

NEWS

Connecticut Department of Education

Dr. Mark K. McQuillan
Commissioner



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Contact: Tom Murphy 860.713.6525

State Department of Education Proposes Changes in Certification Regulations for New Teaching Certificates Effective in July 2014

(HARTFORD, CONN.) The next generation of teachers in Connecticut will be better equipped to meet the needs of a variety of students as a result of new certification requirements being developed by the state Department of Education. The proposed regulations, if approved, would take effect on July 1, 2014 and focus on improving teacher preparation programs to provide specialized training that will help educators to understand and work with diverse learning needs, use test data effectively and utilize evidence-based classroom strategies and behavior management. Teachers who already hold valid certification will not be required to meet the new standards.

According to State Education Commissioner Mark K. McQuillan, "As part of its *Five Year Comprehensive Plan for Education*, the State Board of Education established an overarching goal that "all students must have access to a rigorous curriculum taught by highly effective and qualified educators who believe that every student at every grade level can achieve at high levels. The changes we propose to the state's teacher preparation programs will better prepare our teachers to help every student to succeed."

"The educational challenges in our classrooms are very different today," said McQuillan. "Teachers need a new repertoire of skills and understandings to help their students achieve. This has to be part of their initial training, a foundation of their work." The regulations are being developed in response to national and state mandates focused on the need to ensure that teachers are highly qualified and sufficiently trained to provide instruction and academic or behavioral interventions to all students including English language learners, students with disabilities, struggling learners and gifted and talented students.

The Commissioner pointed out that the State Board of Education will be analyzing and discussing the proposed certification regulation changes now through July 2009. During that time, the State Department of Education will continue to work with education stakeholders to discuss, revise and refine the proposed changes to certification regulations.

Under the proposed certification requirements, Connecticut teacher preparation programs in early childhood, elementary education, secondary education and special subject areas would be required to ensure that all new teacher candidates are provided additional

training in specific competency areas including, but not limited to, the following competencies:

- Understanding the growth, development and characteristics of typical and atypical learners including students with disabilities, English language learners, and struggling learners;
- Using evidence-based principles of instruction to meet the needs of students with disabilities and diverse learning needs and provide interventions to students who don't respond to primary instruction alone;
- Selecting, administering and interpreting data from a variety of assessments to document students' growth to inform planning and instruction and to determine where targeted assistance to struggling students should be directed;
- Understanding evidence-based classroom and behavior management; and
- Providing explicit instruction on social skills that are conducive to ensuring learning, including setting behavioral expectations, implementing typical classroom and school routines, teaching self-management strategies and study skills.

Beginning July 1, 2014, these requirements could apply to all new teachers seeking Connecticut certification in early childhood, elementary, secondary subjects, special subjects (including, but not limited to, music, PE, health, art, world languages, etc.).

A special education certificate would be available to teachers who want to advance their teaching skills to work with struggling learners in need of interventions and students with disabilities and to serve in areas such as: facilitator of the IEP team, administrator of diagnostic assessments, case manager, trainer or coach for paraprofessionals and teachers, etc.

All current certificate holders would retain their valid certificates, but will be provided with the opportunity to complete additional professional development to obtain any new certification endorsements offered under the new regulations.

More detailed information can be found at www.sde.ct.gov .

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