

Hawthorn Academy
Policy: LEA-Specific Educator License Policy
Adopted: May 13, 2020



Hawthorn Academy (the “School”) is committed to employing educators who are properly licensed and qualified for their positions. This policy is adopted in accordance with Rule R277-301 and governs the School’s application for LEA-specific educator licenses and its employment of educators on such licenses.

The School acknowledges that the purpose of LEA-specific educator licenses is to allow the School to hire otherwise qualified educators during the period that they are preparing and completing requirements to qualify for an associate educator license or a professional educator license.

The School’s administration will propose to the Board candidates for an LEA-specific educator license as the need arises.

When the administration proposes a candidate for an LEA-specific license, they will follow the procedures below and provide the Board with an explanation and rationale for requesting an LEA-specific educator license under the criteria contained in this Policy.

When the Board determines that it is appropriate under this policy, the Board will approve the request for an LEA-specific educator license in a public meeting. Approval will take place no more than 60 days prior to submitting the application to the USBE on behalf of the candidate.

The Board will apply for the LEA-specific educator license for one, two, or three years as requested by the administration and approved by the Board.

The School will not request an LEA-specific educator license for a license area in special education or preschool special education.

Criteria for Employing Educators with an LEA-Specific Educator License

The School will use the following processes and consider the following criteria in determining whether to employ an educator and apply for an LEA-specific educator license:

1. Vet each candidate and contact references in order to verify that they are a strong candidate. In particular, ensure that the candidate does not have any prior misconduct that would impair their success in teaching.
2. Interview each candidate and verify that they support the School’s IB focus.

3. Consider the extent to which each candidate has training in the content area and the ability to facilitate student learning in that content area.

4. Consider the extent to which each candidate has experience and the ability to effectively teach courses.

5. Consider whether the LEA-specific educator license is sought in a content area in which there is a shortage of qualified educators in the state.

When an LEA-specific license, license area, or endorsement is sought for an educator for a subject that comprises less than 50% of the educator's course load, the following criteria will also be considered:

1. Consider whether the educator is a certified teacher in other content areas.

2. Consider whether the number of periods to be taught under the LEA-specific license, license area, or endorsement constitutes a full teaching load.

3. Consider whether the School currently employs or is hiring a teacher who does not have a degree or endorsement in the content area but who can also teach other areas in which they are licensed.

4. Consider whether the educator has demonstrated proficiency in teaching these courses.

5. Consider whether the administration has identified other qualified candidates with the necessary dual licensing.

The School will also ensure that a candidate for an LEA-specific educator license has completed (or will timely complete) the required criminal background check and educator ethics review described in R277-301-7.

Educator Preparation, Support, and Mentoring

Within the first year of employment, the School will train each educator holding an LEA-specific educator license on:

- (a) educator ethics;
- (b) classroom management and instruction;
- (c) basic special education law and instruction; and
- (d) the Utah Effective Teaching Standards described in R277-530.

For at least two years, the School will provide each educator holding an LEA-specific educator license with a mentoring program that includes a trained mentor educator and annual mentoring plan.

The mentoring program for educators holding an LEA-specific educator license will include:

- (a) a formal professional learning plan and appropriate support for the educator to meet the requirements of the applicable license area; and
- (b) on-going training on educator ethics and special education.

The trained mentor educator will work with the educator to develop an annual mentoring plan; will assist the educator to meet the Utah Effective Educator Standards established in Rule R277-530; and will not serve as an evaluator of the educator.

The trained mentor educator will hold a professional educator license and will, where possible:

- (a) perform substantially the same duties as the educator with release time to work as a mentor; or
- (b) be assigned as an instructional coach or equivalent position.

Website Posting

This policy will be posted on the School's website.

The School will also prominently post the following information on its website:

- (a) disclosure of the fact that the School employs individuals holding LEA-specific licenses, license areas, or endorsements;
- (b) the percentage of the types of licenses, license areas, and endorsements held by educators employed in the School based on the employees' FTE in CACTUS; and
- (c) a link to the Utah Educator Look-up Tool provided by the USBE Superintendent in accordance with Subsection R277-515-7(6).