



# Renewal Credits and Job-Embedded Professional Learning

## Background

South Carolina Regulation 43-55, Renewal of Credentials, states that educators must earn a minimum of 120 renewal credits each five years “through professional activities that directly relate to the educator's professional growth and development plan, support the goals of the employing educational entity, and promote student achievement.” In 2004, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) released the Certificate Renewal Plan Guidelines and [Certificate Renewal Matrix](#) approved by the State Board of Education (SBE). Although nothing in the Certificate Renewal Matrix or guidelines prohibits granting renewal credits for job-embedded professional learning that occurs during an educator’s contracted number of work days or within the educator’s standard work day, the guidance provided by the SCDE and districts at the time helped shape more restrictive district policies.

## Purpose

Just as the [Profile of the South Carolina Graduate](#) emphasizes collaboration, problem solving, and self-direction for students, the [Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning](#) emphasize learning communities, implementation of learning, and continuous improvement. This document clarifies how the SCDE [Certificate Renewal Matrix](#) allows educators to earn renewal credit for relevant, job-embedded professional learning consistent with the guidance and criteria below.

## Guidance

The [Certificate Renewal Matrix](#) outlines Option 6, professional training, and Option 10, professional development activity, which allow districts to grant renewal credits for job-embedded professional learning that occurs during an educator’s contracted work day. Districts may use Options 6 and 10 to award renewal credit for meaningful, job-embedded professional learning that supports student achievement, school goals, or the educator’s professional growth and development plan. The educator’s professional growth and development plan includes both required goals (e.g. SLO’s or the principal’s professional development plan (PDP) ) and personalized goals (e.g. leadership goals, team goals, or other growth-focused goals). In contrast, the [Certificate Renewal Matrix](#) also describes opportunities to earn renewal credit for activities that “exceed job requirements for the educator’s position, as defined by the employing educational entity,” including college instruction, teacher evaluation, mentorship, and educational projects.

## Criteria: Implementation and Reflection

The efficacy of job-embedded professional learning relies on two important pillars: evidence that the educator has applied the learning in a way that impacts learners and evidence that the educator has reflected on the implementation. Below are example criteria districts may use to evaluate evidence of meaningful, job-embedded learning.

## Evidence of Implementation

- Meets Expectations: Artifacts clearly demonstrate how the educator applied the learning experience to the classroom or leadership context. Specifically, artifacts include evidence of impact through the inclusion of examples of student/learner work.



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### Evidence of Reflection (oral or written)

- Meets Expectations: Reflection describes what the educator learned from implementation and how the experience will shape future practice. Reflection describes a specific connection to student achievement, school goals, or the educator’s professional growth and development plan.

### Current Certificate Renewal Matrix Professional Learning Options

Type of Learning	Renewal Credits Earned	Proof Required
Professional Training (Option 6)	1 hour of direct participation = 1 renewal credit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Training objectives and/or outline</li> <li>● A certificate or other official documentation verifying successful completion</li> </ul>
Professional Development Activity (Option 10)	1 hour of direct participation = 1 renewal credit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Official documentation from the sponsor verifying the educator’s participation, and</li> <li>● A synopsis of the session topic(s), date(s), and time(s).</li> </ul>

### Example Job-Embedded Professional Learning Activities

Type of Learning	Description	Suggested Renewal Credits	Suggested Proof Required
District, or state-approved, high-quality, micro-credential	Micro-credentials are digital certifications that verify an individual’s competence in a specific skill or set of skills. <a href="#">A multi-state group facilitated by the American Institutes for Research</a> defines these quality criteria: research-based, professional-standards aligned competency, clear proficiency measure, multiple learning resources, and evidence of benefit to students.	1 earned micro-credential = or > 12 renewal credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Verification that key components or competencies require implementation and reflection</li> <li>● Official verification of awarded badge from issuer</li> </ul>
Sustained participation in a professional learning community (PLC) engaging in collective inquiry and reflection (e.g. focused on revising or implementing new assessments, a new curriculum, or a new set of teaching practices)	<p>To grant credit for PLCs, the collaboration should include a minimum of 4 hours of direct contact, and require a cycle of learning, implementation, collaboration, and reflection that produces evidence of impact on students (i.e. an inquiry cycle). This collaboration may occur during the school day.</p> <p>For example, a teaching team is revising common assessments through PLCs. One teacher leads professional learning, including facilitating the PLC. The team participates and conducts inquiry cycles that produce evidence of implementation and reflection on impact on student achievement.</p>	<p>Leading professional learning, 1 hour of direct participation= 3 renewal credits for first time led</p> <p>Participation in PLCs, 1 hour of direct participation = 1 hour of renewal credit</p> <p>Professional learning cycle with evidence of implementation and reflection, 1 cycle = 2 renewal credits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Training objectives and/or outline</li> <li>● Evidence of participation in learning opportunity</li> <li>● Evidence of implementation and reflection</li> </ul>



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