

VIII.E.

**Connecticut State Board of Education
Hartford**

To Be Proposed:

April 1, 2026

Resolved, That having carefully reviewed Terrence Collins' request that the State Board of Education waive the Praxis II Elementary Mathematics Subtest for issuance of an Initial Educator Certificate endorsed for Elementary Education, PreK-6 (#305), the State Board has determined that Mr. Collins has not demonstrated the combination of education and experience that is the equivalent of the education and experience required under Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-145bb(b) and therefore denies his request for such waiver.

Approved by a vote of _____, this first day of April, Two Thousand Twenty-Six.

Signed: _____
Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Secretary
State Board of Education

**Connecticut State Board of Education
Hartford**

To: State Board of Education

From: Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education

Date: April 1, 2026

Subject: Consideration of Certification for Terrence Collins #305 Elementary Education, PreK-6

Executive Summary

Introduction

Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-145bb(b) empowers the State Board of Education (SBE) to waive the certification standards otherwise set forth in statute should the SBE determine that an applicant possesses a combination of education and experience that is equivalent to such standards. Pursuant to Section 10-145bb(b), Terrence Collins has requested such waiver, seeking thereby an Initial Educator Certificate endorsed for Elementary Education, PreK-6 (#305). C.G.S. Section 10-145bb(b) provides:

- (a) The State Board of Education shall issue, in accordance with the provisions of section 10-145b of the general statutes, as amended by this act, an initial educator certificate to any person who successfully satisfies one of the following pathways to professional certification: (1) Successful completion of an educator preparation program approved by the State Board of Education. (2) Successful completion of an alternate route to certification program pursuant to section 10-145p, 10-145t, as amended by this act, 10-145w, as amended by this act, or 10-155d of the general statutes. (3) Is an educator from another state and meets the requirements set forth in subsections (c) and (f) of section 10-145f, section 10-146c or section 10-146i of the general statutes.
- (b) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, the State Board of Education may waive any of the requirements of this section and issue an initial educator certificate to any person who presents a combination of education and experience that the state board determines is the equivalent of the education and experience required under this section.

History/Background

For issuance of a certificate endorsed for Elementary Education, PreK-6 (#305), Connecticut Regulations require the successful completion of an approved planned program in elementary education, resulting in an institutional recommendation. Applicants must also meet the following requirements:

- (1) Hold a bachelor's degree from an approved institution;
- (2) Have a minimum of 39 semester hours of credit in general academic courses in five of the following six areas: English, natural sciences, mathematics, social studies, foreign language, and fine arts. A survey course in United States history comprised of not fewer than three semester hours of credit shall also be included;
- (3) Have completed either a content area subject-major or interdisciplinary major; and
- (4) Have a minimum of 30 semester hours of credit in professional education in a planned program of study and experience to be distributed among each of the following:
 - a. Foundations of education;
 - b. Educational psychology;
 - c. Curriculum and methods of teaching, and shall include six semester hours of credit in language arts;
 - d. Supervised observation, participation and full-time responsible student teaching in an elementary school totaling at least six but not more than 12 semester hours of credit; and
 - e. 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.

Furthermore, Section 10-145d-412(a)(3)(A) of the Connecticut Regulations allows an applicant who has not completed a required planned program of preparation to submit the following experience in lieu of the university recommendation:

Evidence of 20 school months of successful teaching or service in the appropriate subject area or field for which the endorsement is sought, except that substitute teaching may not be considered towards meeting this requirement, evidenced by a signed recommendation from the employing agent in the same public school system or approved nonpublic school.

Although Mr. Collins successfully completed the coursework (GPA 3.03) for the Capital Region Education Council (CREC) Teacher Residency Program (TRP) and passed the Pearson Foundations of Reading Test and the Praxis II Elementary Reading and Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies Subtests, he has been unable to successfully pass the Praxis II Elementary Math Subtest. Mr. Collin's best score in mathematics is 138, which is well below the passing score; as such, he does not qualify for the Praxis II Elementary Math Subtest Bridge option. Therefore, Mr. Collins is seeking a waiver of certification testing so that he can be issued an Initial Educator Certificate, as authorized by C.G.S. Section 10-145bb(b).

Justification

Mr. Collins holds a bachelor's degree in human services from Springfield College (GPA 3.85) and a master's degree in educational technology from Central Connecticut State University (GPA 3.53). He also completed non-credit-bearing coursework for an elementary teaching certificate through the Capital Region Education Council (CREC) Teacher Residency Program (TRP) with a GPA of 3.03. He has passed the Pearson Foundations of Reading Test and the Praxis II Elementary Reading and Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies Subtests.

However, his best Praxis II Elementary Math Subtest score was a scale score of 138, which is 19 points below the passing score of 157. The primary purpose of a Praxis II assessment is to ensure that individuals entering the teaching profession have minimum content knowledge in the subject area. The passing score differentiates the "just qualified" candidate from the "not-quite qualified" candidate with respect to this minimum content knowledge. The passing scale score of 157 corresponds to approximately 26 out of 40 raw score points on the test. Mr. Collin's best scale score of 138 in mathematics is more than one standard error of measurement (SEM) below the passing score; consequently, he does not qualify for the Praxis II Elementary Math Subtest Bridge option.

Mr. Collins' undergraduate transcript from 2013 lists three mathematics courses as transfer credits. Based on the course titles, it appears that two of the courses are focused on mathematics pedagogy, while one may be focused on mathematics content. Neither the institution where the courses were completed nor the specific year of completion prior to 2013 is listed; the course grades are also not provided. Regardless, these courses predate the incorporation of critical shifts in mathematics instruction that were brought about by the Common Core State Standards.

Mr. Collins has served successfully as a grade 6 English and language arts teacher for CREC under two Resident Educator Certificates (RECs) endorsed for Elementary Education from August 2022 to June 2025. He is currently serving as a technology education teacher for CREC under a long-term substitute (LTS) authorization. CREC strongly supports his candidacy, highlighting his strong instructional skills and a deep commitment to student success, including his ability to connect with students, differentiate instruction, and maintain high expectations, making him a valuable asset to the CREC team.

However, not being able to demonstrate minimum content knowledge in mathematics, either through the Praxis II or through current, relevant coursework, is a significant concern. Connecticut's Core Standards are rigorous. They expect students from the early grades to possess conceptual understanding, procedural skill, and fluency in mathematics. They also expect students to construct and use mathematical models, apply their knowledge to solve complex problems, analyze data, and construct arguments to communicate their reasoning. Teachers need to provide rich instruction in the key areas of focus in mathematics. Teachers also need a deep understanding of the learning progressions in mathematics across the grades so that they can help students to build new understanding on the foundations built in the previous years.

Recommendation

After a comprehensive review of Mr. Collins' credentials, certification requirements, and the expectations for teaching mathematics in the elementary grades, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) cannot recommend that the SBE approve the requested waiver for an Initial Educator Certificate endorsed for Elementary Education, PreK-6 (#305).

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Educational Supports and Wellness