

# RHODE ISLAND

## REQUIREMENTS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATOR - BLIND/PARTIALLY SIGHTED

The Special Educator-Blind/Partially Sighted certificate is valid for service as a teacher of students who are blind/partially sighted ages birth through twenty-one. This certificate is also valid for services as a diagnostic prescriptive teacher (DPT) to this population.

### I. Certificate of Eligibility for Employment (CEE) – valid for three (3) years

The initial certificate in Rhode Island for all areas of certification is a CEE. The CEE is used to seek regular employment in the schools of Rhode Island for the field identified on the CEE. The CEE is also valid for service as a substitute teacher. If regular employment is not secured in the three (3) year period, the CEE can be renewed every three (3) years (SEE NOTE ONE) until regular employment is secured. To be issued a CEE in blind/partially sighted education an individual needs to satisfy all of the following:

- Bachelor's Degree from an accredited or an approved institution of higher education as defined in these regulations
- Eligibility for a Rhode Island Early Childhood, Elementary or Secondary teacher's certificate.
- Graduate of an approved program for the preparation of Blind/Partially Sighted teachers within the previous five (5) years from the date of application. Applicants who have not completed an approved program can be certified by transcript analysis by presenting evidence of six (6) semester hours of student teaching (SEE NOTE TWO) for the Blind/Partially Sighted and not less than twenty-four (24) semester hours of course work to include work in each of the following areas: Introduction to Education of Students who are Blind/Partially Sighted; Psychology of Students who are Blind/Partially Sighted; Anatomy and Physiology of the Human Eye; Assessment for Students who are Blind/Partially Sighted; Curriculum and Methods for Students who are Blind/Partially Sighted; Fundamentals of Reading and Writing Braille; Foundations of Orientation and Mobility; Techniques of Working with the Severe/Multi-Disabled; and Behavior Management.
- Applicants who have not previously been certified in the State of Rhode Island must achieve a score of at least 167 on the Principles of Learning and Teaching Test, K-6 or 7-12 prior to being certified.

### II. PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE: valid for five (5) years.

- The professional certificate is issued to individuals who secure regular employment in the schools of Rhode Island. Upon securing regular employment in Rhode Island, the CEE is used to request a five (5) year professional certificate. When applying for a five (5) year professional certificate the applicant must submit the CEE along with documentation from the employing authority that regular employment has been secured in the certification area of the CEE. Upon securing regular employment, the educator must write and get approved a five (5) year Individual Professional Development Plan (I-Plan).

(OVER)

- The professional certificate may be renewed every five (5) years upon the successful completion of an (I-Plan) that has been approved by the I-Plan

Review Panel. Individuals who have not served as an blind/partially sighted education teacher in Rhode Island for the five (5) year period are entitled to an extension to the professional certificate (SEE NOTE THREE) at the end of each five (5) year period without the completion of an I-Plan.

NOTE ONE (1): Individuals who do not renew their CEE or Professional Certificate within six (6) months from the date of expiration may be required to complete additional requirements under new regulations to re-instate the expired certificate.

NOTE TWO (2): The student teaching requirement may be waived for an applicant who has had two or more documented years of successful teaching experience in an approved blind/partially sighted setting. Certified teachers who have had two or more years of teaching experience and who seek Blind/Partially Sighted certification may fulfill the student teaching requirement by completing a one-year supervised internship at the blind/partially sighted level. After completing the necessary course work for the Blind/Partially Sighted certificate, and arranging through the local community for a one-year internship, the Superintendent of Schools may request the issuance of a one-year professional certificate. The Department of Education must approve the internship in advance and the supervisor must have at least 3 years of teaching experience. Upon successful completion of the internship, the individual will be issued a five (5) year professional certificate.

NOTE THREE (3): The five (5) year professional certificate requires the successful completion of an I-Plan every five years for renewal for individuals who have been in regular employment for the five-year term of the certificate. To be entitled to an extension of the professional certificate without the completion of an I-Plan, educators must document their employment history during the previous five (5) years. Educators holding regular employment who serve for less than 135 days during any school year are entitled to a one (1) year extension of the professional certificate for each year of service less than 135 days to complete their I-Plan. Educators who leave regular employment during the term of the professional certificate are also entitled to an extension of the professional certificate for the number of years not engaged in regular employment. Educators who return to regular employment, must modify, if appropriate, the I-Plan on record and complete the five (5) year I-Plan during the remaining term of the extended certificate.

Effective January 1, 2005