



**Participant Handbook
Cohort Six
2008**

Program of Alternative Certification for Educators (PACE)

To address critical teaching shortages, the South Carolina General Assembly provided for a conditional certification program as part of the 1984 Education Improvement Act. The purpose of the program is to enable degreed individuals, who otherwise do not meet certification requirements, to gain employment in the public schools in a PACE approved subject area teaching position.

Candidates who have completed the admission process must meet the following requirements to advance to the professional certification.

- A. Candidates will successfully complete the program designed to prepare them for the instructional environment. The program components will include, but not be limited to, training institutes, designated course requirements, and professional development meetings.
- B. Candidates will complete three successful years of teaching in a South Carolina public school including successful completion of the Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Professional Teaching (ADEPT) process. This will include successful participation in an induction program that includes a mentoring program, successful completion of the formal evaluation process, and a successful evaluation during the final year of program participation. Candidates cannot advance to a continuing contract until they have completed all PACE requirements and are eligible to advance to professional certification.
- C. Candidates will successfully complete three courses from the list of core courses approved by the Division of Educator Quality and Leadership on behalf of the State Board of Education. Courses must be selected from the list approved by the Division of Educator Quality and Leadership on behalf of the State Board of Education. All coursework must be from the list of pre-approved courses in the PACE Course Booklet or formally approved by the SDE.

The three required courses must be completed for college credit and an assigned grade of B or better at a South Carolina institution with a teacher education program that has been approved by the State Board of Education for certification purposes. All courses must be completed for three semester hours (or five quarter hours) of credit. Eligible participants may request approval of courses from other regionally accredited colleges or universities provided the coursework is at the graduate level. However, no more than one of the courses (completed

for three semester hours or five quarter hours of graduate credit) can be designated as a Professional Development (PD) course. Only the PD course could be completed as pass/fail.

- D. Candidates will earn a passing score on the appropriate level of the pedagogy Praxis II examination, *Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT)*, prior to advancing to the professional certificate.

Employment

A PACE participant must be hired as the teacher of record in the area(s) for which he/she is eligible for PACE. Employment must be as a full- or part-time teacher in a South Carolina public school. PACE participants who are employed as full-time teachers must be assigned to teach in their subject area full-time.

PACE participants who qualify in more than one subject area at the time of admission can enter and complete the program in up to two subject areas if they are formally evaluated (ADEPT) in each area and they teach .5 full-time equivalency in each certification area.

PACE participants who are employed as a part-time teacher must be employed in at least a .5 full-time equivalency with 100 percent of their teaching time in one subject area.

PACE participants must maintain successful, continuous employment for three academic years in their original PACE content area and grade level (middle, secondary, K-12) certification. If at any point in the program the participant is no longer employed, he/she must inform the Office of Educator Certification in writing immediately. Failure to notify the Office of Educator Certification could result in program dismissal. Participants who are no longer employed are not eligible to continue in PACE.

Confirmation of Employment

A PACE participant's employment status must be verified each year using the PACE Confirmation of Employment form. This verification must include the signature of the designated school district official and the signature of the PACE applicant. PACE participants must maintain successful, continuous employment in their PACE content area and grade level to achieve and maintain teacher certification.

PACE Training Program

The PACE training program is intense and requires an extensive time commitment. PACE participants must successfully complete each training component to achieve and maintain teacher certification.

The PACE Training Program includes three major components. The pre-service, the in-service, and six seminars.

Pre-Service Training

The pre-service training program is offered twice annually, once in July and once in December/January of each academic year. Applicants who meet all admission criteria and whose employing public school district has sent confirmation of employment to the Office of Educator Certification are required to successfully complete the next available pre-service training.

The pre-service training includes three components: Daily Assignments, Major Assignments, and a Final Unit Plan. Participants must score proficient on the Daily Assignments and Major Assignments as well as score proficient on the Final Unit Plan to successfully complete the pre-service training. Participants who do not score proficient on the Daily and/or Major Assignments will fail the pre-service training program. Participants who score proficient on the Daily and Major Assignments and score between proficient and failing on the Final Unit Plan will be placed on probation. Participants who score failing on the Final Unit Plan will fail the pre-service training program.

