

Series: 2005-2006
Circular Letter: C-8

TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Dr. Betty J. Sternberg, Commissioner of Education

DATE: December 12, 2005

SUBJECT: Teacher Certification - Unique Endorsements Available in Dance or Theatre Arts

To assist districts in providing quality dance and theatre programs, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) began using the unique endorsements (#110) category to offer certification in dance and theatre arts as of July 1, 2005. While these endorsements are *available* to individuals who meet the educational criteria, they are currently *not required* for teachers of dance and theatre arts. Connecticut public school districts may, therefore, continue to utilize certified physical education teachers to teach dance, and certified English teachers to teach theatre arts for the present time. A requirement for certification in these areas will be considered over the next year, when all certification regulations will be formally reviewed. Meanwhile, the unique endorsement serves as an intermediate step as well as a means for districts to certify teachers.

To support this activity, the CSDE has been working with Connecticut's dance and theatre arts communities to develop guidelines for future teacher certification in these areas, in order to ensure that well-prepared educators deliver these school-based programs. Attached please find the coursework and eligibility requirements for a unique endorsement in dance (Attachment A), as well as a unique endorsement in theatre arts (Attachment B).

To assist educators in obtaining endorsements in these new fields, teachers who already hold a valid Connecticut certificate in another academic area may apply for a cross endorsement in dance or theatre arts if they have completed at least 30 semester hours of credit at a regionally accredited institution in the specific subject being requested.

As of July 1, 2005, individuals may choose one of two certification routes when applying for a unique endorsement in dance or theatre arts: (1) interstate agreement - the applicant has completed a state-approved teacher preparation program that leads to a recommendation for certification; or (2) appropriate teaching experience - the applicant has completed at least 20 school months of successful full-time grade and subject appropriate experience in an approved nonpublic school where certification is not required or in a public school under a valid state certificate or authorization. Applicants will still need to meet all coursework and eligibility requirements contained in the attached guidelines.

Detailed information about certification in dance and theatre arts is available on the CSDE arts education web page, which is accessible from the agency's website. Enter www.state.ct.us/sde in your browser, click on "Curriculum," then click on "Arts" and select either dance or theatre under "Prospective Arts Teachers" to read or download the appropriate criteria.

Several Connecticut universities have begun to offer courses required for dance and theatre arts certification during evenings and summer, when teachers are available to take them. While no in-state colleges or universities are currently approved to offer a planned program in dance or theatre arts, various institutions have indicated interest in offering a planned program in these areas in the very near future. Once available, information about courses will be linked on the arts education web page mentioned above.

When filling new positions, please note that a unique endorsement in theatre arts will authorize the teaching of video/film from an artistic perspective, while a certificate endorsed for technology education, PK-grade 12 (#047) or trade and industrial occupations – comprehensive high school – video production (#098) will authorize teaching video/film from a technological viewpoint.

The current transition period, during which dance and theatre arts endorsements are available as Unique Endorsements, provides an opportunity for educators with expertise in one of these areas and artists with an interest in becoming educators to apply for certification in dance or theatre arts. If, after a thorough study of certification areas, demand in the field warrants moving forward with formal certification in these fields, teachers who hold a unique endorsement will receive an updated certificate reflecting the new numeric code.

Please take the time to review this material with your Personnel Director and any affected staff. If you have any questions, please contact Nancy L. Pugliese, J.D., Chief, Bureau of Educator Preparation, Certification, Support and Assessment, at (860) 713-6709 or by e-mail at nancy.pugliese@po.state.ct.us.

BJS:npw
Attachments

ATTACHMENT A

Dance Certification

Sec. 10-145d-456. Initial educator certificate requirements

On and after July 1, 1993, to receive an initial educator certificate for a special subject or field an applicant shall present evidence of meeting the following requirements, in addition to meeting the assessment requirement (Praxis I PPST or qualify for Praxis I waiver):

