

# Possible Criteria for Proposed Alternative Pathways to Professional Certification and Cross-Endorsements

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## 1. Introduction

Pursuant to Section 12(a)(1) of Public Act 24-41 (the “Act”), the Connecticut Educator Preparation and Certification Board (the “Certification Board”) is tasked—by July 1, 2025—with developing the evaluation criteria that will be used to assess proposals for alternative pathways to (i) progress from an initial educator certificate to a **professional educator certificate** or (ii) be issued a **cross-endorsement** (the “Relevant Statutory Obligation”).<sup>1</sup>

This memo offers potential criteria that could be used to evaluate each kind of proposal. Taking each matter—professional educator certification and cross-endorsements—in turn, this memo provides an overview of existing pathways in Connecticut; discusses examples of alternative<sup>2</sup> pathways found in other states<sup>3</sup>; and posits a **non-exhaustive** set of possible criteria for evaluating proposed alternative pathways in Connecticut.

## 2. Professional Educator Certification

### a. Existing Pathway in Connecticut

<sup>1</sup> Public Act 24-41, Substitute House Bill No. 5436, 2024, sec. 12(a)(1) (Connecticut).

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this memo, “alternative” refers to pathways other than those which Connecticut currently recognizes. In the case of progression to professional educator certification, “alternative” refers to pathways that are not contingent upon completion of a master’s degree program. In the case of cross-endorsements, “alternative” refers to pathways that do not require passing a standardized content assessment and/or completion of prescribed coursework.

<sup>3</sup> Descriptions of these alternative pathways are based on information publicly available on respective state department of education websites.

Advancing to professional educator certification is required under Connecticut law for educators wishing to stay in the profession for the long/indefinite term.<sup>4</sup> In order for an educator holding an initial educator certificate (or, where still applicable, a provisional educator certificate) to progress to professional educator certification, one must:

- have completed at least fifty school months of successful teaching in public or approved non-public schools;
- have satisfactorily completed the teacher education and mentoring program; and
- either **hold a master's degree or higher in an appropriate subject matter area or complete an alternative pathway jointly approved by the State Board of Education ("SBE") and the Certification Board.**<sup>5</sup>

Currently, there are no alternative pathways jointly approved by the SBE and Certification Board.

[CPRL's memo on alternative pathways to professional educator certification](#) discusses in greater detail professional educator certification in Connecticut.

## b. Alternative Pathways to Professional Educator Certification in Other States

[CPRL's memo on alternative pathways to professional educator certification](#) discusses in greater detail three common alternative pathways to advanced educator certification recognized in other states:

- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards ("NBPTS") Certification;
- Accrual of recognized professional development points/hours ("PDPs"); and
- Completion of designated programs.

## c. Possible Criteria for Evaluating Proposed Alternative Pathways

Any criteria for evaluating proposed alternative pathways to professional educator certification should reflect the purpose of that certification tier, within the broader framework of Connecticut's educator certification system. To the extent professional educator certification is the highest level of mandatory educator certification in Connecticut, it serves to **validate that an educator has reached a threshold level of teaching experience and expertise needed to be part of the profession for the long/indefinite term.**

Flowing from this consideration, this memo posits three criteria for evaluating proposals for alternative pathways to professional educator certification:

- Quality of provider/supervisor of proposed pathway
- Quality of proposed pathway
- Accessibility of proposed pathway

No.	Criteria	Sub-Criteria/Evidence <sup>6</sup>
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<sup>4</sup> Connecticut State Department of Education, (2024). "Certification Alert: 2024 Legislation Affecting Educator Certification", CSDE, Hartford, CT, [https://portal.ct.gov/sdecertification/-/media/sde/certification/alerts/certalert\\_june2024.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/sdecertification/-/media/sde/certification/alerts/certalert_june2024.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> Public Act 24-41, Substitute House Bill No. 5436, 2024, sec. 1 (Connecticut).

<sup>6</sup> The listed sub-criteria/evidence are non-exhaustive.

