STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF TEACHING AND LEADING
ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

CHAPTER 290-3-3
TEACHER EDUCATION - PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

290-3-3-.41 Teacher Leader (Grades P-12).

1. **Rationale.** This program is designed to enhance the leadership capacity among teachers in Alabama. Resultingly, teachers will have the capacity to improve student academic achievement, and increase collaboration amongst school administrators, colleagues, students, families, and the larger community to achieve school-wide goals. Teacher leaders adhere to the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics and model the use of the Alabama Professional Development Standards. Implementation of the standards will be in the Alabama Continuous Improvement guidance.

2. **Unconditional Admission to a Teacher Leader Program.** Initial certification for a teacher leader shall be at the Class AA level.

a. Criteria for unconditional admission to teacher leader programs shall include:

i. A criminal history background check. See Rule 290-3-3-.03 (College and University Requirements).

ii. A valid master's level professional educator certificate in any teaching field or area of instructional support.

iii. A minimum of three full years of full-time teaching experience in a P-12 setting.

iv. A portfolio containing:

a. Three letters of recommendation.

b. Evidence of ability to positively affect student achievement.

c. Evidence of collaborative leadership potential.

b. If an individual is unconditionally admitted to an Alabama Class AA teacher leader program based on a valid master's level professional educator certificate in a teaching field or area of instructional support from another state, completes the Class AA teacher leader program, and subsequently applies for Class AA teacher leader certification, then the individual

must hold at least a valid Class A Professional Educator Certificate in a teaching field or area of instructional support before applying for Class AA certification.

3. **Program Requirements.** Each State-approved program must:

a. Include at least 30 semester hours of course work at the education specialist level or above and not used for prior-level certification in any teaching field or area of instructional support.

b. Include periodic focus sessions for candidates to share problem-based concerns and successes and to collaborate on issues and solutions.

c. Include meaningful P-12 school-based field experiences in any teacher leader course used to meet a teacher leader standard.

d. Include a minimum of six semester hours reserved for a problem-based research project in a school or school system.

4. **Collaboration.** School partners and higher education faculty should jointly design the program, make decisions, plan for field experiences, and create an evaluate the candidate's problem-based research project.

5. **Curriculum of a Teacher Leader Program.** Teacher leaders are prepared to work with colleagues across all teaching fields to improve instruction and to enhance learning opportunities for P-12 students. The program must ensure preparation in:

a. Fostering a Collaborative Culture to Support Educator Development and Student Learning (group processes for problem-solving, listening skills for mediation and clarification, facilitation skills for trust development).

b. Accessing and Using Research to Improve Practice and Student Learning (research critical educational issues to improve student learning, data analysis, data collection and analysis).

c. Promoting Professional Learning for Continuous Improvement (plan, differentiate, and facilitate professional learning, use appropriate technologies, provide constructive feedback, advocate for job-embedded professional learning).

d. Facilitating Improvements in Instruction and Student Learning (collect, analyze, and use school-based data, dialog with colleagues about student progress, support reflection and professional growth, and serve as a team lead to address curricular and student learning needs).

e. Promoting the Use of Assessments and Data for School and District Improvement (identify and use multiple assessment tools, design, implement, score and interpret student data, and reflect on student learning with colleagues).

f. Improving Outreach and Collaboration with Families and Community (model communication and collaboration skills with families and stakeholders, develop a shared understanding with colleagues about the educational needs of the community, and develop strategies to address these needs).

g. Advocating for Student Learning and the Profession (share information regarding educational policies, advocate for teaching and learning for all students, communicate results with targeted audiences, and advocate for professional resources).

6. Requirements for **Class AA Certification** in Teacher Leader. Readiness to serve as a teacher leader shall include:

a. At least a valid Class A Professional Educator Certificate or a valid Class A Professional Leadership Certificate.

b. An official transcript from an accredited institution documenting an earned education specialist degree. The institution must have been approved at the time of degree conferral.

c. A **Survey of Special Education course** is required unless previously completed. The course may not be older than 10 years unless the candidate has teaching experience within the last 5 years, or he/she used the course for prior level certification.

d. Satisfactory completion of a teacher leader program approved by the Alabama State Board of Education, with a minimum GPA of 3.25 for all courses in the program as verified on an official transcript.

e. Satisfactory completion of a problem-based research project.

7. **Testing** for Certification in Teacher Leader. No test required.

8. **Faculty**. An institution shall meet the criteria listed below.

a. The program shall include at least two faculty members who hold earned doctorates and are full-time to the EPP. One faculty member shall hold an earned doctorate in educational administration or instructional leadership and shall be actively involved in the preparation of instructional leaders at the Class AA level. One faculty member shall hold an earned doctorate and be actively involved in the preparation of

teachers at the Class AA level for grades P-3, K-6, 6-12, or P-12.

b. Faculty members shall teach courses required in the teacher leader preparation program, advise candidates seeking certification through program completion, and demonstrate a thorough understanding of current State initiatives.

Author: Dr. Eric G. Mackey
Statutory Authority: Code of Ala. 1975, §§16-3-16 and 16-23-14. **History: New Rule:** December 19, 1978. **Amended:** Filed December 13, 1990; effective February 1, 1991. **Repealed and Replaced:** Filed January 9, 1997; effective February 13, 1997; operative July 1, 1997. **Amended:** Filed March 14, 2002; effective April 18, 2002. **Amended:** Filed December 12, 2002; effective January 16, 2003. **Repealed and New Rule:** Filed September 11, 2003; effective October 16, 2003. **Repealed and New Rule:** Filed July 13, 2004; effective August 17, 2004. **Amended:** Filed October 14, 2004; effective November 18, 2004. **Repealed and New Rule:** April 14, 2005; effective May 19, 2005. **Repealed and New Rule:** Filed August 6, 2007; effective September 10, 2007. **Repealed and New Rule:** Filed August 3, 2009; effective September 7, 2009; operative October 1, 2009. **Amended:** Filed June 15, 2012; effective July 20, 2012. **Repealed and New Rule:** Filed August 13, 2015; effective September 17, 2015. **Amended:** Filed September 13, 2018; effective October 28, 2018; operative June 1, 2019. **Repealed and New Rule:** Published August 31, 2021; effective October 15, 2021. **Repealed and New Rule:** Published March 31, 2025; effective May 15, 2025.

Ed. Note: Previous Rule .42 was renumbered .41 per certification published August 31, 2021; effective October 15, 2021.