

Item 15:

Discussion of Reciprocity Agreements and Comparability for Out-of-State Educators

DISCUSSION

SUMMARY: This item provides the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) an opportunity to discuss certification reciprocity and comparability for out-of-state educators.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Texas Education Code §21.003(a), 21.031 (a)(b), 21.041 b(1)-(6), 21.052(a)(1)-(3)

PREVIOUS BOARD ACTION: At the August 7, 2015 meeting, the SBEC directed staff to present this item for discussion at the October 16, 2015 meeting.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND SIGNIFICANT ISSUES: Individuals fully certified to teach in other states and interested in Texas certification must apply with the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for a review of their out-of-state credentials. The credentials review process requires submission of the online application and \$180 fee, a copy of standard certificate(s) issued in the other state(s), and official transcripts showing degree conferred and date. TEA Educator Certification staff determine the Texas certificates individuals are eligible to pursue based on the areas of certification listed on their credentials from other states. When the credentials review is completed, individuals from other states are advised of the required Texas tests for certification and have the option to apply for a one-year certificate prior to taking tests, or immediately begin testing to qualify for the five-year standard certificate. A summary of this process is included in Attachment II.

In 2001, House Bill 1721 (77th Legislature), was passed to allow the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) to exempt out-of-state educators from Texas testing requirements if they passed credentialing exam(s) in another jurisdiction that are “*similar to and at least as rigorous as*” the corresponding Texas exam(s). To implement legislation, SBEC staff conducted a study of other states’ current educator certification exams to determine the extent to which they were comparable to current Texas exams in both content and rigor. States with basic skills tests only or no required examinations were identified as having no comparable examinations. Educator candidates from those states were required to take the appropriate Texas certification exams. The comparability study continued in spring 2002, focusing on additional tests taken by the largest numbers of out-of-state candidates.

At the height of the comparability process, there were a total of 129 tests identified as comparable to Texas certification tests: 21 Praxis II tests, 34 National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) tests, 3 American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) tests, and 71 state-specific exams from Arizona, Colorado, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Mexico, and Oklahoma. The list of comparable out-of-state tests has dwindled over time, and the test exemption process has not been updated. Today, there are a total of 42 tests listed on the comparable out-of-state tests chart posted on the TEA website: 10 Praxis II tests, 3 AAFCS tests, 29 state-specific exams from the same states referenced earlier, and all NBPTS tests as long as the individual holds a standard state certificate in a corresponding

subject area and grade level. The current list of comparable out-of-state tests is included in Attachment III.

TEA staff and the board have an opportunity to explore options for continuing the comparable out-of-state tests process and/or considering certification reciprocity to address the teacher shortage, to support placement of educators into high needs areas of certification, and to respond to employment challenges in various areas across the state. Attachment IV provides options for comparability and certification reciprocity and includes questions for board consideration. Attachment V lists the top 20 out-of-state certificates reviewed 2010 through 2015.

TEA staff continues to look for ways to facilitate, accelerate, and simplify the process of certification of educators from other states or territories of the United States, while maintaining a level of rigor and preparation needed to ensure teacher preparedness and student success.

FISCAL IMPACT: An assessment of fiscal impact can be made after the SBEC gives guidance to TEA staff.

PUBLIC AND STUDENT BENEFIT: Creating opportunities for certification reciprocity and increasing the number of exams from other states eligible for comparability will expedite the process for certifying educators who have valid certifications in other states.

PROCEDURAL AND REPORTING IMPLICATIONS: An assessment of procedural and reporting implications can be made after the SBEC gives guidance to TEA staff.

LOCALLY MAINTAINED PAPERWORK REQUIREMENTS: An assessment of locally maintained paperwork requirements can be made after the SBEC gives guidance to TEA staff.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

ALTERNATIVES: None.

OTHER COMMENTS AND RELATED ISSUES: None.