1.	Quality of provider/supervisor of proposed pathway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sufficiency of resources to support high quality delivery of programs</li> <li>● Administrative ability to plan, deliver, and operate programs</li> <li>● Qualifications of faculty/personnel</li> <li>● Adequacy of facilities to support participants</li> </ul>
2.	Quality of proposed pathway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Programmatic coherence</li> <li>● Curriculum alignment to applicable state/national content standards and research-backed design principles</li> <li>● Use of effective instructional methods</li> <li>● Effective participant recruitment, selection, and support</li> </ul>
3.	Accessibility of proposed pathway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Affordability</li> <li>● Reasonableness of time/commitment required</li> <li>● Supports the development of a robust and diverse workforce</li> </ul>

#### i. Quality of Pathway Provider/Supervisor

Any proposal should be required to demonstrate that the provider/supervisor of a proposed alternative pathway to professional educator certification has a sustained record of quality—not only through describing and evidencing its fiscal and administrative capacities; but also the academic performance of its participants. This ensures that the pathway provider/supervisor has both the **practical capabilities and technical expertise to implement the proposed pathway successfully**—a threshold matter for any proposal.

As an example, proposals could be required to demonstrate that pathway providers/supervisors have the resources to support high quality delivery of their programs; the administrative ability to plan, deliver, and operate programs of study; a qualified faculty/personnel for delivering proposed programs; and adequate facilities to support their participants.<sup>7</sup> In practice, proposals could offer evidence either in the form of descriptions of the pathway providers'/supervisors' structures, programs, and instructors; or evidence of accreditation (where applicable) to support their case (among other relevant information).

Note that who the pathway provider/supervisor is for the purposes of this criterion will vary according to the nature of the proposed pathway. For instance, if the proposed pathway is NBPTS certification, the pathway provider/supervisor would be the NBPTS. If the proposed pathway is a professional development program, the pathway provider/supervisor would be the professional development provider.

#### ii. Quality of Proposed Pathway

<sup>7</sup> Substantiation of this criteria is inspired by relevant CAEP standards: See Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, (2021). "CAEP Revised 2022 Standards Workbook", CAEP, Washington D.C., p. 76, <https://caepnet.org/-/media/Files/caep/accreditation-resources/caep-2022-standards-workbook-final.pdf?la=en>.

Any proposal should be required to provide evidence substantiating the quality of the pathway it is proposing. Completion of any pathway to professional educator certification should serve both as a **process through which educators learn, refine, and improve** their teaching knowledge and skills; and as **validation of the requisite competency** needed for that level of certification.

For instance, proposals could be required to demonstrate that their proposed pathways will achieve programmatic coherence; deliver curriculum that is aligned to applicable state/national content standards and research-backed design principles (e.g. for professional development); utilize effective instructional methods (and, where relevant, incorporate practical experiences); and have in place effective participant recruitment, selection, and support processes.<sup>8</sup> In practice, proposals could offer evidence in the form of relevant artifacts documenting proposed program details (such as structure, curriculum, scope, and sequence); and/or (where available) perceptive and evaluative data to support their case (among other relevant information).

### iii. Accessibility of Proposed Pathway

Any proposal should be required to discuss the extent to which the proposed pathway is accessible—whether from a financial, time/commitment, diversity, or other relevant perspective—for otherwise eligible/competent candidates. In other words, proposals should be required to demonstrate how their proposed pathways are accessible to candidates and meet the state's goals for a high quality and diverse workforce. **Given progression to professional certification is mandatory in Connecticut for educators wishing to remain in the profession, pathway accessibility is especially crucial for educator retention.** Even for educator *recruitment*, research has suggested that pathways to professional certification which are particularly expensive and/or time-intensive “form a type of indirect structural barrier for entry into the teacher workforce” for certain demographics.<sup>9</sup>

In practice, proposals could offer evidence in the form of analyses of pathway cost relative to median income in the relevant locality; and evidence (or lack thereof) of diversity implications in research literature to support their case (among other relevant information).

### d. Analysis

The alternative pathways discussed in this section share some commonalities worth noting. First, they are all **ways of validating teaching expertise or competency through the completion of structured programs**. Second, these pathways are all subject to **quality control through processes** (e.g. state or third party recognition). While the states in question might not have directly applied the posited criteria in their approval of alternative pathways, it

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<sup>8</sup> Substantiation of this criteria is inspired by the National Academy of Education’s 2024 Consensus Report: See, K. M. Zeichner, L. Darling-Hammond, A. I. Berman, D. Dong, & G. Sykes, (2024). “Evaluating and Improving Teacher Preparation Programs”, National Academy of Education, Washington D.C., p. 97, [https://naeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Evaluating\\_and\\_Improving\\_Teacher\\_Preparation\\_Programs.pdf](https://naeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Evaluating_and_Improving_Teacher_Preparation_Programs.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> Michael Hansen & Diana Quintero, (2017). “How Extra Pay for Graduate Degrees May Influence the Teacher Diversity Gap”, Brookings Institute, Washington D.C., <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/how-extra-pay-for-graduate-degrees-may-influence-the-teacher-diversity-gap>; see also, Scott-Clayton, J. & Li, J. (2016). “Black-white Disparity in Student Loan Debt More Than Triples After Graduation”, Brookings Institute, Washington D.C., <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/black-white-disparity-in-student-loan-debt-more-than-triples-after-graduation> (Stating that one reason for this is that, because certain minority groups have been shown to incur greater debt in pursuit of their bachelor’s degrees (compared to White candidates), they might be more cautious about joining a profession that would require them to eventually complete those pathways (and incur more debt) in order to advance and continue in that career).

