees**

USBE Administrative Rules do not specify whether APPEL programs may charge a fee to applicants or partnership LEAs within an APPEL program. The decision on whether a program may charge fees for services rendered is the discretion of the programs director or LEA governing board. This may include fees for coursework or enrollment.

## **Transcripts**

USBE Board Rule [R277-301-5](#) requires that all candidates for a Professional Educator License must hold a bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited institution, or skill certification in a specific CTE area as established by the Superintendent. Verification of these credentials comes from reviewing official transcripts received from the institution awarding the degree. Other qualifications, such as coursework completed can be verified by receiving and reviewing official transcripts.

### **Receiving Official Transcripts**

Each program shall establish a policy on how they will receive and review official transcripts. Each PLP shall contain and store official university transcripts and Midas transcripts for all coursework that is used toward license requirements. Refer to the [Transcript Training video](#) for additional information on receiving and reviewing transcripts.

### **Reviewing Transcripts**

Any university and Midas coursework that is used to meet PLP pedagogy and content requirements shall be reviewed by the transcript team to ensure that the course meets competency requirements from Board Rule and content endorsement forms (For example: A course that contains Special Education in the title might not always meet the special education topics in Board Rule for a general education teacher). All coursework should be reviewed for course descriptions. If the course description is unclear, please contact [USBE APPEL](#) or [Content Specialist](#) for assistance in determining whether a course meets requirements.

Transcript reviews are conducted as outlined in the guidelines provided by USBE including these processes:



- Pedagogy Consultant reviews official transcripts, MIDAS transcripts, collects course descriptions for all pedagogy coursework to detail which competencies are met.
- Content Consultant reviews official transcripts, MIDAS transcripts, and Endorsement forms, collecting course descriptions for all content and methods coursework. Consult with USBE specialists as needed.
- Plan Writer collates the Consultants' results and creates draft PLPs for each of the candidates.

## **Sharing and Storing Transcripts**

USBE and programs can release records with a signed consent from the educator. This form is located on the website: [APPEL Consent to Release Educator's Records](#). Programs should treat candidate files, including transcripts, as if they contain sensitive information and follow USBE Data Privacy Rules regarding sharing and storing sensitive information when they share and store candidate files both within a program and between programs.

## **Establishing the Professional Learning Plan (PLP)**

The Professional Learning Plan (PLP) is a plan created by individual APPEL programs, for each educator in the APPEL program. They are designed to help educators in the APPEL Program meet all the requirements for a professional license.

## **Candidate Initial Evaluation**

Every APPEL candidate's files should be reviewed initially to identify content and pedagogical competencies already met by the candidate. The Pedagogy Consultant reviews official transcripts, MIDAS transcripts, collects course descriptions for all pedagogy coursework to detail which competencies are met. Content Consultant reviews official transcripts, MIDAS transcripts, and Endorsement forms, collecting course descriptions for all content and methods coursework. They consult with USBE specialists as needed. The Plan Writer uses the information provided by the Pedagogy Consultant and the Content Consultant to create a draft Professional Learning Plan (PLP) for each candidate. The draft PLP should be established no later than thirty days after the candidate is admitted into the APPEL program.

An initial consultation meeting is held between the candidate and their designated APPEL Support Team, which should include the Program Director (or designated

team member), the building administrator or candidate's evaluator, and mentor-educator. The following is an example of an initial meeting:

- The candidate is presented with the draft PLP
- The APPEL Support Team discusses the contents of the PLP with the candidate, including what requirements have been met and what requirements still need to be met
- The team establishes a proposed timeline for when requirements will be met
- The APPEL Support Team shares how they will support the candidate in meeting the requirements by the proposed timeline.