Staff Members Responsible: Marilyn Cook, Director,
Educator Certification

Tim Miller, Director
Educator Preparation

Attachments:

- I. Statutory Citations
- II. Summary of Texas Out-of-State Credentials Review Process
- III. Overview of Comparable Out-of-State Tests
- IV. Options for Comparability and Certification Reciprocity
- V. Top 20 Out-of-State Certificates Reviewed 2010-2015

ATTACHMENT I
**Statutory Citations Related to Discussion of Reciprocity Agreements
and Comparability for Out-of-State Educators**

Texas Education Code §21.003(a) Certification Required (excerpt):

(a) A person may not be employed as a teacher, teacher intern or teacher trainee, librarian, educational aide, administrator, educational diagnostician, or school counselor by a school district unless the person holds an appropriate certificate or permit issued as provided by Subchapter B.

(b) Except as otherwise provided by this subsection, a person may not be employed by a school district as an audiologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, physician, nurse, school psychologist, associate school psychologist, licensed professional counselor, marriage and family therapist, social worker, or speech language pathologist unless the person is licensed by the state agency that licenses that profession and may perform specific services within those professions for a school district only if the person holds the appropriate credential from the appropriate state agency. As long as a person employed by a district before September 1, 2011, to perform marriage and family therapy, as defined by Section 502.002, Occupations Code, is employed by the same district, the person is not required to hold a license as a marriage and family therapist to perform marriage and family therapy with that district.

Texas Education Code §21.031 (a)(b), Purpose (excerpt):

(a) The State Board for Educator Certification is established to recognize public school educators as professionals and to grant educators the authority to govern the standards of their profession. The board shall regulate and oversee all aspects of the certification, continuing education, and standards of conduct of public school educators.

(b) In proposing rules under this subchapter, the board shall ensure that all candidates for certification or renewal of certification demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to improve the performance of the diverse student population of this state.

Texas Education Code §21.041 b(1)-(6), Rules; Fees:

(a) The board may adopt rules as necessary for its own procedures.

(b) The board shall propose rules that:

(1) provide for the regulation of educators and the general administration of this subchapter in a manner consistent with this subchapter;

(2) specify the classes of educator certificates to be issued, including emergency certificates;

(3) specify the period for which each class of educator certificate is valid;

(4) specify the requirements for the issuance and renewal of an educator certificate;

(5) provide for the issuance of an educator certificate to a person who holds a similar certificate issued by another state or foreign country, subject to Section 21.052;

(6) provide for special or restricted certification of educators, including certification of instructors of American Sign Language;

Texas Education Code §21.052 (a)(1)-(3) Certification of Educators from Outside the State:

(a) The board may issue a certificate to an educator who applies for a certificate and:

(1) holds:

(A) a degree issued by an institution accredited by a regional accrediting agency or group that is recognized by a nationally recognized accreditation board; or

(B) a degree issued by an institution located in a foreign country, if the degree is equivalent to a degree described by Paragraph (A);

(2) holds an appropriate certificate or other credential issued by another state or country; and

(3) performs satisfactorily on:

(A) the examination prescribed under Section 21.048; or

(B) if the educator holds a certificate or other credential issued by another state or country, an examination similar to and at least as rigorous as that described by Paragraph (A) administered to the educator under the authority of that state.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

ATTACHMENT II
Summary of Texas Out-of-State Credentials Review Process

Step 1. Submit the online application for review of out-of-state credentials and pay a nonrefundable fee of \$180

Step 2. Mail copies of the front and back of all educator certificates issued by another state or U.S. territory and official transcripts showing degree conferred and date with seal and signature of the college registrar

Step 3. Wait for completion of credential review and email notification from TEA Educator Certification identifying required Texas tests that must be successfully completed for issuance of standard certificate.

Please note: Comparable out-of-state tests may be accepted in lieu of Texas examinations if they are on the list of comparable tests posted on the TEA website and if they were required by the state department of education for issuance of the credential submitted to TEA for review.

Step 4. If you qualify for Texas certification based on the review of credentials, you may decide to apply for the optional one-year certificate; especially if you wish to be employed by a Texas school district prior to taking required tests for the standard certificate. Submit the online application and \$52 fee and complete the fingerprinting process for issuance of the one-year certificate.

Step 5. Take required tests for Texas certification – ideally during the validity period of the one-year certificate to ensure you establish the five-year standard certificate and avoid a lapse in your Texas certification coverage.

