



Teacher Certification Policy

The Cottonwood School is committed to providing a high-quality educational program is dependent upon the employment of certificated staff who are adequately prepared and have demonstrated proficiency in basic skills and in the subject matter to be taught. The Executive Director designee shall ensure that persons employed to fill positions requiring certification qualifications possess the appropriate credential, permit, or other certification document from the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) and fulfill any additional state, federal, or the Charter School requirements for the position.

The purpose of The Cottonwood School Governing Board approving this Teacher Certification Policy is to accomplish the following:

1. Outline the State Requirements for Appropriately Assigned and Credentialed Teachers
2. Define Valid Certification
3. Establish the Requirement for Charter Schools and Teaching Credentials
4. Outline the Process for Maintaining Certification Documents
5. Establish the Support to Teachers Holding Preliminary Credentials
6. Identify the Procedures for Hiring Based on Unavailability of Credentialed Teacher
7. Outline the Declaration of Need Requirements
8. Establish the Procedures for Employing Non-Credentialed Teachers

1. State Requirements for Appropriately Assigned and Credentialed Teachers: State financing of school instruction is premised on pupils being taught by teachers who have authorization from the State of California to teach in public schools. As such, state law establishes various conditions, requirements, and penalties on charter schools to ensure that only authorized personnel are hired to teach. In addition, the State establishes requirements for the issuance of teacher credentials and other requirements designed to ensure that teachers are appropriately assigned.

2. Define Valid Certification: A valid certification is any state-issued certificate or credential (a “Credential”), including a vocational credential and internship credential or certificate, life document or diploma, emergency 30-day substitute teaching permit, or emergency permit or waiver, that is not expired or revoked.

3. Requirement for Charter Schools: Charter schools are required to hold the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (“CTC”) certificate, permit or other document required for the teacher’s certificated assignment. Teachers that were employed by The Cottonwood School during the 2019-20 school year shall have until July 1, 2025, to obtain the certificate required for the teacher’s certificated assignment. Teachers that are newly hired for their assignment in the 2020-21 school year and beyond, or who maintain employment at The Cottonwood School but

are assigned to a new teaching assignment, are required to hold the appropriate certification for their assignment.

In addition to any specific Credential required for the teacher's assignment, all teachers are required to hold a Credential to provide instruction to limited-English-proficient pupils. All teachers employed by The Cottonwood School shall have their professional fitness evaluated by the CTC by July 1, 2020.

- 4. Process for Maintaining Certification Documents:** The certificate, permit or other document shall be maintained and on file at the School and are subject to periodic inspection by the Buckeye Union Elementary School District.
- 5. Support for Teachers Holding Preliminary Credentials:** The Executive Director or designee shall provide assistance and support to teachers holding preliminary credentials to enable them to meet the qualifications required for the clear credential.
- 6. Hiring Based on Unavailability of Credentialed Teacher:** The Executive Director or designee shall make reasonable efforts to recruit a fully prepared teacher for each assignment. Whenever a teacher with a clear or preliminary credential is not available, the Executive Director or designee shall make reasonable efforts to recruit an individual for the assignment in the following order: (Education Code 44225.7)
 1. A candidate who enrolls in an approved intern program in the region of the Charter School and possesses an intern credential
 2. A candidate who is scheduled to complete preliminary credential requirements within six months and who holds a provisional internship permit (PIP) or short-term staff permit issued by the CTC
 3. The Board shall approve, as an action item at a public Board meeting, a notice of its intent to employ a PIP applicant for a specific position. (5 CCR 80021.1)
 4. An individual who holds an emergency permit or for whom a credential waiver has been granted by the CTC

Prior to requesting that the CTC issue an emergency permit pursuant to item #3 above or a limited assignment permit which allows a fully credentialed teacher to teach outside of his/her area of certification while working toward an added or supplementary authorization, the Board shall annually approve a Declaration of Need for Fully Qualified Educators. The Declaration of Need shall be approved by the Board as an action item at a regularly scheduled public Board meeting, with the entire Declaration of Need being included in the Board agenda. (Education Code 44225, 44225.7; 5 CCR 80023.2, 80026, 80027, 80027.1)

- 7. The Declaration of Need:** The Declaration of Need shall certify that there is an insufficient number of certificated persons who meet the Charter School's specified employment criteria for the position(s) and that the Charter School has made reasonable efforts to recruit individuals who meet the qualifications specified in items #1-2 above. The Declaration of Need shall also indicate the number and type of emergency permits that the Charter School estimates it will need during the valid period of the Declaration of Need, based on the previous year's actual

needs and projections of enrollment. Whenever the actual number of permits needed exceeds the estimate by 10 percent, the Board shall revise and resubmit the Declaration of Need. (5 CCR 80026)

- 8. Non-Credentialed Teachers:** Whenever it is necessary to employ non-credentialed teachers to fill a position requiring certification qualifications, the Executive Director or designee shall provide support and guidance in accordance with law to ensure the quality of the instructional programs. The Cottonwood School has the authority to request an emergency permit or a waiver from the CTC.