### **The Professional Learning Plan (PLP)**

USBE has provided Professional License Plan (PLP) templates for [Elementary/Early Childhood](#) and [Secondary/CTE](#) license areas. The PLP template includes all requirements from Board Rule, including General Teacher Preparation, Content Knowledge and Pedagogy, Clinical Experience Competencies and UETS evaluations, and the Pedagogical Performance Assessment. For the Secondary and CTE License Areas, the Content Knowledge and Pedagogy requirements are defined on the respective endorsement form. Endorsement forms should be used and incorporated as part of the candidate's file and are an important part of the candidate's PLP. APPEL programs may use the PLP Templates USBE has provided or they may design their own PLPs. If the program designs their own PLPs, the following elements need to be in the PLP:

- a. A checklist of completing general pedagogy, content, clinical, and PPA requirements
- b. Information on when/where their bachelor's degree was earned & degree major; or CTE Industry equivalence
- c. Date of admittance into program
- d. Date PLP was established
- e. Date of initial consultation
- f. Date of program completion
- g. Signature from candidate, mentor, principal or evaluator, program director, others as appropriate verifying PLP is complete

### **Additional Consultation Meetings**

Additional consultation meetings may be held mid year and end of year. Regular progress meetings with the candidate, Program Director, Progress Monitor, school administrator and mentor-educator(s) are conducted to ensure the candidate is

progressing through the PLP according to the proposed PLP timeline. All candidates must have at least one consultation meeting a year with their APPEL support team.

## **Utah Professional Educator License Requirements**

An educator preparation program shall demonstrate how it will ensure participants are prepared to meet the [Utah Effective Teaching Standards](#) (UETS), have met the competencies required in all applicable Board Rules, and have sufficiently demonstrated the ability to work in the applicable license area and subject area ([R277-303-4](#)). The educator competencies and licensing requirements for the early childhood, elementary, secondary and CTE license areas are outlined in Board Rule [R277-304](#) and include requirements in three main areas:

- General Teacher Preparation
- Content Knowledge & Pedagogy
- Clinical Experience Competency & Dispositions

This section outlines all professional licensure requirements and educator competencies defined in Board Rule and provides guidance on how APPEL programs will document how each candidate has met the competencies and licensure requirement.

### **General Teacher Preparation**

Candidates who enroll in APPEL programs prior to September 1, 2025 will meet current General Teacher Preparation competencies outlined in [R277-304-4](#). Candidates who enroll in an APPEL program on or after September 1, 2025 are expected to meet the new General Teacher Preparation competencies in [R277-304-4](#). Information on the 2025 General Teacher Preparation competencies will be provided in the 2025 APPEL Directors Handbook.

Current General Teacher Preparation competencies have traditionally been met by completing general pedagogy coursework. General Pedagogy courses may be offered through an approved Utah university or an APPEL program. Programs may choose to address General Teacher Preparation competencies in multiple courses or in one large course. If an APPEL program chooses to create and administer courses designed to meet educator competencies, these courses must be reviewed and approved by USBE Licensing Staff prior to implementation in the APPEL program. The General Teacher Preparation competencies have generally been organized into the following five courses:

### Instruction, Technology, Assessment, Planning

- Designing, administering, and reviewing formative and summative assessments in a meaningful and ethical manner
- Improving student outcomes by using student assessment data (both formative and summative)
- Analyzing instructional practices and making necessary adjustments to personalize learning
- Using strategies to promote active student engagement
- Systematically designing instruction toward a specific learning goal by:
  - Providing tier one and tier two instruction and intervention on the Utah core standards including the use of competency-based learning
  - Using a variety of evidence-based instructional strategies, including explicit instruction and scaffold supports
  - Integrating technology to support and meaningfully supplement the learning of students
  - Designing developmentally appropriate and authentic learning experiences
  - Developing higher order thinking and metacognitive skills
  - Integrating cross-disciplinary skills, such as literacy and numeracy, into instruction
- Providing positive and constructive feedback to guide students' learning and behavior

### Creating and Managing a Learning Environment

- Providing positive and constructive feedback to guide students' learning and behavior
- Establishing a consistent, organized, and respectful learning environment, including:
  - Positive behavior interventions and supports within a multi-tiered system of support
  - Classroom procedures and routines
  - Trauma-informed practices
  - Restorative practices

### Introduction to Special Education

- Knowledge and skills to assist in the identification of and instruction for students with disabilities in the general classroom, including:
  - Knowledge of the IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