Step 6. Submit the online application for the five-year certificate and the \$78 fee.

No certificate will be issued until passing a criminal background check. The fingerprint option is only prompted online when you apply for a Texas certificate.

ATTACHMENT III
Current List of Comparable Out-of-State Tests

Arizona Comparable Tests				
Test Number	Test Name	Date Test and Passing Standard Implemented and Discontinued	Comparable Test Number and Name	Comparable Texas Passing Standard
12	Library/Educational Media	May 2001-present	Test 150-School Librarian	262
22	Special Education-Cross Category	Oct. 2004-present	Test 161-Special Education EC-12 OR 163-Special Education Supplemental	268
22	Special Education-Cross Category	May 2001- Oct. 2004	Test 161-Special Education EC-12 OR 163-Special Education Supplemental	267

Colorado Comparable Tests				
Test Number	Test Name	Date Test and Passing Standard Implemented and Discontinued	Comparable Test Number and Name	Comparable Texas Passing Standard
17	English as a Second Language	Oct. 2004-present	Test 154-English as a Second Language Supplemental	220
20	Special Education-Moderate Needs	Oct. 2004-present	Test 163-Special Education Supplemental	229
41	School Counselor	Oct. 2001-May 2003	Test 152-School Counselor	225
41	School Counselor	Sept. 2003-present	Test 152-School Counselor	228
80	Principal	Oct. 1999-Aug. 2003	Test 068-Principal	247
80	Principal	Oct. 2003-present	Test 068-Principal	253

Illinois Comparable Tests				
Test Number	Test Name	Date Test and Passing Standard Implemented and Discontinued	Comparable Test	Comparable Texas Passing Standard
38	Computer Science	Oct. 1, 1997-July 2006	Test 141-Computer Science	77
174	Technology Education	July 1, 2004-present	Test 171-Technology Education	240
144	Physical Education	July 1, 2004-present	Test 158-Physical Education	240

Massachusetts Comparable tests				
Test Number	Test Name	Date Test and Passing Standard Implemented and Discontinued	Comparable Test	Comparable Texas Passing Standard
22	Physical Education	April 1, 1998-present	Test 158-Physical Education	70

Michigan Comparable Tests				
Test Number	Test Name	Date Test and Passing Standard Implemented and Discontinued	Comparable Test	Comparable Texas Passing Standard
48	Library Media	Oct. 1, 1999-July 2002	Test 150-School Librarian	230
48	Library Media	Oct. 2002-present	Test 150-School Librarian	220
50	Computer Science	Oct. 1, 2002-present	Test 141-Computer Science	226
63	Learning Disabilities	Oct. 1997-present	Test 161-Special Education EC-12 OR Test 163-Special Education Supplemental	235
86	English as a Second Language	Oct. 2004-present	Test 154-English as a Second Language Supplemental	220
87	Industrial Technology	Oct. 1, 2003-present	Test 171-Technology Education	220
88	Technology and Design	Oct. 1, 2000-present	Test 171-Technology Education	227

Oklahoma Comparable Tests				
Test Number	Test Name	Date Test and Passing Standard Implemented and Discontinued	Comparable Test	Comparable Texas Passing Standard
24	Middle Level English	Oct. 1999-present	Test 117-English Language Arts and Reading 4-8	242
38	Library-Media Specialist	Oct. 1999-present	Test 150-School Librarian	258
39	School Counselor	Oct. 1999-present	Test 152-School Counselor	258
43	Technology Education	Sept. 1, 2003-present	Test 171-Technology Education	240
44	Principal-Common Core ₂	Oct. 1999-present	Test 068-Principal	264
45	Principal-Elementary ₂	Oct. 1999-present	Test 068-Principal	271
46	Principal-Middle ₂	Oct. 1999-present	Test 068-Principal	257
47	Principal-Secondary ₂	Oct. 1999-present	Test 068-Principal	262
<p>2. Principals from Oklahoma must achieve the comparable Texas passing standard on the Common Core test 44 and on one of the level-specific tests (45, 46, or 47)</p>				