is clear that they are at least concerned with the same considerations that those criteria reflect. This lends further support to the validity of the posited criteria.

It is also worth emphasizing that the posited criteria are broad/general in nature; **each posited criteria might therefore be more or less applicable to a particular pathway depending on the unique characteristics of that pathway.** For this reason, the Certification Board might consider elaborating on these criteria with appropriate sub-criteria/required evidence.

### 3. Cross-Endorsements

#### a. Existing Pathway in Connecticut

Pursuant to Section 5(7) of the Act, educators in Connecticut must achieve a **satisfactory evaluation on the appropriate SBE-approved subject area assessment** in order to be cross-endorsed in that subject, with the exception of special education, teaching English to speakers of other languages, bilingual, remedial reading and remedial language arts or school library media specialist<sup>10</sup>—all of which still require coursework<sup>11</sup>. In Connecticut, the most widely used<sup>12</sup> subject area assessment is the Praxis II test (“Praxis II”).

#### b. Alternative Pathways to Cross-Endorsements in Other States

Cross-endorsements are essentially additional authorizations that expand the subject areas a certificate holder is allowed to teach.<sup>13</sup> 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 (such as the Praxis II) and/or subject coursework requirements, there are potentially other ways to demonstrate such knowledge and skills.

The below subsections highlight promising alternative pathways to cross-endorsements found in two other states, as examples—**either direct, or by analogy**—of the kinds of proposals Connecticut might receive in the future.

- i. Wisconsin’s LWS3 is an alternative pathway **to cross-endorsement** that leverages district professional development.
- ii. New Hampshire’s Portfolio/Oral Board and National Licensure options allow educators to demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to cross-endorse through rigorous processes aligned to state/national standards. Although these are pathways **to both initial and cross-endorsements**, they nevertheless represent non-traditional routes to cross-endorsements worth exploring.

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<sup>10</sup> Public Act 24-41, Substitute House Bill No. 5436, 2024, sec. 5(7) (Connecticut).

<sup>11</sup> See, e.g., CT.gov, *What are the Requirements for a Special Education Endorsement?*, Jun 24, 2022, [https://portal.ct.gov/sdecertification/knowledge-base/articles/resources/endorsements/what-are-the-requirements-for-a-special-education-endorsement?language=en\\_US](https://portal.ct.gov/sdecertification/knowledge-base/articles/resources/endorsements/what-are-the-requirements-for-a-special-education-endorsement?language=en_US) (listing the coursework requirements for special education cross-endorsement).

<sup>12</sup> Elementary Education and Comprehensive Special Education both require the Foundations of Reading test, in addition to Praxis II. World Languages require the ACTFL OPI & WPT. And Remedial Reading requires the Pearson Reading Specialist Test. See, Connecticut State Department of Education, (2019). “Guide to Assessments for Educator Certification in Connecticut”, CSDE, Hartford, CT, [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/certification/guides/assess\\_for\\_cert.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/certification/guides/assess_for_cert.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> 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](https://portal.ct.gov/sdecertification/knowledge-base/articles/resources/endorsements/what-are-cross-endorsements?language=en_US).

### i. District Professional Development (Wisconsin)

Wisconsin's District Sponsored License with Stipulations ("LWS3") allows licensed educators to **teach in a new area and/or grade<sup>14</sup> while receiving supervision, mentoring, and professional development** provided by their employer.<sup>15</sup> The LWS3 was introduced in 2018 via a change to the Wisconsin Administrative Code,<sup>16</sup> 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.<sup>17</sup>

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.<sup>18</sup>

There is a processing fee of \$125 when one applies for the LWS3.<sup>19</sup>

**The LWS3 is only valid for three years; is non-renewable;<sup>20</sup> and is valid only in the school district that employs and provides professional development to the educator.**<sup>21</sup> 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 stipulations<sup>22</sup> 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; artifacts<sup>23</sup> that demonstrate

<sup>14</sup> 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>.