- Knowledge of the role of non-special-education teachers in the education of student with disabilities
- Knowledge and skills in implementing least restrictive behavior interventions
- Skills in implementing and assessing the results of interventions
- Skills in the implementation of an educational program with accommodations, modifications, services, and supports established by an IEP or a 504 plan for students with disabilities in the general education classroom

#### Strategies for Working with Diverse Learners

- Knowledge and skills designed to meet the needs of diverse student populations in the general education classroom, including:
  - Allowing students alternative ways to demonstrate learning that are sensitive to student diversity
  - Creating an environment that is sensitive to multiple experiences and diversity
  - Designing, adapting, and delivering instruction to address each student's diverse learning strengths and needs
  - Incorporating language development into planning, instruction, and intervention for students learning English, using their first language as an asset while supporting development of English proficiency
- Effectively communicating and collaborating with parents, colleagues, and administration.

#### Literacy in the Content Area (for Secondary/CTE license areas only)

- Incorporating literacy and quantitative learning objectives in content specific classes in alignment with the Utah Core Standards
- Planning instruction and assessment in content-specific teams and in cross-curricular teams
- Integrating cross-disciplinary skills, such as literacy and numeracy, into instruction

A number of Utah-based universities offer general pedagogy coursework that have been reviewed by USBE staff. APPEL directors are encouraged to collaborate with and contact universities about what courses they may need offered. Not all courses are offered every semester. The following universities offer general pedagogy coursework to candidates enrolled in APPEL programs:

- Southern Utah University (<https://www.suu.edu/ed/k12/appel.html>)
- Salt Lake Community College  
(<http://www.slcc.edu/workforce-training/teacher-education-index.aspx>)
- University of Utah (traditionally offered during the summer)  
(<https://uite.utah.edu/programs/summer-course-schedules/>)

## Course Approval

While General Teacher Preparation competencies have traditionally been addressed through five general pedagogy courses, APPEL programs may choose how they want to support their educators in meeting these competencies. Programs may offer multiple courses or one large course. If an APPEL program chooses to offer their own coursework or use a course that is not offered through a Utah university, the courses will need to be approved by USBE and available for USBE credit through MIDAS. To offer USBE credit, courses have to be approved in MIDAS *before* candidates enroll in the courses and classes start.

The course approval process in MIDAS includes a review of how the course meets the [Utah Professional Learning Standards](#), the Utah Effective Teaching Standards and the competencies in Board Rule. The approval process will take 3-4 weeks. For instructions and resources on how to get coursework approved in MIDAS, visit the [APPEL Directors Collaboration Folder](#).

## Demonstrated Competency

Teacher candidates who already have the knowledge and skills necessary to demonstrate the educator competencies may submit evidence of competency in-lieu of taking a course. Board Rule [R277-304-2](#) defines ‘competency’ as evidence through demonstration in a higher education or preK-12 classroom setting of successful application of knowledge and skills. Candidates may complete a [USBE-approved microcredential](#) or submit evidence of demonstrated competency as outlined on [this document](#).

Programs wishing to implement evidence of demonstrated competency should work with USBE to ensure that the evidence meets the minimum standards. Evidence of demonstrated competency must include documentation the candidate has prepared and planned the demonstration of competency, implemented or demonstrated the competency, and reflected on their demonstrated competency. For more information on how programs may collect artifacts for demonstrating competency, see the following [guidance document](#).

## Content Knowledge & Pedagogy

A teacher preparation program shall require competency in content and content-specific pedagogy appropriate for the area of licensure (R277-304-4(4)). APPEL programs administered by local school districts and charters, or consortiums of districts and/or charter schools can recommend candidates for licensure in Early Childhood, Elementary, Secondary and Career & Technical Education (CTE) license areas. Candidates seeking licensure in Special Education license areas will need to enroll in the APPEL-SpEd program administered by the Utah State Board of Education. For more information on the APPEL-SpEd program, visit the [website](#).

**Elementary & Early Childhood License Areas.** The content knowledge and pedagogical competencies for the Early Childhood and Elementary license areas are defined in Board Rule [R277-304-5](#) and are outlined on the [Elementary and Early Childhood Content Requirements in Board Rule](#) document. Candidates are expected to demonstrate these competencies through coursework, microcredentials, or other methods of demonstrated competency.