Probation Status. Participants who are placed on probation will be given the opportunity to resubmit the Final Unit Plan as outlined in documentation sent with the graded Final Unit Plan.

Failing Status. Participants who fail the pre-service training program will be given one additional opportunity to successfully complete the next available pre-service training program. Participants who do not attempt the next available pre-service training program after the time they failed will be reviewed using the admission criteria at the time they seek re-admission to PACE. Participants who fail the pre-service training program a second time will be dismissed from PACE and will not be eligible for readmission.

In-Service Training

The in-service training program is held during June of each academic year. Applicants who were employed during the academic year prior to the scheduled June training program do not have to submit confirmation of employment prior to the training program. However, confirmation of continuous employment is required to receive the next certificate and to continue successful participation.

The in-service training program includes two components: Daily Assignments, and a Portfolio. Participants must score proficient on the Daily Assignments as well as score proficient on the Portfolio to successfully complete the in-service training program. Participants who do not score proficient on the Daily Assignments will fail the in-service training program. Participants who score proficient on the Daily Assignments but score between proficient and failing on the portfolio will be placed on probation. Participants who score failing on the portfolio will fail the in-service training program.

Probation Status. Participants who are placed on probation will be given the opportunity to resubmit the portfolio as outlined in documentation sent with the graded portfolio.

Failing Status. Participants who fail the in-service training program will be given one additional opportunity to successfully complete the next available in-service training program the following year. For the academic year following the failed in-service the participant will not be eligible for certification. Pending receipt of a confirmation of employment by May 31 of the next academic year, the participant will be allowed to attend the next in-service training program. Participants who do not attempt the next available in-service training program after the time they failed will be reviewed using the admission criteria at the time they seek re-admission to PACE. Participants who fail the in-service training program a second time will be dismissed from PACE and will not be eligible for readmission.

Seminars

The seminars are held on Saturdays and Sundays throughout the academic year. Applicants who have successfully completed the pre-service training program must begin the seminar sequence.

Each seminar must be completed with a score of proficient (70 percent or higher). The seminars include two components: work completed prior to the seminar date and submitted for grading at the seminar and work completed during the seminar.

Work completed prior to the seminar date. Participants who submit **all required work in the required format** and receive 60-69 percent of the possible points for the work completed prior to the seminar will be placed on probation. Participants who are placed on probation will be given the opportunity to resubmit the required seminar work as outlined in documentation sent with the graded seminar documents. Participants who receive 59 percent or less of the possible points will be considered failing.

Work completed during the seminar. Participants who submit **all required work in the required format** and receive 60-69 percent of the possible points for the work completed during the seminar will be required to attend the make-up session. Participants who receive 59 percent or less of the possible points will be considered failing.

Failing Status. Participants who fail a seminar will be dismissed from the program until the next regularly scheduled time the seminar in question is offered. Participants who fail a seminar a second time will be dismissed from PACE and will not be eligible for readmission. Participants who do not attempt the next regularly scheduled seminar will be reviewed using the admission criteria at the time they seek re-admission to PACE. Participants who fail more than one seminar will be dismissed from PACE and will not be eligible for readmission.

Attendance

Since PACE is an accelerated teacher training program, attendance at all training sessions is required.

Pre-service and in-service

Participants may request a one time absence for a maximum of four consecutive morning or afternoon hours during the Pre-Service or In-Service. An absence request must be submitted in writing to the State Department of Education, Office of Educator Certification along with a letter of support from employing district personnel administrator and any supporting documentation. An absence request for the pre-service or the in-service must be submitted by the Monday prior to the first day of training. If approved, the participant will be responsible for all regular assignments, in addition to make up assignments. No absences will be allowed for any reason on day ten of the pre-service or in-service training sessions.

In case of an emergency that leads to an absence during the pre-service or in-service, the participant must submit a written explanation along with medical documentation and a letter of support from the employing school district administrator. Again, if approved, the participant will be responsible for regular assignments, in addition to make up assignments.