<sup>15</sup> Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, *Three-Year District-Sponsored License with Stipulations*, <https://dpi.wi.gov/licensing/apply-educator-license/lws-threeyear>.

<sup>16</sup> See, 2018 WI REG TEXT 440664 (NS), 2018 WI REG TEXT 440664 (NS).

<sup>17</sup> 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.

<sup>18</sup> 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>.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, at 8.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, at 3.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, at 2.

<sup>22</sup> 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>.

<sup>23</sup> 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#>.



understanding and proficiency related to each standard<sup>24</sup> enumerated in the rubric; and corresponding narratives drawing direct connections between each standard, related artifacts, and the educator’s developing teaching practice.<sup>25</sup> 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 the the applicable rubric (in addition to evidence of work in the school district that requested the LWS3 license for at least one year).<sup>26</sup>

There is a portfolio review fee of \$275.<sup>27</sup>

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.<sup>28</sup>

## ii. 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”).<sup>29</sup> 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:<sup>30</sup> Portfolio/Oral Board, National/Regional Licensure, Transcript Analysis,<sup>31</sup> and Experience under Out-of-State License.<sup>32</sup> 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 Board<sup>33</sup> is a pathway that relies on a **portfolio review and oral examination process**.<sup>34</sup> To be eligible, an educator needs to:

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<sup>24</sup> 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#>.

<sup>25</sup> 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>.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, at 3.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, at 17.

<sup>28</sup> 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>.

<sup>29</sup> See, NHDOE, (2024). *Information Regarding Revised Credentialing Rules*, <https://nhdoepm.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/CHD/pages/899121153/Information+Regarding+Revised+Credentialing+Rules>.

<sup>30</sup> N.H. Code Admin. R. Ed 505.06.

<sup>31</sup> Transcript Analysis is for administrative endorsements only. See, *ibid.* at (c).

<sup>32</sup> 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>.

<sup>33</sup> N.H. Code Admin. R. Ed 505.06, at (a).

<sup>34</sup> 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;<sup>35</sup> 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).<sup>36</sup>

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.<sup>37</sup> 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.<sup>38</sup> 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.<sup>39</sup> The review board reviews the application and, at the oral board review, asks the candidate questions based on the material submitted.<sup>40</sup> The review board then presents a written recommendation to the Bureau regarding granting licensure.<sup>41</sup>

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.<sup>42</sup> **The candidate's existing endorsement must match one of New Hampshire's available endorsements.**<sup>43</sup> Educators submit applications (including relevant documentation) and a fee of \$120 to the Educator Information System.<sup>44</sup> Educators must also have met any other endorsement-specific testing requirements outlined in the Administrative Rules.<sup>45</sup>

### c. Possible Criteria for Evaluating Proposed Alternative Pathways

Any criteria for evaluating proposed alternative pathways to cross-endorsements should reflect the function of cross-endorsements. Given, as aforementioned, cross-endorsements are essentially additional authorizations that expand the subject areas a certificate holder is allowed to teach,<sup>46</sup> they perform a similar function to initial

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> N.H. Code Admin. R. Ed 505.06(b).

<sup>43</sup> See, NHDOE, *Demonstrated Competencies: National/Regional Licensure (DCNR)*, <https://nhdoepm.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/CHD/pages/193921438/Demonstrated+Competencies+National+Regional+Licensure+DCNR>.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> 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>.

<sup>46</sup> 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](https://portal.ct.gov/sdecertification/knowledge-base/articles/resources/endorsements/what-are-cross-endorsements?language=en_US).



endorsements more generally: they **validate that an educator has attained a threshold level of content knowledge and general and subject-specific teaching skills to teach a particular content area.**<sup>47</sup>

Flowing from this consideration, this memo posits two criteria for evaluating proposals for alternative pathways to cross-endorsements:

- i. Extent to which proposed pathway facilitates the demonstration of requisite competency
- ii. Accessibility of proposed pathway

No.	Criteria	Sub-Criteria/Evidence <sup>48</sup>
1.	Extent to which proposed pathway facilitates the demonstration of requisite competency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alignment to state/national content standards</li> <li>• Qualifications and consistency of assessors</li> </ul>
2.	Accessibility of proposed pathway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordability</li> <li>• Reasonableness of time/commitment required</li> <li>• Supports the development of a robust and diverse workforce</li> <li>• Alignment to state's workforce needs</li> </ul>