Candidates earning an elementary or early childhood license area are not required to earn an endorsement to be qualified to teach general education students in grades K-6, unless they want to be qualified to teach content specific courses to students in 7th and 8th grades or other specialized elementary courses, such as Dual Language Immersion.

*Foundations of Reading.* APPEL candidates earning a professional license in elementary, early childhood, or special education are required to pass the Foundations of Reading exam if their PLP was established after August 31, 2022. Preparation programs may request vouchers for their candidates who are ready to take the test. The voucher will be entered as a code during the registration process in lieu of payment. Vouchers cannot be applied retroactively to existing registrations, so candidates must acquire their voucher codes before they register. For additional questions about requesting vouchers for candidates, reach out to Lisa McLachlan at [lisa.mclachlan@schools.utah.gov](mailto:lisa.mclachlan@schools.utah.gov). For additional information on the Foundations of Reading test, visit Pearson's website at: <https://www.ut.nesinc.com/>. A passing score of 240 on the Foundations of Reading will go into effect on September 1, 2024. Individuals who apply for licensure on or after September 1, 2024 will need to pass the Foundations of Reading test with a score of 240 or higher to receive their license.

**Secondary & Career and Technical Education (CTE) License Areas.** Content knowledge and pedagogy requirements for secondary candidates are defined on their respective endorsement form. Candidates for secondary and CTE licenses must be recommended for at least one professional endorsement with their professional secondary license. All requirements on the endorsement forms must be completed and forms kept on file for at least 5 years. Candidates who are working on retiring endorsement forms must be recommended no later 6/30/2025. Programs that do not have content specialists are encouraged to establish program policies that require candidates to submit their endorsement applications for USBE approval prior to being recommended for a professional license.

### **Clinical Experience Competencies and Dispositions**

Board Rule [R277-304](#) outlines clinical experience competencies each candidate needs to demonstrate in a classroom with students before being recommended for professional licensure. A teacher preparation program shall require multiple opportunities for a program applicant to successfully demonstrate application of knowledge and skills gained through the program in one or more clinical experiences in collaboration with a licensed teacher over an extended period of time in each of the following competencies:

- Implementing the planning and design, delivery, facilitation, assessment, evaluation, and reflection of a unit of instruction
- Revising instructional plans for future implementation or reteaching concepts as appropriate
- Implementing the accommodations, modifications, services, and supports as outlined in a student's IEP or 504 plan
- Evaluating student artifacts and assessments
- Establishing and maintaining classroom procedures and routines that include positive behavior interventions and supports
- Establishing and maintaining a positive learning climate
- Reflecting on the teaching process and justifying instructional decisions
- Participating in at least one IEP meeting or parental consultation regarding a student that the program applicant has instructed
- Consulting with qualified personnel, such as a mental health or behavior professional, regarding the emotional well-being of students and responding appropriately

Documentation the candidates have met these competencies could include a description of how each competency was met. To see an example of acceptable description of evidence, please visit the [Model PLP Checklist](#).



## Candidate Teaching Evaluations

The school administrator will formally evaluate the candidate's classroom mastery of the [Utah Effective Teaching Standards](#) (UETS) and disposition for teaching at least once a school year. The administrator will also observe the candidate multiple times throughout the year, including drop-ins and other informal observations.

Informal observations and formal evaluations of APPEL candidates are part of the LEA's evaluation system and must align to [Board Rule R277-323](#) and [R277-329](#). This includes multiple opportunities for the candidate to meet with their administrator and provide additional information throughout the process. All evaluation systems used with APPEL programs must align to the Utah Effective Teaching Standards and the public education evaluation framework for school districts as outlined in [R277-323](#) and [R277-329](#).

There are several resources available on the USBE website to assist with candidate teaching evaluations. These include a [pre-observation tool](#), a [post observation tool](#), a formative feedback form and the [Utah Teacher Observation Tool 4.1](#).