Any absence over the allowable time outlined above during the pre-service or in-service, no matter the reason, will **not** be approved. Absences submitted after the deadline for each session, whether emergency or not, may or may not be approved. This could result in the participant having to repeat the entire program, being dismissed from PACE and/or a delay in receiving certification.

If a participant has a medical reason supported by medical documentation that leads to missing more than the four allowable hours of the in-service, he/she can request to miss the entire in-service session. This request must include a letter outlining the reason for missing the session and must include the medical documentation and a letter of support from the employing school district. If approved, the participant will be required to attend the next available in-service training program. In addition, the PACE participant must complete one of the required courses during the summer they are missing the in-service to maintain eligibility for certification. A Confirmation of Employment, a PACE Course Request form and a transcript indicating successful completion of the approved course must be on file to issue the next certificate.

Seminars

Participants have two options for requesting a one-time absence from the six seminars. A participant may request either one full day absence or a one time absence for a maximum of four consecutive hours. Any individual participant may request either the full day absence or the four consecutive hour absence, but he/she cannot request both. Either absence request must be submitted in writing to the State Department of Education, Office of Educator Certification along with a letter of support from the employing district personnel administrator and any supporting documents. Absence requests for any one of the six seminars must be submitted by Monday prior the specific seminar.

In case of an emergency that leads to an absence, the participant must submit a written explanation along with medical documentation and a letter of support from the employing school district administrator.

For participants who miss a full day for either a planned or emergency absence, the participant will be responsible for attending a weekday make-up session in Columbia. The participant will also be responsible for a make-up fee of \$100.00.

Participants who miss up to four consecutive hours will not be required to attend the make-up session *unless those missed hours do not give the participant the opportunity to pass the in-class assignments*. These participants will be responsible for attending a weekday make-up session in Columbia and a make-up fee of \$100.00.

Participants who attended a seminar but did not score proficient on the work completed during the seminar will not be required to pay for the make-up session.

Any participant who misses a seminar and the required make-up session will be dismissed from the program. Any absence over the allowable time, no matter the reason, will **not** be approved and will result in dismissal from PACE.

Unprofessional Conduct

PACE participants will receive information regarding expectations related to professionalism and disposition during all training components. Participants who do not meet this requirements are at risk of being dismissed from PACE. Expectations include, but are not limited, to those listed below.

Tardiness and Leaving Early

Participants are expected to arrive for all training sessions at the time indicated on the schedule. They are also expected to remain in the training session until dismissed. This includes the first session of the day, after lunch, and following the transitions between the auditorium and individual classes. Participants who are more than five minutes late will be considered tardy and will receive one demerit for each five minute period they are late.

Participation and Attentiveness

Participants are expected to participate in the lessons of the training program. This includes, but is not limited to, the class discussion, group activities, general conversations, bringing required materials to class, coming to class with assignments complete, and turning in their own assignments. Participants must also be alert and contributing to the learning process. Participants are not to use cell phones or have off-task conversations with other participants during the presentations. A participant who is not participating or who is not attentive in a training segment will receive one demerit for each incident.

Professionalism

Participants are expected to present themselves as teaching professionals. This professionalism should be apparent in their "casual business" attire and their positive demeanor. This includes, but is not limited to, treating peers as professionals, recognizing the diverse backgrounds of other members in the training program, welcoming the participation of fellow participants, and not using profane language. In addition, participants are expected to treat the instructors with respect. Participants who do not present themselves as professionals will receive one demerit for each incident.

Candidates who have their certificates suspended or revoked or who have had a breach of contract will not be allowed to continue or be readmitted to the program.

PACE Assignments

PACE participants are expected to complete and present all assignments as directed in the PACE training materials. Work must be original and completed by the individual PACE participant.

PACE participants who are suspected of having presented non-original work or who share their work with other PACE participants are at risk of being dismissed from PACE. The Office of Educator Certification reserves the right to request additional information and conduct an investigation regarding any suspicious materials presented by a PACE participant.

The process for investigation of suspicious work will include but will not be limited to requesting additional materials regarding the work in suspicion from the PACE participant. Staff in the Office of Educator Certification may request PACE participants to answer additional questions regarding their work. If a PACE participant's work is found to be non-original, the individual will be dismissed from PACE. Decisions regarding suspicious work can be appealed to the PACE Advisory Committee. Members of the PACE Advisory Committee will be given the opportunity to review the suspicious work and to meet with all individuals involved in the investigation. The decision of the PACE Advisory Committee is final.

