



January 4, 2021

TO: **Superintendents of Schools** receiving Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) Grants
Superintendents of Schools in Districts receiving Statewide Universal Full-Day Prekindergarten (SUFDPK) funding
Pre-K Program Contacts in Districts receiving UPK funding through a District Collaboration or SUFDPK
Program Contacts for Voluntary Registered Nursery Schools and Kindergartens

FROM: Jason Breslin, Office of Early Learning *Jason Breslin*
Heidi Audino, Office of Teaching Initiatives *Heidi Audino*

SUBJECT: Acceptable Experience for Professional Teacher Certification in Early Childhood Settings

One of the requirements for the Professional teacher certificate is to complete at least three school years of valid teaching experience or its equivalent (540 full-time days). A maximum of 180 days of teaching experience will be accepted per school year (July 1 – June 30). In addition, the teaching experience must span at least three different school years.

Acceptable Experience for the Professional Certificate

For individuals who were issued their Initial teacher certificate **on or after February 2, 2014**, the required valid teaching experience **must** be in the subject area of the certificate held to be acceptable for the Professional certificate. For individuals who were issued their first Initial teacher certificate **before February 2, 2014**, the required valid teaching experience does **not** need to be in the subject area of the certificate held to be acceptable for the Professional certificate.

Please note that if individuals hold multiple Initial teacher certificates, they may combine valid teaching experience gained under each of their certificates to satisfy the teaching experience requirement for Professional certification. However, individuals who taught three or more years in one subject area must apply for the Professional certificate in that subject area as their first Professional Certificate.

Acceptable Experience in Early Childhood Settings

The settings in which individuals, who hold or held Initial Early Childhood Education certification, could gain the valid teaching experience required for the Professional Early Childhood Education certificate includes, but is not limited to, the early childhood settings listed below. Please see the [Office of Teaching Initiatives \(OTI\) website](#) to see the full, up-to-date list of settings in which individuals could meet the teaching experience requirement for Professional certification.

- Head Start programs approved by the U.S. Department of Education
- Licensed day care centers through the [Office of Children and Family Services \(OCFS\)](#)
- School-Based Child Care programs recognized by the [New York City Department of Health](#)
- Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) approved by the [New York State Education Department \(NYSED\)](#)
- Voluntary Registered Nursery Schools and Kindergartens through [NYSED](#)

Teachers who have questions about certification requirements can contact the Office of Teaching Initiatives at tcert@nysed.gov. For questions regarding UPK programming, please contact the Office of Early Learning at OEL@nysed.gov.