Candidates must have at least one formal evaluation in the program that will recommend them that aligns to the UETS and includes a description of the indicator & evaluation level outcomes (e.g. 1-not effective, 2-effective, 3-highly effective). If a candidate spends more than 5 months in a program, they must also have at least one additional formal or informal evaluation. These evaluations must contain feedback on their teaching performance. To document progress over time, the school administrator observes and evaluates the candidate a minimum of two times per school year using the UETS rubric or an LEA evaluation tool that is based on the UETS. To successfully complete the UETS portion of the Professional Learning Plan, the candidate must meet a minimum of Emerging/Minimal proficiency in all UETS standards.

The Clinical Experience Coordinator selects, trains, and monitors mentor-educators. The candidate's assigned mentor-educator models, advises' and supports the candidate through the program experience. The mentor-educator ensures the candidate understands the ten standards and is developing competency in teaching as outlined in the [Utah Effective Teaching Standards](#) (UETS).

Progression towards competency demonstration will be determined by the mentor-educator reviewing curriculum lesson plans and observations including

discussion and reflection with the candidate and/or the administrator evaluation reports. Teacher artifacts such as a portfolio, written curriculum and assessments, reflections, etc. should be part of the demonstration of competency. During reflection times, the mentor-educator and candidate will jointly discuss the state of competencies and identify further work that needs to be done to demonstrate mastery for the administrative evaluation.

### **Teacher Dispositions**

Teacher preparation programs shall provide evidence that the program considers a candidate's dispositions and suitability for teaching ([R277-304-4\(8\)](#)). A candidate's dispositions for teaching may be evaluated in tandem with formal evaluations or may be evaluated separately. Programs may define the essential dispositions they expect from their candidates and how they will evaluate candidates' dispositions.

### **The Pedagogical Performance Assessment (PPA)**

As of May 2nd, 2024, the Pedagogical Performance Assessment is no longer required for licensure. Candidates may choose to complete one of the PPAs as a method of demonstrating competency. Please use the [PPA General Competency crosswalk](#) to determine which competencies a candidate may satisfy through passing the PPA.

### **Mentor Educators**

Per Board Rule [R277-308](#), Candidates enrolled in APPEL programs must be assigned a mentor as part of their induction program. The mentor-educator is an advocate for the candidate and helps them through their educator preparation experience by guiding the candidate through school and district policies and procedures, answering questions, providing resources, reviewing curriculum plans, observing instruction and providing feedback, ensuring the candidate is familiar with the [Utah Effective Teaching Standards](#) (UETS), and coaches them through the educator dispositions and clinical experience competencies. The key mentor-educator responsibility is to observe and give feedback in order to help the candidate meet the pedagogical requirements described in [R277-301.5\(5\)](#) including the Utah Effective Teaching Standards described in [R277-330](#). The mentor-educator does not serve as an evaluator of the educator. Building administrators or candidates' supervisors are the appropriate individuals to formally evaluate candidates' pedagogical skills.

Mentor-educators are selected by the Program Director and building principal, in consultation with the APPEL Leadership Team with the following criteria:

- Possesses a Utah professional educator license and preferably at least three years teaching experience;
- Performs, or has performed, substantially the same instructional duties as the candidate;
- Models effective standards-based teaching and demonstrates high leverage practices;
- Displays strong intra- and interpersonal and teaming skills;
- Has or will have participated in state-hosted Mentor Training in observation and quality feedback skills.

Mentor-educators should meet regularly with the Clinical Experience Coordinator to collaborate on candidates' progress in meeting program requirements, including building their pedagogical skills, and receiving additional support in mentoring and coaching candidates. Release time may need to be provided to mentor-educators to help them more effectively provide these supports to their candidates.

For additional information on the role of the Mentor, please see [Mentor Roles and Competencies](#).

### **Remediation**

Every APPEL program should have a policy that describes how the program will plan for candidate remediation and exit counseling if necessary. The Progress Monitor ensures a candidate demonstrates progress, over time, in all of the areas of the PLP. The Progress Monitor notifies the APPEL leadership team if a candidate does not show sufficient progress. Insufficient progress may lead to program probation, remediation and exit counseling as needed. If placed on program probation, a candidate must work with their mentor-educator and PLP mentor to develop a plan for improvement including a specific action plan for each appropriate area and a specific timeline to demonstrate improvement. As necessary, the program will release the candidate from regular teaching responsibilities to increase observation of other educators, make arrangements for the mentor-educator to team-teach or observe the candidate, or increase preparation time to make appropriate adjustments to curriculum development. If the candidate does not demonstrate sufficient progress by the deadline established in the candidate's improvement plan, they may be removed from the program.