PACE Dismissal

PACE participants who are dismissed for unprofessional conduct can appeal for readmission to PACE following the completion of the dismissal period.

PACE Courses (Please Read Carefully)

Candidates will successfully complete three courses from the list of core courses approved by the Division of Educator Quality and Leadership on behalf of the State Board of Education. Courses identified for individual teachers will be based on the individual's experience, knowledge, and skills. All courses must be completed while an active participant in PACE or within three years prior to issuance of the first alternative route certificate.

The three required courses must be completed for college credit and an assigned grade of B or better at a South Carolina institution with a teacher education program that has been approved by the State Board of Education for certification purposes. All courses must be completed for three semester hours (or five quarter hours) of credit.

Participants who wish to complete the required courses at an institution other than one as outlined above may request approval of courses from other regionally accredited colleges or universities provided the coursework is at the graduate level.

Participants who have completed any or all courses on the course list within three years prior to issuance of the first alternative route certificate do not have to take an additional course. However, they must take any remaining courses not completed prior to entering PACE as outlined in this document. Participants who completed required coursework prior to entering PACE as outlined above must submit the attached form and transcripts reflecting completion of the required courses.

No more than one of the courses can be designated as a Professional Development (PD) course. Only the PD course could be completed as pass/fail. Be sure you check with the institution offering the course to see if it is designated a professional development course.

PACE Required Courses Effective Cohort Four

All PACE participants must complete the courses listed below related to their specific certification area.

Special Education – Emotionally Disabled certified PACE participants
(These courses can be completed through Project CREATE)

1. Characteristics of ED
2. Methods and Procedures of ED
3. Behavior Management

Library Media certified PACE participants

1. School Library Media Program Development
2. Curricular Role of the School Library Media
3. One of the following (based on the grade level where employed)
 - Children's Materials
 - Young Adult Materials

PACE Participants in all other certification areas

1. Classroom Management
2. Methods in the content area
3. One of the following (based on district evaluation)
 - Educational Psychology
 - Reading
 - Exceptional Child
 - Assessment

Program Completion

PACE participants must meet all PACE program requirements within three academic years of receipt of their first alternative route certification. Participants who enter the pre-service training program in July or December 2008 must complete all requirements for professional certification by June 30, 2011. If there are extenuating circumstances that prevented the individual from completing the program requirements within the three year time limit, the PACE participant and employing school district can use the PACE Extension Request form to request a one-time, one academic year extension to complete program requirements. If approved, this extension would be for one academic year. The extension would only be granted for the academic year immediately following the third academic year of program participation. If all program requirements are not completed within this extended year, the individual would no longer be considered a participant in PACE and would not be given any additional opportunities to complete PACE requirements.

Readmission

Former PACE participants who left the program prior to program completion can request readmission to PACE one time. This request must include a letter indicating why the former participant did not meet the requirements for professional certification and why the former participant left the program. The letter must also indicate why they are now ready for readmission and why they are now ready to meet program requirements. Former PACE participants must also request a letter from the most recent school district employer while previously a PACE participant indicating they left the program in good standing. Applicants for readmission must meet all PACE admission criteria at the time of evaluation for readmission to PACE.

PACE applicants who received a Statement of Eligibility who did not attend a pre-service training program and therefore did not earn the initial critical need certification do not need to seek readmission. These applicants can request an updated Statement of Eligibility using the Request for Change/Action form. They will be notified of whether they meet current admission criteria and whether they need to submit any updated application materials or fees.

PACE participants who completed 3-4 academic years of PACE participation but did not complete program requirements are not eligible for readmission.

I have read and understand the attached PACE Participant Handbook. A PACE representative has gone over the participant handbook during the pre-service training. I understand my role and responsibilities in fulfilling the PACE requirements. I understand that if I do not make continued program progress, I may put my certificate at risk. I understand that the lack of certification could affect my position, salary, and benefits.

Name (printed): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____