### i. Facilitating Demonstration of Requisite Competency

Any proposal for an alternative pathway to cross-endorsements should be required to show that the proposed pathway effectively facilitates/enables a candidate's demonstration of the required competency to teach in the cross-endorsed subject. Indeed, this is what Educational Testing Service ("ETS"), the developers of Praxis II (being Connecticut's predominant pathway to cross-endorsements), states is the function of its test—to assess “applications of ... knowledge and skills to the kinds of decisions and evaluations a teacher must make during work with students, curriculum and instruction ... that are critical for teaching.”<sup>49</sup>

Just as there are a variety of ways candidates could demonstrate the requisite competency, there are different ways proposals could satisfy this criterion. For example, a proposal for an alternative pathway based on portfolio review could be required to demonstrate that the rubric used to assess portfolio submissions is adequately aligned with state and/or national content standards; and that portfolio reviewers have the necessary expertise and consistency to effectively and fairly assess portfolios against that rubric (given such a review will oftentimes be substantive in nature).

### ii. Accessibility of Proposed Pathway

Any proposal should be required to discuss the extent to which the proposed pathway is accessible—whether from a financial, time/commitment, diversity, or other relevant perspective—for otherwise eligible/competent candidates. In other words, proposals should be required to demonstrate how their proposed pathways are accessible to

<sup>47</sup> Praxis II Study Guides & Test Info, *PraxisExam.org*, <https://praxisexam.org/praxis-ii/>.

<sup>48</sup> The listed sub-criteria/evidence are non-exhaustive.

<sup>49</sup> ETS Professional Educator Programs, (2021). “The PRAXIS® Mathematics Study Companion,” ETS Professional Educator Programs, <https://praxis.ets.org/on/demandware.static/-/Library-Sites-ets-praxisLibrary/default/dw13354279/pdfs/5165.pdf>.

candidates and meet the state's goals for a high quality and diverse workforce, as well as specific workforce needs (such as addressing shortage areas).

As aforementioned, there are different dimensions of “accessibility”; depending on the nature of the proposed pathway, it might be appropriate for the proposal to speak to one or more of these facets. For example, a proposal for an alternative pathway based on coursework might be required to demonstrate that the coursework requirements prioritize—and only include—courses which there is consensus in the field are crucial to the effective teaching of that subject. This will help ensure that the proposed pathway is accessible from a time/commitment perspective, while at the same time preparing and allowing candidates to demonstrate expertise over essential knowledge and skills. One of a number of states that has revisited its coursework is New York. New York recently examined its cross-endorsement requirements and adjusted the number of semester hours for the content core requirement for an additional subject area teaching certificate (for a number of subject areas) from 30 to 18, with a focus only on the specific subject matter of the certificate title sought.<sup>50</sup>

Section 2 c. iii. above provides further examples of possible sub-criteria and types of evidence that could be required to demonstrate satisfaction of this criterion.

#### d. Analysis

Compared to the alternative pathways to professional educator certification (which mostly involve completion of structured programs), the alternative pathways discussed in this section are more **varied and nuanced in nature**. That said, these pathways all require educators seeking cross-endorsements to **demonstrate competency in the subject area they wish to cross-endorse into**.

As articulated in Section 3 d. above (and like the criteria for proposed pathways to professional educator certification), the posited criteria here are broad/general in nature; **each posited criterion might therefore be more or less applicable to a particular pathway depending on the unique characteristics of that pathway**. For this reason, the Certification Board might consider elaborating on these criteria with appropriate sub-criteria/required evidence.

## 4. Concluding Thoughts

Although advancement to professional educator certification and obtaining cross-endorsements are distinct ways for educators to progress in their careers, they share a common trait: they both serve as validation of having attained a threshold level of teaching expertise and subject area mastery (respectively). It follows that the criteria used to evaluate proposals for alternative pathways to professional educator certification and cross-endorsements should reflect their respective purposes.

This memo posits three criteria that could be applied to proposals for alternative pathways to professional educator certification: quality of provider/supervisor of the proposed pathway; quality of the proposed pathway; and accessibility of the proposed pathway. And, it proposes two criteria that could be applied to proposals for alternative pathways to cross-endorsements: the extent the proposed pathway facilitates the demonstration of requisite

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<sup>50</sup> NYSED.gov, *Content Core Requirement Update*, <https://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/content-core-sh-update.html>.

competency; and accessibility of the proposed pathway. To be clear, these proposed criteria are non-exhaustive—there could be other relevant criteria the Certification Board might consider.