## **Program Completion & Recommendation**

When the candidate has successfully completed all the Utah Professional Educator License requirements, the candidate is eligible to be recommended for a Professional Educator License. The Program Director will ensure the program has evidence the candidate has completed all program and licensure requirements and will recommend the candidate for professional licensure.

Programs recommending their first candidate for professional licensure are required to meet with USBE Licensing Staff virtually to review the candidate files before the recommendation will be accepted by USBE. Programs that have been placed on probation by USBE will also need to have each completers' files reviewed by USBE before recommending their candidates for professional licensure. Programs may reach out to USBE Staff for assistance with questions about candidate files or to review candidates files at any time.

To recommend a candidate for a professional license, the director will send a pdf copy of a letter of recommendation to [appel@schools.utah.gov](mailto:appel@schools.utah.gov). The letter should be on official letterhead from the LEA and must be written by the APPEL Program Director. It should include the candidates name, cactus number, the name of the license and endorsements they are being recommended for, the date their PLP was established and be signed by the APPEL Program Director. [Click here](#) for a link to the recommendation template.

## **Records Management**

USBE provides initial training on how to manage and organize the documents and records required in the program for all candidates. APPEL programs are expected to maintain all program and candidate records for up to 5 years. The following list provides an example of the types of documents programs are expected to maintain.

### **Program Documentation**

- EPP Annual Reports
- Program policies, including entry requirements, candidate enrollment criteria, clinical experience placement, mentors selection and assignment, and candidate support.
- Course Content, including syllabi, attendance or event logs, and course requirements/learning outcomes

### Candidate Documentation

- Professional Learning Plans
- Official transcripts from regionally accredited institutions and CTE certifications
- Endorsement forms
- Assessment scores (e.g. PPAT, Praxis)
- Documentation of communications related to the candidate's progress
- Notes from consultation meetings, clinical experiences, and reflection conversations.
- Relevant educator artifacts to document progress and evidence of competency

### Document Sharing & Storage

- Create a personal, private, password-protected storage area for the candidate to develop and maintain personal artifacts.
- Create a shared, password-protected storage area to house APPEL documents
- Create a document sharing strategy to give restricted access to PLPs from draft to completion.
- Set up bookmarks, etc. for searching for course descriptions, regional accreditation status, MIDAS transcripts, etc. to support the transcript review process
- Create a tracking process to manage clinical experience schedules, consultation events, coursework progress, and shared documentation for each candidate.

### **Candidate/Completer Files**

Educator files should be kept for 5 years after recommendation or when the individual is no longer enrolled in the program. The following elements need to be in the candidate/completer file:

- PLP
- Evidence/artifacts to support meeting competencies
- Evaluations that align to the Utah Effective Teaching Standards
- PPA/Praxis score reports
- Disposition & clinical observation forms
  - The PLP will show how they met competencies with a brief description
- Official Transcripts

- PLP
- Evidence/artifacts to support meeting competencies
- Evaluations - explain the purpose & the expectations of the evaluations (align to the UETS); expectations in Board Rule;
- PPA/Praxis score reports
- Disposition & clinical observation forms
  - PLP – met competencies & brief description
- Official Transcripts

Syllabi from local and state professional development should be kept in the candidates files if they are being used as evidence of demonstrated competency, along with records and notes from follow up meetings with the APPEL director, instructional coaches, and observations of master educators.

### **Program Review**

Per Board Rule ([R277-303](#)), approved educator preparation programs will be reviewed by the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) at least once every five years. Program reviews are intended to check for compliance of Board Rule and provide opportunities for feedback and collaboration between program leadership teams and USBE staff. USBE will work with each program to establish a program review schedule and communicate expectations for the review, including program requirements, site visit schedules, and inspection of program documents.