Praxis II and other Educational Testing Service (ETS) Administered Tests				
Test Number	Test Name	Date Test and Passing Standard Implemented and Discontinued	Comparable Tests	Comparable Texas Passing Standard
0350	Special Education	Jan. 1990-Sept. 2004	Test 161-Special Education EC-12 OR Test 163-Special Education Supplemental	560
0091	Physical Education	Jan. 1993-present	Test 158 Physical Education EC-12	158
10310	Library Media Specialist	Jan. 1990-present	Test 150-School Librarian	620
10352	Special Education: Application of Core Principles Across Categories of Disabilities	Nov. 1995-present	Test 161-Special Education EC-12 OR Test 163-Special Education Supplemental	146
10439	Middle School Science	Oct. 1998-present	Test 116-Science 4-8	151
20353	Education of Exceptional Students: Core Content Knowledge	Sept. 2001-Aug. 2012	Test 161-Special Education EC-12 Or Test 163 Special Education Supplemental	156
0354/5354	Special Education: Core Knowledge and Applications	Sept. 2012-present	Test 161-Special Education EC-12 Or Test 163 Special Education Supplemental	156
0361	English to Speakers of Other Languages	Sept. 2010-present	Test 154-English as a Second Language Supplemental	Required by state
20420	School Guidance and Counseling	Jan. 1991-present	Test 152-School Counselor	620
1010	School Leaders Licensure Assessment	Jan. 1997-present	Test 068-Principal	164

Family & Consumer Sciences Tests Developed by American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS)				
Test Number	Test Name	Date Test and Passing Standard Implemented and Discontinued	Comparable Tests	Comparable Texas Passing Standard
200	Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) Composite	May 2004-present	This is the exam required as part of the Texas certificate in Family and Consumer Sciences 6-12	240
201	Hospitality, Nutrition, and Food Services	May 2004-present	This is the exam required as part of the Texas certificate in Hospitality, Nutrition and Food Sciences 8-12	240
202	Human Development and Family Studies	May 2004-present	This is the exam required as part of the Texas certificate in Human Development and Family Studies 8-12	240
These National AAFCS examinations may be used to meet content testing requirements for FCS Texas teacher certification				

ATTACHMENT IV

Options for Comparability and Certification Reciprocity

Comparability vs. Reciprocity

The terms comparability and reciprocity are often used interchangeably. Since the implementation of legislation, *comparability* has been recognized to mean “similar to and rigorous as” when discussing certification tests and/or preparation requirements to obtain certification; while *reciprocity* is often used in the teacher certification arena to explain an agreement between states to recognize teaching credentials issued by each other and/or to refer to a process to facilitate the movement of certified educators across states.

Option 1– Update the Out-of-State Comparable Tests Chart

Add more tests to the comparable tests chart to ensure a representative list of all certificate grade levels (EC-6, 4-8, 6-12, 7-12, and EC-12). This will be simplified, since the phasing out of 8-12 certificates will reduce the number of test exemption possibilities. Without an exemption for the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) EC-12, individuals would need to apply for the review of credentials and the one-year certificate to allow time for testing, and then apply for the five-year standard certificate.

- Is there interest in doing comparability on all content area tests?
 - TEA staff have discussed beginning a new comparability alignment that would identify comparable out-of-state tests for the following areas: Mathematics, Science, Computer Science, Special Education, Bilingual Education, English as a Second Language, Career and Technical Education, and Elementary.
- How would the Board define comparable tests?
- Is the Board looking for a particular score on other state exams OR looking for a test framework to ensure similar scope of content has been covered?
- Is the Board comfortable with leaving the districts to be responsible for ensuring educators coming to Texas from other states establish a mastery of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) or enough content and pedagogy knowledge to enter the classroom and provide instruction to public school students?
- With the big push last session to raise the rigor of the requirements for elementary certification, the new Core Subjects EC-6 and 4-8 tests were implemented and administered for the first time in January 2015. Will there be any issue with exempting out-of-state educators from this testing requirement?
- Does SBEC want to move forward with allowing an exemption from all Texas tests that have a comparable testing requirement in another state (i.e., Science to Science, School Counselor to School Counselor, Elementary to Generalist/Core Subjects, etc.)? The test names may not always be the same, but the “spirit” of the subject area being assessed may be easy to identify.

