

VIII.D.

Connecticut State Board of Education Hartford

To Be Proposed:

June 3, 2026

Resolved, That pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-145bb(b), the State Board of Education determines that Tanasia Edwards presents a combination of education and experience that is the equivalent of the education and experience required under Section 10-145bb(b) and thereby waives the requirements set forth in C.G.S. Section 10-145bb(a) and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action to issue an Initial Educator Certificate endorsed for Comprehensive Special Education, PreK–12 (#165).

Approved by a vote of _____, this third day of June, 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: June 3, 2026

Subject: Consideration for Approval of Certification for Tanasia Edwards #165
Comprehensive Special Education, PreK-12

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), Tanasia Edwards has requested such waiver, seeking thereby an Initial Educator Certificate endorsed for Comprehensive Special Education, PreK–12 (#165). 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 Comprehensive Special Education, PreK–12 (#165), Connecticut Regulations require the successful completion of an approved planned program in special education, resulting in an institutional recommendation. Applicants must also meet the following requirements:

- (1) Hold a bachelor's degree; and
- (2) Complete a planned program of professional education related to the preparation of teachers of students with special needs and present the recommendation based on the applicant's skills related to knowledge and competence acquired through study and experience in:
 - Psychoeducational theory and development of handicapped children;
 - Diagnosis of handicapped children;
 - Program planning and evaluation of handicapped children;
 - Curriculum and methods of teaching handicapped children; and
 - Supervised observation, participation and full-time responsible student teaching, totaling at least six but not more than 12 semester hours of credit, dealing with at least two handicapping conditions covered by the comprehensive special education endorsement.

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 Ms. Edwards successfully completed the coursework for the Master of Arts in Teaching Special Education at Southern Connecticut State University (GPA 3.83) and the Praxis II Special Education Test, she was unable to successfully pass the Pearson Foundations of Reading Test. Her Pearson Foundations of Reading Test score reports verify that her highest score on the test was 233, which misses the passing score of 240 by seven points. However, a score of 233 on the Pearson Foundations of Reading Test is within one standard error of measurement (SEM) of the passing score of 240. If Pearson offered a Bridge option in Connecticut like the ETS Praxis II Tests, she would qualify for an alternative testing option. Therefore, Ms. Edwards is seeking a waiver of certification testing to be issued an Initial Educator Certificate, as authorized by C.G.S. Section 10-145bb(b).

Justification

Ms. Edwards holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Tuskegee University (GPA 2.9) and a master's degree in special education from Southern Connecticut State University (GPA 3.83), which included the required dyslexia-related course content and the supervised practicum component completed prior to student teaching, as well as satisfying the Praxis II Special Education Test requirement. She has been serving successfully as a special education teacher for the New Haven Public Schools under five durational shortage area permits (DSAPs) endorsed for special education since August 2021.

The New Haven Public Schools strongly supports her candidacy as a special education teacher, citing her deep commitment to successfully creating an inclusive and structured learning

environment for all students that supports academic growth, social-emotional development, and behavioral success. In addition, the district verified Ms. Edwards' eagerness to continue to learn and grow as a professional, as well as her strong leadership and collaborative skills working with all school community members. Her professional development has been strategically focused on successful implementation of the reading curriculum, systematic structured literacy for students with learning and language disabilities, evidence-based literacy interventions, literacy lesson design and implementation, and the role of assistive technology in supporting reading development.

If Ms. Edwards' request for an Initial Educator Certificate is granted, she must meet all requirements necessary at the time of application to advance to the next level of certification, including, but not limited to, successful completion of the TEAM beginning educator induction program and professional experience. Additionally, Ms. Edwards will be subject to the same supervision and performance evaluation as other certified staff.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the SBE accept the bachelor's degree, master's degree in special education, and successful teaching experience at New Haven Public Schools as the basis for issuance of an Initial Educator Certificate for Comprehensive Special Education, PreK-12 (#165).

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

Approved by: Sinthia Sone-Moyano, Deputy Commissioner Educational Supports and Wellness