### **What to Expect During Your Program Review**

APPEL program reviews will consist of two parts: 1) reviewing a random selection of 5-7 program candidate/completer files, and 2) a follow up discussion between APPEL Leadership Teams and USBE staff on program strengths, challenges, and needed support. USBE Staff will conduct a review of 5-7 randomly selected candidate files who are either currently enrolled in the program or have completed the program in the last 5 years. Each candidate/completer' file should contain the following documentation:

- Completed professional learning plan
- Evidence the candidate was assigned a mentor & worked with the mentor to meet competencies
- Evidence that an initial evaluation was completed within a reasonable time (preferably 30 days from when they are admitted into the program)

- Evidence the program has supported and evaluated candidates in demonstrating competency in meeting the Utah Effective Teaching Standards proficiency levels.
- Evidence the completer has knowledge of the Utah Ethical Standards for Educators contained in Rule [R277-217](#);
- Evidence the candidate has completed the following licensing requirements as outlined in Board Rule:
  - General Teacher Preparation (general pedagogy)
  - Content Knowledge & Pedagogy for the license area/endorsement(s)
    - Elementary content knowledge and pedagogy
    - Secondary/CTE endorsement form(s)
  - Clinical Experiences, Clinical Competencies, and UETS evaluations
  - Evidence of observations of master educators
- Any applicable supporting documentation including official transcripts, Praxis score reports, classroom observations, administrative evaluations, course descriptions, competency-based scoring rubrics, etc.

Candidate/completer files will be reviewed by USBE staff during the program review and a member of the APPEL Leadership Team will need to be available to answer questions while USBE staff are reviewing files. The program is expected to have all supporting documentation available for review by the USBE team during the scheduled Program Review time.

After the review of candidate/completer files, the USBE team and the APPEL Leadership Team will discuss the following questions about the program:

- How does your APPEL Program Director build and maintain the capacity of program personnel in their duties and responsibilities?
- What is working well in your program/team?
- What issues or challenges does the team face?
- What support does the program need from USBE?

This discussion will take approximately 30 minutes and most, if not all members of the APPEL Program Leadership Team (e.g. director, content & pedagogy consultants, clinical experience coordinator, progress monitor) will need to attend and participate in the discussion.

## **Program Review Outcomes**

USBE Staff will use the APPEL Program Review Rubric (see page 3) to guide the review and provide feedback to the program. For programs who are reviewed this year, USBE will make one of three possible outcome decisions at the conclusion of the review:

- Program Reviewed with suggestions (program will be reviewed again in 3-5 years)
- Program Reviewed with stipulations (program will receive another review within 1 year, with additional supports as needed)
- Program Reviewed with notice of probation (program will receive a Corrective Action document that outlines next steps)

If a program is reviewed with stipulations and those stipulations are not addressed within 1 year, the program will be placed on official probation and on a corrective action plan for at least one year and . If the items are not addressed on the corrective action plan during the probationary period, the program's approval status will be revoked and the program will no longer be able to recommend educators for licensure. USBE will provide feedback and a detailed description of the program review's outcomes via email within two business days after the scheduled visit. [Link to APPEL Program Review Rubric](#)

### **EPP Annual Report**

According to Utah Administrative Rule [R277-303](#), Utah Educator Preparation Programs shall submit an annual report to the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) by October 15th of each year. Information included in the EPP Annual Report will be used to inform the Superintendent's Annual Report to the Legislature and Title II reporting requirements to the U.S. Department of Education.

USBE Staff will share instructions and information on how to submit the annual report by August 15th of each year. The Annual Report generally includes an enrollment count that documents all candidates enrolled in the APPEL program during the previous school year and follow up questions on program policies, practices, and changes. Completed reports should be submitted to USBE no later than 5pm on October 15th.

### **General Licensing Q&A**

#### **License Structure**

Each educator license has a license level and a license area of concentration. Some licenses have an endorsement to indicate a specialization in a content area or



particular set of skills. The [Utah Educator License](#) document provides an overview of the new licensing structure.

