

Teaching Certification Requirements for Connecticut Technical High School Teachers

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Issue

Describe the evolution of certificate requirements for teachers in the Connecticut technical high school system (“the system”).

Summary

State law has required teachers in the system to hold certification since at least the early 1970s. Currently, these teachers must hold certification whether they are teaching a traditional academic subject, like English or mathematics, or a career or technical skill, like plumbing or digital media. This report focuses exclusively on the certification requirements for career and technical skill teachers seeking entry-level certificates, known as “initial” certificates.

Currently, there are three different types of certificates that apply to career and technical skills teachers. The regulations establishing these requirements were most recently revised in 1993. A comparison of the current certification requirements to those from 1973 shows that, overall, certification requirements have not substantially increased in the past forty years.

Evolution of Certification Requirements

We describe the current entry-level requirements below, which include three types of certificates, and then provide a history of how the requirements have evolved over the past 40 years.

Current Certification Types and Requirements

There are three types of certificates that apply to career and technical skill teachers in the system, depending upon the skill subject area taught. (A fourth certificate for “trade related subjects” exists in state regulation but does not appear to be issued in practice according to the State Department of Education’s [website](#).) This report will examine requirements for the entry-level “initial” certificate.

Current requirements for each of the three certificates were most recently revised in 1993. All three types require (1) a certain minimum education level, (2) demonstration of specific work experience in the subject area taught, and (3) completion of a technical high school teaching practicum and special education coursework.

Education and Experience Requirements. Table 1 below describes each of the three certificates, the minimum education level required to attain each, and the specific field experience applicants must demonstrate in order to become certified.

Table 1: Current Education and Experience Requirements for Initial Certification

Certificate Type	Description	Education and Experience Requirements
Occupational Subjects in Vocational-Technical Schools	For teachers in fields that require special knowledge, skills, and expertise and are not addressed within existing teacher preparation institutions (e.g., automobile servicing, carpentry, plumbing, culinary arts, electronics, cosmetology) (Conn. Agencies Regs. § 10-145d-509)	Hold a high school diploma or GED Have completed eight years of experience in the field, including no more than five years of apprenticeship or specialized schooling (Conn. Agencies Regs. § 10-145d-511)
Practical Nurse Education in Vocational-Technical Schools	For teachers of practical nurse education courses (Conn. Agencies Regs. § 10-145d-519)	Hold a valid registered nurse license issued by the Connecticut Department of Public Health Hold a bachelor’s degree from an approved institution Have completed three years of nursing experience (Conn. Agencies Regs. § 10-145d-521)

Table 1 (continued)

Certificate Type	Description	Education and Experience Requirements
Health Occupation in Vocational-Technical Schools	For teachers of subjects such as dental assistant, dental laboratory technology, home health aide, or medical assisting (Conn. Agencies Regs. § 10-145d-524)	<p>Hold a high school diploma or GED</p> <p>Hold a valid license or certificate appropriate to the particular health occupation to be taught, issued by the appropriate Connecticut governing body</p> <p>Have completed eight years of approved experience in the particular health occupation to be taught, or hold a bachelor's degree from an approved institution and have three years of approved experience in the particular occupation (Conn. Agencies Regs. § 10-145d-526)</p>

Teaching and Coursework Requirements. In addition to education and experience requirements described in Table 1 above, all career and technical skills initial teaching certificates require that applicants complete the following:

1. at least six semester hours of credit teaching vocational and industrial education and
2. at least 36 clock hours of a special education course studying the growth and development of exceptional children (including children with disabilities, gifted and talented children, and children who may require special education) and methods for identifying, planning for, and working effectively with children with special needs in the regular classroom.

Historical Evolution of Certificate Requirements

The Legislative Library traced technical high school certification regulations back to at least 1973. At that time, entry-level certificates were referred to as “provisional” level certificates. The current certification regulations have remained unchanged since 1993.

In a comparison of the 1973 provisional certification requirements to the current requirements, the differences are as follows:

1. beginning in the 1987-88 academic year, the 36-hour special education course requirement was added (PA 84-298, 87-499 & 88-360);

2. the bachelor's degree requirement for teaching media-related occupational subject areas (e.g., radio and television) was removed; and
3. certain certificate endorsements were removed, presumably due to program offerings being discontinued at the high school (e.g., "vocational homemaking").

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