

Public Act No. 24-41, Section 13(b)

Acknowledgements

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1. Introduction

This memo pertains to the obligations of the Connecticut Educator Preparation and Certification Board (the “Certification Board”) set out in Sections 13(b)(1), (2), and (3) of Public Act 24-41 (the “Act”).¹

2. Section 13(b): An Overview

Section 13(b) of the Act requires the Certification Board—by July 1, 2025—to:

1. undertake a review of the certification endorsement areas for the purpose of (A) developing standards regarding the adequacy and relevance of such endorsement areas, and (B) considering whether the grade ranges for the endorsement areas should be expanded;
2. explore alternative pathways for educators to receive cross endorsements; and
3. consider whether to transfer authority over candidate admission criteria for alternate route to certification programs to the program providers.

3. Section 13(b)(1)

¹ Public Act 24-41, Substitute House Bill No. 5436, 2024, § 13 (Connecticut).

A review of the certification endorsement framework and areas in Connecticut yielded the following **conclusions and recommendations**:

- The Act included several provisions that modified the pre-existing endorsement framework in Connecticut. Specifically, the Act (i) expanded the grade-span validity of elementary education endorsements to grades pre-kindergarten to six, inclusive; (ii) expanded the grade-span validity of a host of secondary education endorsement areas to grades four to twelve, inclusive;² and (iii) sunset sections 10-145d-444 through 10-145d-450 of the State Board of Education Regulations (the “Regulations”), which cover the requirements for obtaining a Middle Grades certificate effective July 1, 2026.
- On an ongoing basis, the Connecticut State Department of Education (“CSDE”) works to align endorsement codes with existing legal requirements, and maintains an updated list of endorsement codes on its website.³ Rather than being discontinued entirely, endorsement areas that have been rendered obsolete or have otherwise been superseded remain eligible for reissuance to existing endorsement holders.
- There is a need to retain the Middle Grades endorsements. The expansion of the grade-span validity of the secondary education endorsements effectuated by the Act has largely obviated the need for discrete Middle School (Grade 4–8) certificates (215, 226, 229–235). However, those endorsement codes should remain active for two principal reasons. First, it is important for out-of-state educators seeking an equivalent certification upon relocation to Connecticut to have a middle school endorsement area available. Second, it will allow elementary school teachers seeking a cross-endorsement that would allow them to teach Grades 7 and 8 to expand their practice without necessarily having to develop the skills needed to work with high school students. Three Connecticut EPPs (Albertus Magnus College, CREC, and the University of Bridgeport) offer certification programs for teachers in Grades 4–8.
- A new Birth–Grade 3 endorsement area that would replace/combine the existing Integrated Early Childhood/Special Ed., Birth-Kindergarten (112) and Integrated Early Childhood/Elementary Ed. N-3 and Special Ed., N-K (113) endorsements should be established. This would align with research suggesting that preparation programs for early-childhood educators benefit from a dedicated focus on the developmental needs of young children.⁴ **Draft regulatory language is currently being developed to establish such a new endorsement area.**

The review also surfaced **potential areas of further exploration**, which the Certification Board could work with CSDE to address moving forward as part of its ongoing effort to ensure the continued adequacy and relevance of certification endorsement areas:

- Section 10-145d-481 of the Regulations, which is identified by the Act for repeal on July 1, 2026, pertains to the validity of the remedial reading endorsement. The repealed regulation indicated that the certificate is

² The Act makes the following endorsements valid for Grades 4–12 irrespective of when they were issued: Biology, business, chemistry, earth science, English, French, German, general science, history and social studies, Italian, Latin and classical humanities, Mandarin Chinese, mathematics, Portuguese, physics, Russian, Spanish and any other world language.

³ CT.gov, *What are the Numbers for Endorsement Codes?*,

<https://portal.ct.gov/sdecertification/knowledge-base/articles/resources/endorsements/endorsement-codes>.

⁴ Jackson, S., Orenstein, N., & Bornfreund, L., (2017). “One size doesn’t fit all: The need for specialized teacher licenses in the early grades”, New America Foundation, Washington D.C., <http://na-production.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/One-Size-Doesnt-Fit-All.pdf>.

valid for Grades 1–12. With the Act having expanded the grade-span validity of an elementary certificate down to pre-kindergarten, the Certification Board should consider whether to update the law to align the grade-span validity of this endorsement area to the expanded elementary certificate.