An educator license is like a tree:

1. Trunk is the license
2. Branches are the license areas
3. Leaves are the endorsements

Licenses, license areas of concentration and endorsements can be issued at the License Level - There are three educator license levels approved by USBE:

LEA-Specific, Associate Educator License (AEL) and Professional Educator License.

- LEA-Specific - LEA-Specific license LEA's can request that an individual they have hired to teach, be recommended for an LEA- Specific license. This license is valid for 3 years, and may be renewed. It is non-transferable to other LEAs or states.
- Associate - Associate licenses are granted when a candidate has met a minimum number of requirements. To see requirements for specific license areas, [click here](#). Candidates apply for this license through USBE. AELs are temporary, non transferable licenses and only valid for 3 years. Candidates who hold an associate license are assumed to be working toward a professional license through an educator preparation program. In most cases, an associate license may be extended for two additional years, with the exception of special education and service providers license areas. Holding an AEL is not required to earn a professional license.
- Professional - Professional licenses are earned by completing all educator preparation competencies and licensing requirements, usually through an educator preparation program. A candidate must be recommended for a professional license by their preparation program, which could be a university program or an Alternative Pathway to Professional Educator License (APPEL) program. A professional license is valid for 5 years and can be renewed.

**License Area.** The license area designates the area or grade level the license covers. The following license areas are:

- Early Childhood (PK-3)
- Elementary (K-8)
- Secondary (6-12)
- Career and Technical Education or CTE (6-12)
- Preschool Special Education (Birth - Age 5)

- Special Education (K-12+)
- Audiologist
- Deaf Education
- School Counselor
- School Leadership
- School Psychologist
- School Social Worker
- Speech Language Pathologist

Endorsements attach to a license area. The endorsement form will specify which license areas each endorsement can attach to. Use these links to access [Secondary](#) and [CTE](#) endorsements.

To view a list of which license areas and endorsements qualify candidates for an assignment, [click here](#).

Visit the [USBELicensing website](#) for other Frequently Asked Questions about licensing.

Each educator license has a license area; some have an endorsement to indicate a specialization in a content area or particular set of skills. License areas of concentration and endorsements have parallel levels to the educator license. Note: If the expiration date field is blank, then the license area and/or endorsement expires at the same date as the license expiration date.

## **Funding Deadlines**

There are two licensing funding deadlines each school year. The Educator Salary Adjustment, or ESA, funding deadline is October 1st of each year (see [R277-110](#)). Educators must have an educator license (i.e. LEA-Specific, Associate, or Professional) and their assignment and license must be requested in CACTUS by October 25th to receive funds. The Professional Staff Costs, or PSC, funding deadline is June 29th of each year. Educators must be qualified for their assignment and have a Bachelor's degree posted in CACTUS.

To request an LEA-Specific license for an educator, the LEA adopts a policy for LEA-Specific licenses and holds a public meeting of their governing body who approves the LEA-Specific licenses. The LEA posts the educator data in CACTUS and requests the license under the LEA-Specific tab in CACTUS. Please Note: all educators must have completed the Educator Ethics Review within a year and have a cleared background check before any new license, including an LEA-Specific license, can be awarded in CACTUS. Background Checks & Ethics Reviews can be

completed via [USIMS](#).

### **Educator Look-Up Tool**

If you are searching for an educator's licensing information in Utah, please refer to the [Utah State Board of Education Educator Look-up Tool](#) and type in the first and last name of the educator. School information is not required.

### **Resources**

USBE provides various trainings, monthly meetings, resources, and communication for APPEL Directors and their leadership teams. The following is a list of resources available. For additional resources, visit the [APPEL Program website](#) under the Resources tab.

[USBE APPEL-SpEd Program](#)

[APPEL Model Program Framework](#)

[Transcript Training Video](#)

[APPEL Consent to Release Educator's Records](#)

[APPEL PLP Checklist for Elementary and Early Childhood](#)

[APPEL PLP Checklist for Secondary and CTE](#)

[Evidence of Demonstrated Competency in General Teacher Preparation](#)

[Demonstrated Competency Rubric](#)

[Link to APPEL Directors Collaboration Folder](#)

[LEA APPEL Leadership Team](#)