



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



TO: Connecticut Housing Finance Authority
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Directors of Approved Private Special Education Programs
Executive Directors of Regional Educational Service Centers

FROM: Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner *CRJ*

DATE: July 13, 2023

SUBJECT: Designation of Certification Shortage Areas, 2023-24 School Year

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has identified 11 certification endorsement shortage areas this year based on a demonstrated lack of qualified certified educators in certain subject areas. Filling vacancies with certified teachers in these areas is an urgent need for Connecticut’s students, especially in the four priority shortage areas (Mathematics, 4-12; Science, 4-12; Bilingual Education/TESOL, PreK-12; and Special Education, PreK-12).

The following certification endorsements are identified as shortage areas for the 2023-24 academic year:

Certification Endorsements

Connecticut Teacher Shortage Areas for 2023-24

Certification Endorsement	Grades	Shortage Area Designation
Bilingual Education	PreK-12	Statewide
History and Social Studies	7-12	Statewide
Mathematics	4-12	Statewide
Special Education*	PreK-12	Statewide
School Library and Media Specialist	PreK-12	High Needs Districts only**
School Psychologist	PreK-12	High Needs Districts only**
Science	4-12	Statewide
Speech and Language Pathologist	PreK-12	High Needs Districts only**
Technology Education	PreK-12	Statewide
Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)	PreK-12	Statewide
World Languages	7-12	Statewide

*The Special Education shortage area designation comprises Partially Sighted, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Blind, Comprehensive Special Education, and Integrated Early Childhood teaching endorsement codes.

**A district is designated as a high-needs district for teacher shortage purposes if any of the following is true:

- The district is an Alliance District; OR
- The district’s average annual percentage of students who qualified for free or reduced-price lunch was greater than or equal to 43% (over the period of 2014-15 to 2020-21); OR

- The district's percentage of students who qualified for free or reduced-price lunch in 2021-22 was greater than or equal to 43%. The full list of High-Needs Districts is available in Appendix A of the Staffing Shortage Areas in Connecticut Public Schools report.

Teacher shortage areas are determined by a combination of supply and demand. The shortage areas above represent certification endorsement areas where significant vacancies exist, where educator preparation programs (EPPs) do not produce enough graduates to meet the needs of Connecticut's PreK-12 student population, and/or where a disproportionate number of teachers who are not certified in the appropriate field are being hired to teach such courses. This information can be used to determine the current and projected needs of classroom teachers for specific subject areas in the upcoming school year. The process used to determine these teacher shortage areas is presented in [CSDE Identification of Shortage Areas](#).

Teachers who teach in one of the identified shortage areas, either Statewide or High-Needs Districts only, may benefit from the following state and federal programs:

Teachers' Mortgage Assistance Program

Per Section 8-265pp of the C.G.S., a mortgage assistance program is provided for the purchase of a primary residence for certified teachers who:

1. are employed by a priority or transitional school district;
2. are employed by the Technical Education and Career System in a technical education and career school that is located in a priority or transitional school district;
3. teach in a subject matter shortage area pursuant to Section 10-8b of the C.G.S.;
4. graduated from a public high school in an education reform district as defined in Section 10-262u of the C.G.S.; or
5. graduated from an historically black college or university or a Hispanic-serving institution, as those terms are defined under the applicable federal laws.

In the case of certified teachers teaching in a priority or transitional school district, or in a technical education and career school located in a priority or transitional school district, the dwelling must be located in the district in which the school is located.

The [Teachers' Mortgage Assistance Program](#) is an important incentive designed to alleviate shortage areas and to have educators live in the community in which they teach. The program is administered by the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) through its participating lenders.

All eligible teachers seeking a mortgage through this program will be required to have a Statement of Eligibility signed by the Superintendent of Schools in their district. This signed statement will be required by the mortgage lender for proof of eligibility.

Rehiring of Retired Teachers

Retired teachers receiving Teachers' Retirement Board (TRB) retirement benefits may be reemployed without being subject to the statutory earnings limit if, in the school year in which they are employed, they teach (1) in a subject shortage area, or (2) in a priority school district.