- The Certification Board should consider implementing a series of technical amendments to the current certification endorsement framework, including:
 - Shifting endorsement codes with limited use cases into the historic section of CSDE guidance. The Integrated Science (235) endorsement, for example, is congruent with the General Science (234) endorsement and need not remain an active option for new teacher candidates. Similarly, barring any adverse implications with the Teacher Retirement Board, the Certification Board might consider moving the School Business Administrator (085) endorsement into the Historic category given the option to work in that capacity with an Intermediate Administration or Supervision (092) endorsement.
 - Updating the names of certain endorsement codes. Family and Consumer Sciences, for example, has become the standard nomenclature for the Home Economics (045) certification area.⁵
- The Certification Board should consider whether certification endorsement areas/pathways for specialized services roles in public education—such as occupational therapists, physical therapists, and board-certified behavior analysts/registered behavior technicians—should be established by CSDE. There is precedent for such an approach in other states (for example, Colorado,⁶ New Jersey,⁷ and Washington⁸).

4. Section 13(b)(2)

Cross-endorsements are essentially additional authorizations that expand the subject areas a certificate holder is allowed to teach.⁹ While the most common approaches to assessing the minimum content knowledge and skills necessary for teaching a new subject area are through standardized content area exams and/or subject coursework requirements, there are potentially other ways to demonstrate such knowledge and skills. **The following subsections provide an overview of alternative pathways to cross-endorsements found in other states.**

a. District Professional Development (Wisconsin)

⁵ See, e.g., 603 CMR § 7.04(3)(a) (Massachusetts); 8 CRR-NY § 52.21 (New York).

⁶ See, e.g., Colorado Department of Education, *Occupational Therapy (OT)*, <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/rs-ot>.

⁷ See, e.g., New Jersey Department of Education, *School Physical Therapist Standard Certificate: Endorsement Code 2920*, <https://www.nj.gov/education/certification/edsrvs/endorsementsedsrvs/2920S.shtml>.

⁸ See, e.g., Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, *Education Staff Associate (ESA)*, <https://ospi.k12.wa.us/educator-support/education-staff-associate-esa>.

⁹ See, Connecticut State Department of Education, *What are cross-endorsements?*, https://portal.ct.gov/sdecertification/knowledge-base/articles/resources/endorsements/what-are-cross-endorsements?language=en_US.

Wisconsin's District Sponsored License with Stipulations ("LWS3") allows licensed educators to teach in a new area and/or grade¹⁰ while receiving supervision, mentoring, and professional development provided by their employer.¹¹ The LWS3 was introduced in 2018 via a change to the Wisconsin Administrative Code,¹² as a result of recommendations made by a stakeholder working group convened by the Wisconsin State Department of Public Instruction ("DPI") to address staffing shortages.¹³

To be eligible for the LWS3, an educator must be:

- licensed (that is, hold a valid Provisional, Lifetime, or Master Educator license);
- employed in a Wisconsin school and have at least one year of full-time teaching experience in that school; and
- assigned to teach grades and/or subjects outside the currently-licensed grade and/or subject.¹⁴

There is a processing fee of \$125 when one applies for the LWS3.¹⁵

The LWS3 is only valid for three years; is non-renewable;¹⁶ and is valid only in the school district that employs and provides professional development to the educator.¹⁷ While holding the LWS3, an educator must participate in employer-provided professional development; and complete any statutory stipulations on the educator's current license(s) and any additional stipulations¹⁸ related to the full license in the subject area that is being cross-endorsed into.

The LWS3 license is a route to full licensure—educators holding LWS3 can apply for full licensure in the new endorsement area after having taught using a LWS3 license for at least one year, via portfolio review. The purpose of the portfolio is to demonstrate proficiency in the new subject and/or grade. The DPI will typically review a LWS3 educator's portfolio, which includes the completed content rubric; artifacts¹⁹ that demonstrate understanding and

¹⁰ See, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, (2018). "Three-Year License with Stipulations (LWS3): License Via Portfolio Review Handbook", WDPI, Madison, WI, <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/licensing/pdf/three-year-license-stipulations-handbook.pdf>.