- (a) Holds a bachelor's degree from an approved institution;
- (b) Has a minimum of 39 semester hours of credit in general academic courses in five of the six areas listed below, including a course in United States history. On and after July 1, 1998, a survey course in United States history comprised of not fewer than three semester hours of credit shall be included.
 - (1) Natural sciences;
 - (2) Social studies;
 - (3) Fine arts;
 - (4) English;
 - (5) Mathematics; and
 - (6) Foreign language;
- (c) Has completed a subject area major awarded by an approved institution in the subject area for which endorsement is sought; (see criteria on next page)*
- (d) Has a minimum of 18 semester hours of credit in professional education in a planned program of study and experience to be distributed among each of the following:
 - (1) Foundations of education. This group includes areas such as: (1) philosophy of education, (2) school effectiveness, (3) history of education and (4) comparative education;
 - (2) Educational psychology. This group includes areas such as: (1) growth and development of children from birth through the life span, (2) psychology of learning, (3) child-adolescent psychology and (4) mental hygiene;
 - (3) Curriculum and methods of teaching. This group includes areas such as: (1) subject-area curriculum and methodology and (2) effective teaching skills;
 - (4) Supervised observation, participation and full-time responsible student teaching totaling at least six but not more than 12 semester hours of credit; and
 - (5) A course of study in special education comprised of not fewer than 36 clock hours, which shall include study in understanding the growth and development of exceptional children, including handicapped and gifted and talented children and children who may require special education, and methods for identifying, planning for and working effectively with special-needs children in the regular classroom.

Attachment A (continued)

* "For dance, an applicant shall present a subject area major or its equivalent in dance, including coursework in each of the following:

- a) applied study in ballet;
- b) two applied courses in modern dance;
- c) applied study in a third folkloric or classical world dance form (e.g., tap, jazz, ballroom/social, African, flamenco, Balinese);
- d) composition/choreographic principles and dance improvisation;
- e) dance history/cultures representing a variety of periods and ethnic groups;
- f) applied anatomy/kinesiology; and
- g) dance education methods/curriculum (including elementary and secondary)."

ATTACHMENT B

Theatre Arts Certification (for live theatre or video/film)

Sec. 10-145d-456. Initial educator certificate requirements

On and after July 1, 1993, to receive an initial educator certificate for a special subject or field an applicant shall present evidence of meeting the following requirements, in addition to meeting the assessment requirement (Praxis I PPST or qualify for Praxis I waiver):

- (a) Holds a bachelor's degree from an approved institution;
- (b) Has a minimum of 39 semester hours of credit in general academic courses in five of the six areas listed below, including a course in United States history. On and after July 1, 1998, a survey course in United States history comprised of not fewer than three semester hours of credit shall be included.
 - (1) Natural sciences;
 - (2) Social studies;
 - (3) Fine arts;
 - (4) English;
 - (5) Mathematics; and
 - (6) Foreign language;
- (c) Has completed a subject area major awarded by an approved institution in the subject area for which endorsement is sought; (see criteria on next page)**
- (d) Has a minimum of 18 semester hours of credit in professional education in a planned program of study and experience to be distributed among each of the following:
 - (1) Foundations of education. This group includes areas such as: (1) philosophy of education, (2) school effectiveness, (3) history of education and (4) comparative education;
 - (2) Educational psychology. This group includes areas such as: (1) growth and development of children from birth through the life span, (2) psychology of learning, (3) child-adolescent psychology and (4) mental hygiene;
 - (3) Curriculum and methods of teaching. This group includes areas such as: (1) subject-area curriculum and methodology and (2) effective teaching skills;
 - (4) Supervised observation, participation and full-time responsible student teaching totaling at least six but not more than 12 semester hours of credit; and
 - (5) A course of study in special education comprised of not fewer than 36 clock hours, which shall include study in understanding the growth and development of exceptional children, including handicapped and gifted and talented children and children who may require special education, and methods for identifying, planning for and working effectively with special-needs children in the regular classroom.

Attachment B (continued)

** "For theatre arts, an applicant shall present a subject area major or its equivalent in theatre or video/film, including coursework in each of the following:

- a) applied acting;
- b) directing;
- c) technical theatre (design, stagecraft, or video/film techniques);
- d) movement for actors or dance;
- e) voice for theatre or music;
- f) theatre (or video/film) history/cultures representing a variety of periods and ethnic groups;
- g) creative dramatics, process drama, or video option;
- h) scriptwriting (play- or screenwriting); and
- i) theatre (or video/film) education methods/curriculum (including elementary and secondary)."