

IX.D.

Connecticut State Board of Education Hartford

**To be Proposed:
April 3, 2024**

Resolved, That the State Board of Education adopts the recommendation from the Connecticut State Department of Education to extend, for the 2024-25 school year only, implementation of the following temporary certification endorsements, as allowable under Sec. 10-145d-619 of *Regulations Concerning State Educator Certificates, Permits and Authorizations*, Emergency Generalist, PK-8 (#201), Emergency Generalist, 7-12 (#202), and Emergency Teacher of English Language Learners, PK-12 (#204) to allow educators who currently hold and continue to hold during the 2024-25 school year an appropriate provisional or professional teaching certificate to be eligible for Emergency Authorization at the request of the local education agency (LEA)/district, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Approved by a vote of _____, this third day of April, Two Thousand Twenty-Four.

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 3, 2024

Subject: Reauthorization of Emergency Educator Certification Endorsements 2024-25

Executive Summary

Introduction

This report provides the State Board of Education (SBE) with a rationale for the recommendation to re-adopt Emergency Educator Certification Endorsements as temporary authorizations for the 2024-25 academic year only in an effort to provide additional flexibility for districts and local education agencies (LEAs) to meet the unique staffing challenges presented by the ongoing teacher shortage. The 2024-25 Emergency Authorization, at the request of the LEA/district, may be issued only to educators who hold a valid provisional or professional educator certificate with a teaching endorsement.

History/Background

On March 10, 2020, Governor Lamont declared public health and civil preparedness emergencies throughout the State of Connecticut in response to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus in the United States and Connecticut.

On several occasions since March 10, 2020, acting pursuant to legal authority conferred by the Connecticut General Statutes, and in response to the continued need to respond adequately to the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Lamont renewed the declarations of public health and civil preparedness emergencies and also issued new declarations of public health and civil preparedness emergencies.

Educators leaving the field voluntarily combined with Connecticut educator preparation programs graduating fewer students continue to give rise to unprecedented staffing challenges for schools. An expectation of continued high levels of vacancies for certified staff members in Connecticut public schools statewide persists and the Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification continues to trend well above pre-pandemic level requests for temporary authorizations and permits.

The employment of appropriately certified, authorized and/or permitted educators remains crucial to the success of all students. Throughout the ongoing pandemic, the Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification has worked closely with PK-12 Superintendents, HR personnel and Educator Preparation Program (EPP) personnel, to implement numerous measures to allow for

the continued processing of applications, expanded pathways into the profession and on-going flexibilities for teacher candidates and educators to meet the needs of students.

The Bureau continues to provide guidance to districts and LEAs regarding flexibility around the use of non-certified staff members and candidates enrolled in EPPs under temporary authorizations, guidance regarding the re-employment of retired educators, and strategies to utilize the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) EdSight Active Certificate Search Tool, which has provided easier access to Connecticut Educator Certification data to assist districts in strategic recruitment and hiring of staff. Additionally, in August 2020, the SBE approved Emergency Educator Endorsements for the 2020–21 school year and supported the Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification, under the authority of the Commissioner of Education, to utilize Equivalency, as prescribed in Sec. 10-145d-614, to accept 20 months of successful service as a paraeducator to serve in lieu of the 12-credits of special education content required for temporary authorizations (Durational Shortage Area Permits and Long-Term Substitute Authorizations).

Recommendation and Justification

As Connecticut school districts work to transition responses from a pandemic to an ongoing teacher shortage, all early indicators show the 2024–2025 academic year will prove to be another challenging one for Connecticut school districts to hire appropriately certified, authorized, and permitted educators. As such, it is recommended that the following Emergency Endorsements be re-approved as “Temporary Unique Endorsements” by the SBE for the 2024–25 school year only, as allowed under Sec. 10-145d-619 of *Regulations Concerning State Educator Certificates, Permits, and Authorizations*.

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

As new endorsements, the Emergency Generalist, PK-8 (#201) and Emergency Generalist, 7-12 (#202) would allow a certified educator who currently holds a provisional or professional teaching certificate to teach all content/subject and grade levels within the PK-8 or 7-12 grade span, exclusive of special education and TESOL/bilingual endorsements, for the 2024-2025 school year at the request of the LEA/District.

Currently certified elementary #002, #003, #004, #005, #013, #305, #112, and #113 holders are eligible for Emergency #201, and current 7-12 holders are eligible for Emergency #202. Currently certified PK-12 educators and middle grades (4–8) would be eligible for either #201 or #202, depending on need.

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

The Emergency Teacher of English Language Learners, PK-12 (#204) would authorize a certified world language teacher or a bilingual or TESOL teacher who currently holds a provisional or professional teaching certificate to serve either as a TESOL or bilingual education content teacher in grades PK-12 for the 2024-25 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 SBE and Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification greater control over the addition and subsequent removal (expiration) of the “Temporary Authorization.” All Emergency Endorsements issued under a Temporary Authorization would be set to expire June 30, 2025.

Districts would submit a request to the Bureau to have the “Temporary Authorization” assigned to the designated educator’s EIN# with the educator completing part 1 of the application and the district completing part 2. This process would help ensure that the use of the Emergency Endorsement was mutually agreed to by both the educator and the requesting district. We believe this process protects the role of the educator in the decision and this procedure encourages districts to have conversations with educators prior to requesting the emergency authorization.

The Bureau would re-establish the unique emergency endorsement codes into the Educator Database System (EDS) which would allow districts to assign the Emergency Endorsements to an educator for the 2024-25 school year to ensure compliance with both certification and Teachers Retirement Board (TRB) requirements.

Follow-up Activity

If the SBE approves the recommendation to adopt temporary educator certification endorsements as authorizations for 2024-2025 school year, the CSDE will notify Connecticut districts, LEAs and partner organizations immediately. The Bureau would continue to process applications through the use of the ED 2020 form which was developed to process LEA/district requests of unique emergency endorsements since the 2020-21 school year.

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Educational Supports and Wellness