¹¹ Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, *Three-Year District-Sponsored License with Stipulations*, <https://dpi.wi.gov/licensing/apply-educator-license/lws-threeyear>.

¹² See, 2018 WI REG TEXT 440664 (NS), 2018 WI REG TEXT 440664 (NS).

¹³ See, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, (2016). "State Superintendent's Working Group on School Staffing Issues," WDPI, Madison, WI, <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/tepd/pdf/FINALReport-StateSuperintendentsWorkingGrouponSchoolStaffingIssues.pdf>; see also CR 17-093: cr. Register July 2018 No. 751, eff. 8-1-18.

¹⁴ See, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, (2018). "Three-Year License with Stipulations (LWS3): License Via Portfolio Review Handbook", WDPI, Madison, WI, p. 1, <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/licensing/pdf/three-year-license-stipulations-handbook.pdf>.

¹⁵ Ibid, at 8.

¹⁶ Ibid, at 3.

¹⁷ Ibid, at 2.

¹⁸ These might include, for example, minority relations and conflict resolution courses. See, e.g., Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, *Statutory License Stipulations*, <https://dpi.wi.gov/licensing/apply-educator-license/statutory-stipulations>.

¹⁹ These might include, for example, lesson plans and/or assessment plans. See, e.g., Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, *Three-Year District-Sponsored License with Stipulations*, <https://dpi.wi.gov/licensing/apply-educator-license/lws-threeyear#>.

proficiency related to each standard²⁰ enumerated in the rubric; and corresponding narratives drawing direct connections between each standard, related artifacts, and the educator’s developing teaching practice.²¹ An educator may also elect to have an EPP review the portfolio instead, in which case the educator must obtain a letter from the certifying officer of the EPP verifying that the educator has demonstrated proficiency in the national or content standards laid out in the applicable rubric (in addition to evidence of work in the school district that requested the LWS3 license for at least one year).²²

There is a portfolio review fee of \$275.²³

It appears that the LWS3 is well-received in Wisconsin. Recent data shows that between 2019 and 2023, there was a 37.3% increase in LWS3 licenses issued, with 232 issued for the 2022-23 school year.²⁴

b. Portfolio/Oral Board and National Licensure (New Hampshire)

New Hampshire has three pathways that apply equally to initial and cross-endorsements: Approved Educator Preparation Programs (“AEPPs”), Demonstrated Competencies (“DCs”), and Site-Based Licensing Plans (“SBLPs”).²⁵ In other words, educators seeking additional endorsements in new subject areas or grade bands follow the same pathways that initial certification endorsements require.

While the AEPP is the standard pathway, and the SBLP resembles more of a temporary/shortage area permit, the DC pathway could be a route worth exploring. The DC pathway comprises 4 sub-options:²⁶ Portfolio/Oral Board, National/Regional Licensure, Transcript Analysis,²⁷ and Experience under Out-of-State License.²⁸ The Portfolio/Oral Boards and National/Regional Licensure pathways could offer examples of alternative ways to assess the knowledge and skills needed for cross-endorsements.

Portfolio/Oral Board²⁹ is a pathway that relies on a portfolio review and oral examination process.³⁰ To be eligible, an educator needs to:

²⁰ These are either national standards or license program content guidelines (where no national standards exist). See, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, *Three-Year District-Sponsored License with Stipulations*, <https://dpi.wi.gov/licensing/apply-educator-license/lws-threeyear#>.

²¹ See, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, (2018). “Three-Year License with Stipulations (LWS3): License Via Portfolio Review Handbook”, WDPI, Madison, WI, p. 11, <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/licensing/pdf/three-year-license-stipulations-handbook.pdf>.

²² Ibid, at 3.

²³ Ibid, at 17.

²⁴ Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, (2023). “2023 Educator Preparation and Workforce Analysis Report”, WDPI, Madison, WI, p. 35, <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/education-workforce/pdf/2023-wi-epp-workforce-annual-report.pdf>.

²⁵ See, NHDOE, (2024). *Information Regarding Revised Credentialing Rules*, <https://nhdoepm.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/CHD/pages/899121153/Information+Regarding+Revised+Credentialing+Rules>.

²⁶ N.H. Code Admin. R. Ed 505.06.