Option 2– Establish a Process for Certification Reciprocity

- How does the State Board for Educator Certification define reciprocity?
 - One example would be if you are an educator already “fully-certified” in another state, you can apply for the review of credentials, provide official test score reports, official transcripts showing degree conferred and date, and copies of the

standard certificate(s), and we will approve your credentials for standard certificate issuance in Texas.

- Another example would be if you are an educator already “fully-certified” in another state, you can be exempted from the pedagogy and professional responsibilities (PPR) testing requirement and you just need to pass the Texas content test.
 - **Staff believes it would be important to require the educator be certified more than 2 years, or have passed a comparable pedagogy exam for licensure in the other state.**
- Would Texas allow an individual who completed a teacher education program in another state that included student teaching/internship to have “full reciprocity” and be exempt from taking all required Texas certification tests?
- Would Texas consider allowing years of creditable teaching experience to substitute for student teaching/internship if it was not part of another state’s certification preparation program
- TEA staff would need to clearly define the term standard certificate, since many states may issue credentials in varying levels based on years of teaching experience.
- Would reciprocity be limited to classroom teaching certificates only or all certifications are eligible?
- Use of the term “fully-certified” assumes Texas would not offer reciprocity to educators who have not completed all requirements for certification in another state and been issued a standard credential to teach in that state.

What is the message that requiring no tests sends?

A belief that the other state issuing initial certification was satisfied enough with the level of teacher preparation and assessment of content and pedagogical knowledge to issue state certification.

What is the message that requiring the PPR test for all initial certificates sends?

A belief there is merit to a Texas-based assessment of pedagogical knowledge and the ability to successfully deliver instruction.

What is the message that allowing no exemptions from Texas tests sends?

A belief that Texas certification exams assess the content and knowledge essential for measuring an educator’s ability to enter Texas public schools and ensure student success on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills.

ATTACHMENT V
Top 20 Out-of-State Certificates Reviewed 2010-2015

	Total Number of Out of State Certificates Reviewed	Name of State where Certificate Issued	Total Number of Out of State Certificates Reviewed	Name of State where Certificate Issued	Total Number of Out of State Certificates Reviewed	Name of State where Certificate Issued	Total Number of Out of State Certificates Reviewed	Name of State where Certificate Issued	Total Number of Out of State Certificates Reviewed	Name of State where Certificate Issued
	9/1/2010 - 8/31/2011		9/1/2011 - 8/31/2012		9/1/2012 - 8/31/2013		9/1/2013 - 2/4/2014		9/1/2014 - 8/31/2015	
1	360	OK	359	OK	409	OK	393	OK	471	OK
2	292	CA	318	LA	373	CA	363	CA	367	LA
3	263	LA	311	CA	342	FL	349	FL	356	FL
4	257	AZ	281	FL	339	LA	348	LA	348	CA
5	246	FL	266	AZ	274	AZ	311	AZ	317	PR
6	218	IL	238	IL	261	IL	308	IL	314	IL
7	175	NM	199	NM	223	NY	248	NY	290	AZ
8	168	NY	199	NY	203	GA	230	GA	229	NC
9	146	GA	172	AR	187	AR	215	NC	223	NY
10	144	OH	168	GA	174	NM	213	NM	220	GA
11	133	AR	157	UT	173	MO	210	MS	218	NM
12	130	MO	153	CO	166	UT	188	MO	214	MS
13	121	UT	147	OH	161	PA	181	PA	199	AR
14	116	MS	132	VA	159	MS	178	OH	184	PA
15	115	NC	131	TN	156	MI	174	AR	180	MO
16	113	MI	130	MI	154	TN	169	VA	179	TN
17	109	PA	129	MO	146	OH	166	CO	174	VA
18	108	VA	125	NC	145	NC	163	PR	157	MI
19	104	TN	113	PA	141	CO	162	UT	156	CO
20	100	CO	108	MS	133	VA	160	TN	151	OH