

## III.B.

### CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Hartford

#### TO BE PROPOSED:

August 11, 2020

**RESOLVED**, That the State Board of Education adopts the recommendation from the Connecticut State Department of Education to implement the following temporary certification endorsements: Emergency Generalist, PK-8 (#201), Emergency Generalist, 7-12 (#202), and Emergency Teacher of English Language Learners, PK-12 (#204), to allow an educator who currently holds an initial, provisional or professional teaching certificate to be eligible for Emergency Authorization during the 2020-2021 school year at the request of the LEA/District, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Approved by a vote of \_\_\_\_\_, this 11<sup>th</sup> day of August, Two Thousand Twenty.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dr. Miguel A. Cardona, Secretary  
State Board of Education

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Hartford**

**TO:** State Board of Education

**FROM:** Dr. Miguel A. Cardona, Commissioner of Education

**DATE:** August 11, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Emergency Educator Certification Endorsements

**Executive Summary**

**Introduction**

This report provides the Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE) with a rationale for the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) recommendation to adopt new Emergency Educator Certification Endorsements as temporary authorizations for the 2020-21 academic year. The purpose of these temporary authorizations is to provide additional flexibility for school districts and LEAs to meet the unique staffing challenges in the coming school year during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

**History/Background**

The disruption to our State's educational system as a result of the pandemic has required school communities to adapt in multiple areas. As school districts resume in-person classes, they are preparing for potential changes in staffing needs. The employment of appropriately certified, authorized and/or permitted educators is critical to the success of all students.

The CSDE has already engaged resources and identified ways to assist districts with staffing. The CSDE worked closely with the Governor's office, PK-12 Superintendents, HR personnel, Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs), Teachers Retirement Board, unions and other stakeholders to:

- Implement numerous flexibility measures to allow for the continued submission of required official documentation and forms electronically;
- Extend interim certificates to Connecticut candidates, to provide a pathway to certification for spring 2020 teacher candidates not able to complete testing;
- Provide guidance to districts regarding the use of temporary authorizations to fill vacant teaching positions with appropriate non-certified staff members and candidates enrolled in educator preparation programs;
- Advise districts on re-employment of retired educators;
- Assist districts with using the CSDE EdSight Active Certificate Search Tool to access Connecticut Educator Certification data and identify potential teacher candidates for more strategic recruitment and hiring of certified staff;
- Utilize *Equivalency*, as prescribed in Sec. 10-145d-614 of the educator certification regulations, to accept 20 months of successful service as a para-educator in lieu of the 12 credits in special education coursework required for temporary authorizations such as Durational Shortage Area Permits and Long Term Substitute Authorizations.

## **Recommendation and Justification**

The pandemic will make the 2020-2021 academic year challenging for Connecticut school districts in many ways. In terms of staffing, they must hire enough appropriately certified, authorized and permitted educators to prepare for instructional demands brought about by the need to provide in-person, hybrid and distanced-based staffing solutions. They must be prepared to pivot quickly as health conditions change during the year. To further facilitate the required staffing agility, the CSDE recommends the following Emergency Endorsements be approved as “Temporary Authorizations” for the 2020-21 school year only, as allowed under Sec. 10-145d-619 of the educator certification regulations. The process to request and secure these authorizations will be structured so they are only allowed in instances where both the educator and the school district wish to pursue this option.

### **(1) Emergency Generalist, PK-8 (#201) and Emergency Generalist, 7-12 (#202)**

The Emergency Generalist, PK-8 (#201) and Emergency Generalist, 7-12 (#202) would allow a certified educator who currently holds an initial, provisional or professional teaching certificate to teach all content/subject and grade levels within the PK-8 or 7-12 grade span, excluding special education and TESOL/bilingual endorsements. These endorsements would be valid for the 2020-2021 school year only, and require the request of the LEA/District.

Currently certified holders of elementary endorsements #002, #003, #004, #005, #013, #305, #112, #113 would be eligible for the Emergency #201 and current holders of secondary 7-12 endorsements for #202. Currently certified PK-12 educators and holders of middle grades (4-8) endorsements would be eligible for either #201 or #202, or for both, depending on need. It will be up to the district to ensure that the educators chosen have the skills and support to serve successfully in these positions.

### **(2) Emergency Teacher of English Learners, PK-12 (#204)**

The Emergency Teacher of English Learners, PK-12 (#204) would authorize a certified world language teacher or a bilingual or TESOL teacher who currently holds an initial, provisional or professional teaching certificate to serve either as a TESOL or bilingual education content teacher in grades PK-12 for the 2020-21 school year, at the request of the LEA/District.

In each instance, the temporary authorization would be issued as a stand-alone authorization, valid for the remainder of the school year, with no fees associated with the processing. Status as a temporary authorization would allow the CSBE and Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification greater control over the addition and subsequent removal (expiration) of the Temporary Authorization. All Temporary Authorizations issued with these Emergency Endorsements would expire June 30, 2021.

The CSDE will add new codes to the Educator Database System (EDS) to allow districts to report their use of the Emergency Endorsements for each educator during the 2020-21 school year. This promotes compliance with both certification and Teachers Retirement Board (TRB) requirements, and facilitates tracking of use of the emergency authorizations.

**Follow-up Activity**

If the CSBE approves the recommendation to adopt temporary educator certification endorsements as authorizations for 2020-2021 school year, the CSDE will notify Connecticut districts, LEAs and partner organizations immediately. The Bureau will adapt a document to facilitate speedy and consistent processing of these district requests.

Prepared by: Christopher M. Todd, Bureau Chief, Talent Office

Approved by: Shuana K. Tucker, Ph.D., Chief Talent Officer, Talent Office