



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



TO: Superintendents of Schools
FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner of Education *DRW*
DATE: May 22, 2018
SUBJECT: Certification Endorsement for School Marriage and Family Therapists

This letter is being sent to clarify state statute and corresponding regulations regarding the employment of individuals who hold a School Marriage and Family Therapist certification endorsement.

HISTORY/BACKGROUND

In accordance with Section 10-145d (h) of the Connecticut General Statutes, the State Board of Education adopted regulations for the certification of school marriage and family therapists employed by local or regional boards of education. These regulations can be found in Sections 10-145d-566a to 10-145d-566f, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (Regulations), and were effective September 9, 2008. Enclosed please find a copy of these regulations for your information.

This endorsement is required for anyone serving in the employ of a board of education as a school marriage and family therapist. This certificate authorizes the holder to provide services to students, families, and parents or guardians in order to support the academic and/or behavioral functioning of the student. The holder is not authorized to teach unless the person also holds an appropriate teaching endorsement.

Provision of services by the holder of the certificate for school marriage and family therapist will be determined by the school building administrator, in consultation with the planning and placement team, as defined in Section 10-76a-1 of the Regulations, or in accordance with alternative procedures and programs, e.g., student assistance team, child study team, etc., before a child is referred to a planning and placement team, as described in Section 10-76d-7 of the Regulations.

As provided under Section 10-145d-566b of the Regulations, a licensed marital and family therapist providing services to a board of education through a personal services contract and not as an employee of the board of education shall not be required to hold a valid certificate.

IMPLICATIONS FOR DISTRICT HIRING DECISIONS

It is left to the discretion of each local or regional board of education, pursuant to Section 10-145d-566b of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, to determine which student support professional (e.g. school social worker, marriage and family therapist, school guidance counselor etc.) is most appropriate to support the academic or behavioral functioning of students. Based upon that determination, the local or regional board shall develop a job description that

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appropriately reflects the services the support professional is authorized to provide and advertise accordingly. It is important to note the differentiation among the roles of a school psychologist, school social worker, school counselor and school marriage and family therapist. While a local or regional board of education may determine that a school marriage and family therapist is the most appropriate support professional to deliver services to students, school marriage and family therapists should not be hired into a school psychologist, school social worker, or school counselor position unless they hold appropriate certification in these areas, as determined by the Department.

If you have questions regarding the certification requirements for this endorsement, feel free to contact Patricia Wilson, Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification, at 860-713-6723.

DRW:svv

cc: Ellen Cohn, CSDE, Deputy Commissioner
Dr. Sarah Barzee, CSDE, Chief Talent Officer
Charlene Russell-Tucker, Chief Operating Officer
Patricia Wilson, CSDE, Education Consultant

Enclosure

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Concerning State Educator Certificates for
School Marriage and Family Therapist

Section 1. The Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies are amended by adding new sections IO145d-566a to 10-145d-566f, inclusive, as follows:

(NEW) Sec. 10-145d-566a. Applicable Provisions under Regulations Concerning State Educator Certificates, Permits and Authorizations

For purposes of sections 10-145d-566b to 10-145d-566f, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, the definitions, general conditions, code of professional responsibility, types of certificates, special authorizations, reissuance of certificates, and the appeal process provisions as described in Part I, Part II, Part III, Part IV, Part V, and Part XV II of sections 10-145d-400 to IO-145d619, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies shall apply.

(NEW) Sec. 10-145d-566b. When required

This endorsement for school marriage and family therapist shall be required for anyone serving in the employ of a board of education as a school marriage and family therapist. Provision of services by the holder of this certificate for school marriage and family therapist will be determined by the school building administrator and in consultation with the planning and placement team, as defined in Section 10-76a-1 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, or in accordance with alternative procedures and programs, e.g., student assistance team, child study team, etc., before a child is referred to a planning and placement team as described in Section 10-76d-7 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. A licensed marital and family therapist providing services to a board of education through a personal services contract and not as an employee of the board of education shall not be required to hold a valid certificate.

(NEW) Sec. 10-145d-566c. Validity of certificate

This certificate for school marriage and family therapist authorizes the holder to provide services to families, parents and guardians in order to support the academic or behavioral functioning of the student. The holder of this certificate for school marriage and family therapist shall not be authorized to teach unless the person holds an appropriate teaching endorsement.

(NEW) Sec. 10-145d-566d. Initial educator certificate requirements

To receive an initial educator certificate to serve as a school marriage and family therapist, the applicant shall meet the following requirements:

- (a) Holds a bachelor's degree from an approved institution;
- (b) Holds a master's degree from an approved institution with a planned program in marriage and family therapy accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE);
- (c) Has successfully met Praxis I requirements;

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- (d) Holds a valid license from the Connecticut Department of Public Health pursuant to Section 20195c of the Connecticut General Statutes to practice marriage and family therapy;
- (e) Has completed graduate coursework in the following areas:
 - (1) Child and adolescent development;
 - (2) Learning theories;
 - (3) School-based systems theory;
 - (4) Federal and state education laws including, but not limited to, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Americans with Disabilities Act Section 504,

professional ethics and code of professional responsibility for educators, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and statutory requirements for mandated reporting, suspensions and expulsions, and school and district accountability; and
 - (5) 300 hours of school-based marriage and family therapy practicum jointly supervised by faculty of a program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) and a special service staff member of a board of education;
- (f) Has completed 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.

(NEW) Sec. 10-145d-566e. Provisional educator certificate requirements

To receive a provisional educator certificate for school marriage and family therapist, an applicant shall present evidence of meeting the preparation and eligibility requirements for an initial educator certificate, and evidence of having completed the following:

- (a) 10 school months of successful service under the initial educator certificate or interim educator certificate; or
- (b) Within 10 years prior to application, at least 30 school months of successful service as a school marriage and family therapist in the employ of a public school in another state, approved nonpublic school in Connecticut or nonpublic school approved by the appropriate governing body in another state.

(NEW) Sec. 10-145d-566f. Professional educator certificate requirements

To receive a professional educator certificate for school marriage and family therapist, an applicant shall present evidence of having completed 30 school months of successful service under a provisional educator certificate or interim provisional educator certificate.

Effective Date: Upon filing with the Secretary of State.

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: To adopt regulations, as required by Section 10-145d(h) of the 2008 Supplement to the General Statutes, for the certification of marriage and family therapists employed by boards of education.