

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Division of Evaluation and Research

Bureau of Evaluation and Educator Standards

Summary of NCATE Discussions on Alternate Route to Teacher Certification

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There have been some discussions on the NCATE listserv regarding various states' standards and practice of alternate route to teacher certification programs.

According to Cindy C. Lips (Associate for State Relations, NCATE, 2010 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20036, telephone: 202-466-7496, fax: 202-296-6620, www.ncate.org), many states are increasingly interested in what other states are doing to approach alternative certification and delivery issues. The questions posted below were submitted by one of the states:

- 1) Does your state have an alternative certification/alternative delivery system in place?
- 2) If so: Are the assessment requirements for alternative candidates the same as the requirements for traditional candidates (If they are different, please explain differences)?
- 3) What are the other requirements for alternative candidates (e.g., college course work, portfolios, participating in entry-year induction program, etc.)?

4) At what point in time does an alternative candidate achieve a standard certificate?

NCATE is also exploring these issues and offers the following:

As states look for ways to increase the supply of qualified classroom teachers and administrators, NCATE is aware that many institutions are being asked to offer additional programs. The issue of unit accountability for alternative preparation programs will be discussed during the October All-Boards meeting and it is anticipated that a new policy will be added to the NCATE handbook. In order to guide states and institutions in the interim, NCATE offers the following statement:

For purposes of NCATE accreditation, professional education units must ensure that candidates in all programs meet the NCATE standards. With the NCATE standards now focused on outcomes, units are expected to demonstrate that candidates have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to teach all children effectively, regardless of the specific program candidates are enrolled in within the unit. NCATE defines a program as "a planned sequence of courses and experiences leading to a degree or recommendation for a state license." The Board of Examiners will gather evidence from all programs fitting this description as a part of its on-site examination.

It is NCATE's hope that states and institutions working to build alternative certification routes at the university level, will find ways to apply the profession's rigorous standards to the development of such programs in order to ensure all children are taught by qualified and caring persons.

California

According to Larry Birch (Administrator of Accreditation, California Commission on Teacher Credentialing), in California, there are alternative certification programs for the teaching credential. *All* programs are approved and granted continuing accreditation on the basis of the *same* program standards and requirements. The major delivery options are undergraduate or postgraduate "student teaching" type programs, university delivered teaching internship programs and district (non-university) delivered teaching internship programs. (This does not include the emergency permits issued at the request of school districts to less than fully qualified educators who are required to enroll in one of the above types of program and be making progress toward certification to maintain the permit.)

The assessment requirements are the same.

All requirements are the same - in other words meeting the same standards. (At the present time, participation in the state-funded Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program is voluntary for newly employed teachers. When our SB2042 credential reforms are in place, there will be a requirement that all new teachers complete an approved induction program (one of which will be BTSA). More information about the credential reforms can be obtained at the Commission's website at www.ctc.ca.gov).

At the end of a "student teaching" type program, the candidate receives a standard credential. During a university or district teaching internship, the candidate serves on an

internship credential (authorizing service as a teacher of record), at the completion of the program the candidate receives a standard credential.

Delaware

Catherine Gilbertson (Ed. D., Program Approval, Evaluation, and Certification, Delaware Department of Education) states that Delaware does have an Alternative Routes to Certification Program. The ARTC program is designed for individuals who are employed to teach in a secondary content area who have an academic major in (or closely related to) a content area that they are teaching but who have not completed the coursework in Professional Education (24 semester hours) traditionally required for certification. For example, a person with a bachelor's degree in math or science would be eligible for our program. In addition, the candidate must pass the PRAXIS I test within two years. Candidates must be hired before they enter the ARTC program. ARTC candidates are assigned a mentor and must complete a one-year, full-time practicum. They must attend the ARTC summer institute that includes approximately 120 instructional hours as well as seminars on teaching (120 instructional hours) that are given throughout the school year on Saturdays. After completion of all coursework in the program and the PRAXIS I exam, they are recommended for full certification by their principal and they are issued a standard teaching certificate.

Indiana

Marie Theobald states that Indiana will have Transition to Teaching in July 2002. Transition to Teaching was included with the Charter School bill.