²⁷ Transcript Analysis is for administrative endorsements only. See, *ibid.* at (c).

²⁸ Experience under Out-of-State License caters mostly to interstate applicants who do not meet the requirements for Out-of-State Approved Program and/or completed an out-of-state alternative pathway: See, NHDOE, *Endorsements Available and Requirements*, <https://nhdoepm.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/CHD/pages/193954145/Endorsements+Available+and+Requirements>.

²⁹ N.H. Code Admin. R. Ed 505.06, at (a).

³⁰ See, NHDOE, *Demonstrated Competencies: Portfolio/Oral Board (DCPOB)*, <https://nhdoepm.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/CHD/pages/193954261/Demonstrated+Competencies+Portfolio+Oral+Board+DCPOB>.

- possess a Bachelor's degree;
- meet the Basic Academic Skills Assessment ("BASA") and other testing and degree/experience requirements;³¹ and
- have at least four months of U.S. full-time continuing licensed educator experience in the area of endorsement they are seeking (either public or non-public schools).³²

If the candidate is deemed eligible, they then submit a completed written portfolio to provide evidence of competence for each required licensure standard, and a portfolio review/oral board fee of \$500.³³ Upon review of the portfolio, the New Hampshire Department of Education Bureau of Credentialing (the "Bureau") schedules a review board for a half-day of oral examination.³⁴ The review board is selected by the Bureau and comprises four members, three of whom hold valid Experienced Educator Licenses in the endorsement area sought, and a representative of the Department of Education.³⁵ The review board reviews the application and, at the oral board review, asks the candidate questions based on the material submitted.³⁶ The review board then presents a written recommendation to the Bureau regarding granting licensure.³⁷

The National/Regional Licensure pathway, on the other hand, is for educators who hold licensure from a national/regional organization such as the NBPTS or National Association of School Psychologists.³⁸ The candidate's existing endorsement must match one of New Hampshire's available endorsements.³⁹ Educators submit applications (including relevant documentation) and a fee of \$120 to the Educator Information System.⁴⁰ Educators must also have met any other endorsement-specific testing requirements outlined in the Administrative Rules.⁴¹

5. Section 13(b)(3)

Program providers (including providers of alternate route to certification programs) have general authority over candidate admission criteria.⁴² Currently, however, there are two requirements in law that constrain such authority. The first is that candidates must take (though they do not need to necessarily pass) the

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ N.H. Code Admin. R. Ed 505.06(b).

³⁹ See, NHDOE, *Demonstrated Competencies: National/Regional Licensure (DCNR)*,

<https://nhdoepm.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/CHD/pages/193921438/Demonstrated+Competencies+National+Regional+Licensure+DCNR>.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ See, NHDOE, *Basic Academic Skills Assessment (BASA) and Subject Area Testing Information*,

<https://nhdoepm.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/CHD/pages/193954172/Basic+Academic+Skills+Assessment+BASA+and+Subject+Area+Testing+Information>.

⁴² Although sections 10-145d-10(d)(1) and 10-145d-11(b)(1) of the Regulations stipulate certain standards for candidate admission (including, but not limited to, passing the Praxis I CBT and achieving a cumulative grade point average of at least B-minus average), they are due for repeal on July 1, 2026.

Praxis Core Academic Skills Test (or SAT or GRE);⁴³ the second is that they must achieve a minimum cumulative grade point average of B- for all undergraduate courses.⁴⁴ That said, these requirements serve more as “bare minimums”—according to CSDE guidance, “[s]ome programs may set higher standards, and some may waive the minimum GPA requirement at their discretion.”⁴⁵ Thus, broad admissions authority nevertheless resides effectively with program providers.

⁴³ Section 10-145f(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes continues to impose a requirement that each applicant take a basic skills exam in reading, writing, and math (either Praxis I, the SAT, or the GRE).

⁴⁴ See, CSDE, *Guide to Approved Educator Preparation Programs in Connecticut (January 2025)*, https://portal.ct.gov/dol/-/media/sdecertification/guide-to-approved-educator-preparation-programs-in-connecticut_january-2025.pdf?rev=f30a11c1c24a4008bcc1d3f4d9a4fb74&hash=DAF921EC0D3F248B1D772D3AE736DC5D

⁴⁵ Ibid