Similarly, retired teachers who graduated from a public high school in an education reform district, or from a historically black college or university or a Hispanic-serving institution, may also be reemployed without being subject to the statutory earnings limit. The period of employment may last one full school year and may be extended for an additional year, subject to prior approval of the TRB and upon request of the local board of education. Teachers receiving TRB benefits also may be reemployed without being subject to the statutory earnings limit if they suspend TRB benefits during their period of reemployment. Additional information regarding Post Retirement Reemployment can be found on the TRB website, <https://portal.ct.gov/TRB/Content/Retired/Retired-Menu>.

Federal Shortage Area Programs

Teachers holding certifications in the state-designated shortage areas may be eligible for:

- targeted teacher deferment for borrowers under the Family Federal Education Loan (FFEL) and Federal Supplemental Loans for Students (SLS) programs [34 CFR 682.210(q)]; and
- cancellation of up to 100 percent of their debt under the Federal Perkins Loan Program for full-time teaching [34 CFR 674.53(c)].

Additionally, teaching in a shortage area may enable grant recipients under the Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant Program to fulfill the requirement that their teaching obligation be in a high-need field [34 CFR 686.12(d)].

Please refer Federal Stafford/SLS and Federal Perkins Loan borrowers who have general questions concerning their loan(s), including the teacher shortage area deferment, to the Federal Student Aid Hotline at 1-800-433-3243.

The following programs and or pathways are methods in obtaining certification in designated shortage areas:

Alternate Route to Certification Programs

First-Time Certificates:

- The Office of Higher Education Alternate Route to Certification ([ARC](#)) Program prepares qualified candidates with content knowledge and relevant work experience for a first-time certificate in secondary content areas.
- Capitol Region Education Council ([CREC-TRP](#)) Teacher Residency Program is an alternate route to elementary teacher certification specifically designed to recruit and retain teachers of color.
- Charter Oak State College offers an alternate route to certification program for [Integrated Early Childhood, Birth-Kindergarten](#).

Cross-Endorsements (for candidates already holding an initial teaching certificate):

- Alternate Route to Certification for Teachers to become Library Media Specialists ([ARCLMS](#)) at ACES prepares qualified candidates for a cross-endorsement as a School Library Media Specialist (#062).

- Advanced Alternate Route to Certification ([AARC](#)) for Special Education at CREC prepares qualified candidates for a cross-endorsement in Comprehensive Special Education, K-12 (#165).
- Alternate Route to Certification for Teachers of English Learners ([ARCTEL](#)) at ACES prepares qualified candidates for a cross-endorsement in Bilingual Education (#902-974).
- Educators who hold a valid Initial, Provisional or Professional Educator Certificate with a *teaching* endorsement, can add an additional endorsement in the following content areas by obtaining a passing score on the appropriate Praxis II/ACTFL test(s):
 - World Language, 7-12 (French #018, German #019, Italian #020, Russian #022, Spanish #023, Chinese #318, Portuguese #317, Other World Languages #024)
 - Mathematics, 4-12 (Middle School, 4-8, #229, Secondary, 7-12, #029)
 - Science, 4-12 (Biology, Middle School, 4-8, #230; Biology, Secondary, 7-12, #030; Chemistry, Middle School, 4-8, #231; Chemistry, Secondary, 7-12, #031; Physics, Middle School, 4-8, #232; Physics, Secondary, 7-12, #032; Earth Science, Middle School, 4-8, #233; Earth Science, Secondary, 7-12, #033; General Science, Middle School, 4-8, #234; General Science, Secondary, 7-12, #034; Integrated Science, Middle School, 4-8, #235).
 - Technology Education, PreK-12 (#047)
 - History and Social Studies, 7-12 (#026)

Note: These endorsements cannot be added to administrative, adult educator, or special service certificates.

In compliance with Section 10-8b of the Connecticut General Statutes, the CSDE will disseminate this memorandum outlining the 2023-24 designated shortage areas to the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority and to the president of every institution of higher education in the state offering an educator preparation program (EPP). To ensure that information regarding the 2023-24 shortage areas is shared widely, the CSDE will also disseminate the memorandum outlining designated shortage areas to Superintendents of Schools, RESC Directors, Board of Regents, the Office of Higher Education, and the Deans/Directors of EPPs.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Shuana K. Tucker, Chief Talent Officer, at shuana.tucker@ct.gov or 860-713-6820.

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