Michigan

According to Sue Wittick (Higher Education Coordinator, Office of Professional Preparation Services, Michigan Department of Education, P. O. Box 30008, Lansing, MI 48909, telephone: 517-241-0172, fax: 517-373-0542, e-mail: witticks@state.mi.us), Michigan has a MARTC program (Michigan Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification), which was instituted in 1993. It is designed to address local/regional teacher shortages in specific grade levels, subjects or geographic settings, and to promote diversity of culture and gender. The process, approved by the State Board of Education, involves collaboration between a local district, the teacher bargaining organization, a higher education institution and the Michigan Department of Education. It allows Michigan citizens who have been professionally active in specialized areas and who are interested in teaching to come into the teaching profession in non-traditional ways. Candidates in MARTC programs must meet all the same requirements as candidates in traditional programs including passing the appropriate components of the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification. Program completers receive the same (Provisional) certificate that is awarded to graduates of traditional teacher preparation programs. A non-traditional route does not result in lower standards for entry into the profession, nor does it enable untrained or inadequately trained individuals to engage in classroom practice. The candidate is employed by a qualified school district during completion of the MARTC program.

Missouri

According to J. Mike Lucas (Ph.D., Director, Teacher Education, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education), Missouri authorizes institutions to

offer alternative programs leading to state certification. The state is in the process of developing a formal state board rule for innovative and alternative programs, but in the interim they are working from a set of informal guidelines. All programs, whether conventional, innovative, or alternative are held to the appropriate unit and program standards, but alternative programs are allowed more latitude in addressing those standards.

The assessment requirements for alternative program completers are the same as for traditional program completers. In addition to whatever assessments the preparing institution requires, candidates must successfully complete the Praxis II Content Knowledge assessment in the subject area for which they are seeking certification. Often, the preparing institutions use the Praxis to diagnose candidates' areas of weakness in the subject, and then certain courses may be prescribed in candidate's program of study to strengthen those areas.

Candidates are ultimately held to the same requirements for licensure as traditional candidates. They must have a bachelor's degree in the content area being pursued; they must complete professional education coursework; they must prepare portfolios as a requirement of their program; and they must complete all clinical experience requirements. Candidates in alternative programs may qualify for provisional certification and teach under specified conditions while they complete their program of study.

A standard Professional Certificate I (PCI) is issued when the candidate has completed all program requirements and passed the designated exit assessment.

New York

According to Rich Gervais,, in July of 2000 the Board of Regents enacted regulations to implement an alternative teacher certification program in New York State. The purpose of this program is to provide an effective pathway for qualified individuals to enter the teaching profession in a non-traditional manner.

The assessment requirements for alternative candidates are the same as the requirements for traditional candidates, although the time frames differ. Assessments are all part of the New York State Teacher Certification Examinations (NYSTCE) program. In addition, the registered college program meets the same requirements as other teacher education programs as set forth in Commissioner of Education's Regulations.

Candidates for alternative certification must take and pass the Liberal Arts and Sciences Test (LAST) and a Content Specialty Test (CST), in some cases, prior to receiving a Transitional B certificate, which permits them to teach under the supervision of a mentor. Upon completion of the alternative certification preparation program, these candidates must also take and pass the Assessment of Teaching Skills-Written test (ATS-W). They will then be issued a provisional certificate.

Traditional candidates must take and pass the LAST and the ATS-W prior to receiving provisional certification. Certification in English to speakers of other languages or bilingual education requires both types of candidates to take the Language Proficiency Assessment in English. Additionally, a Language Proficiency Assessment in the target language is required for provisional certification in bilingual education.

Alternative certification candidates must be enrolled in a State-approved college program for alternative certification. The program generally leads to a master's degree. It

includes a minimum 200-clock-hour, introductory component (including a 40-hour minimum field experience) prior to candidates being issued a Transitional B certificate. Candidates are then eligible to teach in a school district with which the college sponsoring the program has a partnership. Requirements during this time include satisfactory completion of college coursework and mentored teaching. The entire program takes two to three years to complete.

Alternative program candidates qualify for provisional certificates following completion of their college program and mentored teaching experience. They must also take and pass the ATS-W.

Effective February 2, 2004, terminology will change from provisional/permanent certification to initial/professional certification. This has resulted in changes in requirements, but will not affect what is stated above.

Washington

Lin Douglas states the Washington legislature approved three alternative routes to teacher certification to be implemented during the 2001-2003 biennium. A description of the three routes may be accessed at <www.pesb.wa.gov>.

The standards and requirements are the same as those required for more traditional routes.

Completion of the approved program results in a residency certificate. Verification of completion is a decision that rests with the college or university providing the program.