

Technical High School Teacher Certification Requirements and Student Transfer Models in Other States

By: Marybeth Sullivan, Associate Analyst

OLR Staff

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Issue

Describe technical high school entry-level teacher certification models in other states, as well as examples of other states' policies for student transfers from traditional high schools to technical (i.e., vocational or trade) high schools.

Summary

OLR examined a sample of New England, mid-Atlantic, and mid-Western states (Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island). All require a teaching certificate for entry-level positions teaching in a trade subject area, as well as varying amounts of work experience in the trade. They vary, however, in their requirements about (1) completing postsecondary degrees and additional teacher training and (2) allowing work experience as a postsecondary education substitute.

Of these nine states, eight have an entry-level certification model similar to Connecticut's (predominantly experience-based). Some of these same states do require a postsecondary degree for certain subject areas, however (e.g., nursing, biotechnology, engineering technology). Two (Delaware and Illinois) require at least some college coursework but not a postsecondary degree. Three of the nine (Delaware, Iowa, and Maine), like Connecticut, require additional teacher training in preparation for managing a classroom.

The states surveyed typically did not establish a formalized plan for transferring from a traditional high school to a technical one. Two states, however, established transfer opportunities that differed from Connecticut's: New Hampshire delays transfer opportunities until the third year of high school, and Rhode Island delegates the authority to set transfer policies at the local level.

Teacher Certification Models

Overview

Table 1 below provides a comparison of Connecticut's entry-level certification requirements with nine other states. Links to each state's teacher certification websites or controlling statutes or regulations are provided.

Table 1: Entry-Level Technical High School Teacher Certification Requirements by State

State	Requires teacher certification or license	Requires work experience	Requires college coursework in the desired certificate subject area	Allows training or work experience as a degree substitute	Requires teacher training coursework
Connecticut	X	X	X (certain subjects)		X
Delaware	X	X	X	X	X
Illinois	X	X	X		
Indiana	X	X			
Iowa	X	X			X
Maine	X	X			X
Maryland	X	X			
Massachusetts	X	X			
New Hampshire	X	X		X	
Rhode Island	X	X		X	

Work Experience

All of the states surveyed require work experience in order to earn entry-level teaching certification, and several allow training or work experience to substitute for a postsecondary degree. Such experience must be in the same trade area as the one sought for certification. Some states measure the work in years, others hours; some specify a minimum level of paid work versus apprenticeship or work training. Several specify how recently the applicant must have completed the work.

Of the states sampled, relevant work experience ranges from five to eight years, or between 2,000 to 8,000 hours. Typically, states require entry-level applicants who have completed less education to demonstrate a longer history of work experience. Of the states that specify how recently employment experience must have occurred, requirements range from within the last five to seven years.

Postsecondary Education

None of the states surveyed require a postsecondary degree for entry-level certification; however, several require less employment experience or offer a higher certification than entry-level for applicants who hold an associate or bachelor's degree. For example, Iowa allows certificate applicants with bachelor's degrees to demonstrate less work experience than applicants who lack such a degree (4,000 hours versus 6,000 hours of relevant occupational experience, respectively).

There are also some states, such as Connecticut, that do require a degree for entry-level certification in specialized fields (e.g., Connecticut requires a bachelor's degree for practical nurse education, Massachusetts for animal science).

Of those states surveyed, two require some college coursework for entry-level certification (Delaware and Illinois). Delaware requires at least two years of college or technical training; Illinois requires 60 semester hours of coursework at the 100-level or higher from a regionally-accredited higher education institution and does not accept remedial coursework.

Teacher Training

Similar to Connecticut, Delaware, Iowa, and Maine require entry-level certification applicants to complete a special education course. Additionally, Delaware and Iowa, like Connecticut, require all applicants to complete a course or courses in pedagogy.

Transfer Models

The states surveyed typically did not establish a formalized plan for transferring from a traditional high school to a technical one. Both New Hampshire and Rhode Island, however, are examples of systems that have different admissions and enrollment criteria than Connecticut, which in turn affect transfer students.

New Hampshire

Unlike Connecticut, where students must transfer into a technical high school by the beginning of their third semester, [New Hampshire](#) requires that high school students complete at least two years of high school prior to entering a career and technical education (CTE) program. Additionally, students must meet specific admissions criteria and have selected a CTE program where there is space available.

Rhode Island

[Regulations](#) established by the Rhode Island Board of Regents allow local boards of education to create their own program-specific CTE admissions criteria. The admissions must be formally adopted and made publically available, and they must at least include (1) the admissions criteria used in the selection process, (2) the application process and continuing enrollment conditions, and (3) a review and appeal process for any student denied admission to a career preparation program (Regulation 5.3).

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