



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF EDUCATION



TO: Superintendents of Schools
Superintendents of Unified School Districts
Directors of Public Charter Schools
Executive Directors of Regional Educational Service Centers
Directors of Approved Private Special Education Programs

FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell 
Commissioner of Education

DATE: March 10, 2017

SUBJECT: Designation of Certification Shortage Areas, 2017-18 School Year

Pursuant to Section 10-8b of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.), the following endorsement areas are designated as certification shortage areas for the 2017-18 school year:

Certification Endorsements

- Bilingual Education, PK-12
- Comprehensive Special Education, K-12
- Mathematics, 7-12
- Occupational Subject, Vocational
Technical High School
- School Library and Media Specialist
- Science, 7-12
- Speech and Language Pathologist
- Technology Education, PK-12
- TESOL, PK-12
- World Languages, 7-12

Teachers who teach in one of the shortage areas may benefit from the following state programs:

Teachers' Mortgage Assistance Program

Section 8-265pp of the C.G.S. provides for a mortgage assistance program for the purchase of a primary residence for certified teachers who are:

1. employed by priority or transitional school districts;
2. employed by the State of Connecticut in a technical high school that is located in a priority or transitional school district; and
3. teaching in a subject matter shortage area pursuant to Section 10-8b of the Connecticut C.G.S.

In the case of certified teachers teaching in a priority or transitional school district, or in a technical high 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. Attached is the Statement of Eligibility that you may copy and distribute to eligible teachers. This signed Statement will be required by the mortgage lender for proof of eligibility.

Any questions or concerns regarding the Teachers' Mortgage Assistance Program may be directed to the Single Family Underwriting Unit at CHFA at 860-571-3502.

Rehiring of Retired Teachers

Retired teachers may be reemployed without being subject to the statutory earnings limit if they teach in a subject shortage area for the school year in which they are employed. The period of employment may last one full school year and may be extended for an additional year, subject to prior approval of the Teachers' Retirement Board (TRB). If you have questions about this program, please contact TRB Administrator, Darlene Perez, at 860-241-8400.

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)];
- cancellation of up to 100 percent of their debt under the Federal Perkins Loan Program for full-time teaching in fields of expertise [34 CFR 674.53(c)]; or
- reduction of the teaching obligation for scholars under the Paul Douglas Teacher Scholarship Program [34 CFR 653.50(a)].

Additionally, teaching in a shortage area enables grant recipients under the Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant Program to fulfill their teaching obligations [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 1-800-4-FED-AID, and refer Douglas Scholars to the state agency that awarded the scholarship.

Connecticut Recruitment and Training Initiatives to Address Shortage Areas

The Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) Talent Office continues to implement strategic initiatives that attract qualified candidates to the education profession, especially in the designated shortage areas.

Among the talent initiatives approved by the State Board of Education (SBE) are the development of various alternate route to certification programs which focus on recruiting and training educators for priority certification-endorsement areas. These programs vary from training educators for a first-time certificate to training certified educators for additional advanced certification endorsement areas of teaching or administration. *A bachelor's degree or higher, from a regionally accredited institution, is a prerequisite for these alternate route programs.* Candidates without a bachelor's degree should refer to a [Guide to Approved Educator Preparation Programs in Connecticut](#).

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.
- Teach For America ([TFA](#)) - Connecticut prepares candidates with content knowledge for a first-time certificate in elementary or secondary certification areas.
- [Relay Graduate School of Education](#) is an accelerated route to certification focused on "grow-your-own" recruitment efforts with partner districts (e.g., paraprofessionals). They currently offer certification in elementary education, as well as secondary science, math, and English/Language Arts.

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 Language Learners ([ARCTELL](#)) at ACES prepares qualified candidates for a cross-endorsement in Bilingual Education (#902-974).

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For additional information about the information in this memo, please contact:

- Designation of certification shortage areas:
Michael Sabados, michael.sabados@ct.gov, 860-713-6856
- Talent Office initiatives to address shortage areas:
Kim Wachtelhausen, kim.wachtelhausen@ct.gov, 860-713-6841

DRW:kwj
Attachment

**Statement of Eligibility
for Participation in the
CHFA Teachers' Mortgage Assistance Program**

I hereby certify that: _____

(Name of Applicant)

Check only **one** box:

Holds a valid Connecticut certificate, is employed as a teacher in his/her respective endorsement area(s) and is employed as a teacher in a priority school district or transitional school district as designated by the Connecticut School Improvement Initiative.

OR

Holds a valid Connecticut certificate and is employed as a teacher in his/her respective endorsement area(s) in one of the following 2017-18 identified certification endorsement shortage areas:

(Check One)

- _____ Bilingual Education, PK-12
- _____ Comprehensive Special Education, K-12
- _____ Mathematics, 7-12
- _____ Occupational Subject, Vocational Technical High School
- _____ School Library and Media Specialist
- _____ Science, 7-12
- _____ Speech and Language Pathologist
- _____ Technology Education, PK-12
- _____ TESOL, PK-12
- _____ World Languages, 7-12

Signed: _____

(Original Signature of: Superintendents of Schools, Charter School Directors, Principals of Endowed & Incorporated Academies, Executive Directors of Regional Educational Service Centers, or Directors of State Approved Non-Public Special Education Facilities)

Typed Name & Title of Signatory: _____

School District: _____

Telephone: _____ Date: _____