

N.J.A.C. 6A:9A, NEW JERSEY EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS

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CHAPTER 9A. NEW JERSEY EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS

SUBCHAPTER 1. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

6A:9A-1.1 Scope

This chapter sets forth the rules governing the approval of CEAS and CE educator preparation programs and their content. It also contains the rules governing the preparation of educators and candidates that is required for certification.

6A:9A-1.2 Purpose

- (a) The purpose of this chapter is to establish a system of educator preparation programs that continuously serves to improve the quality of instruction for New Jersey's children preparing them for post-secondary education and/or careers.
- (b) Educator preparation programs shall function along a continuum of rigorous pre-professional preparation, certification, and professional development to prepare educators to support improved student achievement of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS).

SUBCHAPTER 2. DEFINITIONS

6A:9A-2.1 Definitions

The definitions set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-2.1 shall apply to the words and terms used in this chapter.

SUBCHAPTER 3. EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM APPROVAL

6A:9A-3.1 Approval criteria of educator preparation programs

- (a) The Commissioner shall approve all educator preparation programs designed to lead to State certification, including: educator preparation programs from higher education institutions chartered in the State and programs that have a physical presence in New Jersey but are run by out-of-State institutions that are approved by the New Jersey Secretary of Higher Education; and educator preparation programs established by educational organizations, school districts or consortia, or Commissioner-approved entities.
- (b) Educator preparation program approval shall be based on the following:
 - 1. Compliance with State Professional Standards for Teachers and Professional Standards for School Leaders as established in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-3.3 and 3.4;
 - 2. The following accreditation requirements:
 - i. For CEAS educator preparation programs, accreditation through NCATE, the TEAC, the CAEP, or any other professional education accreditation body recognized by the CHEA or approved by the Commissioner; or
 - ii. For CE educator preparation programs designed to lead to an instructional certificate, accreditation by January 1, 2022, through NCATE, the TEAC, the CAEP, or any other professional education accreditation body recognized by the CHEA or approved by the Commissioner;
 - 3. Compliance with educator preparation program requirements in this chapter or in N.J.A.C. 6A:9B, as applicable; and
 - 4. Performance, as indicated by the required documentation in N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-3.2(f), for operating programs.

- (c) If the program provider operates an educator preparation program, the Commissioner may consider available data and performance evidence from the program provider's operating educator preparation program(s) before approving any new program under the same program provider.

6A:9A-3.2 Approval process for educator preparation programs

- (a) The Commissioner has the authority and discretion to approve all new or substantially revised educator preparation programs and he or she shall consider the State Program Approval Council's analysis of the proposed program and its recommendation for approval.
- (b) The Commissioner shall appoint a State Program Approval Council and shall consult the Council on matters pertaining to the quality of educator preparation programs designed to lead to an instructional certificate as required for teachers pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-8, an administrative certificate as required for administrators pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-12, and an educational service certificate as required for educational service personnel pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-14. The State Program Approval Council shall be comprised of no more than 11 members who shall serve two-year, renewable terms. The State Program Approval Council shall include:
 - 1. Four representatives from CEAS educator preparation programs;
 - 2. Three representatives from CE educator preparation programs; and
 - 3. Four practitioners from preschool through grade 12 schools.
- (c) All new or substantially revised educator preparation programs shall secure approval from the Commissioner prior to implementation.

1. If changes are made to the educator preparation program's course content or requirements, or clinical component structure or requirements, the program shall be considered substantially revised.
- (d) The Commissioner shall re-approve all educator preparation programs at least every seven years and has the authority and discretion to periodically review educator preparation programs more frequently at his or her discretion.
- (e) The Commissioner shall withdraw approval or require an educator preparation program to take corrective action if he or she determines the program has failed, or is at risk of failing, to meet the criteria in N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-3.1(b).
- (f) Documentation for the Commissioner's periodic review of educator preparation programs shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
 1. Candidate performance assessment scores and pass rates;
 2. Numbers of educator candidates prepared in teacher shortage areas and from diverse backgrounds;
 3. Placement and retention rates;
 4. Evaluation data based on initial year(s) of teaching;
 5. Scores and pass rates on State test(s) of subject matter knowledge and a Commissioner-approved test of basic reading, writing, and mathematics skills;
 6. Follow-up survey of graduates and employers; and
 7. Preschool through grade 12 student achievement data, when relevant.

SUBCHAPTER 4. CEAS EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS

6A:9A-4.1 CEAS educator preparation program implementation

- (a) CEAS educator preparation programs shall implement the program requirements pursuant to this subchapter, which shall be:
1. Applied equitably and in a non-discriminatory manner to all candidates, including transfer students. All admissions and retention processes shall be consistent with State and institutional affirmative action policies and goals; and
 2. Considered minimum requirements. Higher education institutions and/or their CEAS educator preparation programs may require higher GPAs and higher levels of proficiency for educator preparation program admission, clinical component, and recommendation for certification.
- (b) CEAS educator preparation programs shall develop procedures in compliance with this subchapter. The program procedures and components shall include:
1. Course requirements, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-4.2;
 2. Formal admission to the educator preparation program, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-4.3;
 3. Clinical component and the supervision of clinical practice, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-4.4;
 4. Procedures for placing on probation, and dismissal from the program, candidates who fall below minimum requirements before graduation, including procedures for student appeals;
 5. Recommendation of a candidate for a CEAS, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-4.4, including certification to the Department that a candidate has completed the CEAS requirements; and
 6. Submission of educator preparation program data at the Department's request.

6A:9A-4.2 CEAS educator preparation program course requirements

- (a) The CEAS educator preparation program designed to lead to instructional certificates shall include:
1. A curriculum devoted to educator preparation that builds upon the content knowledge and skills of the individual candidate;
 2. A clinical component aligned with the Professional Standards for Teachers as specified in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-3.3; and
 3. Clinical experiences incorporated into courses leading up to and including clinical practice, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9-4.4.

6A:9A-4.3 Admission to CEAS educator preparation programs

- (a) A candidate who starts a CEAS educator preparation program in or after academic year 2015-2016 shall be admitted only if he or she meets the GPA and basic skills requirement in (b) and (d) below.
- (b) The average cumulative GPA of the accepted cohort of candidates shall be at least 3.00, when a grade point of 4.00 equals an A grade and the cumulative GPA is earned in an undergraduate level prior to entering a CEAS educator preparation program, except:
1. Each accepted individual candidate shall achieve at least a 2.75 GPA.
 2. A candidate admitted to a program that starts in an academic year prior to 2015-2016, shall maintain for the first two years of college an individual cumulative GPA of at least 2.50 when a grade point of 4.00 equals an A grade.
- (c) The candidate for a post-baccalaureate or graduate degree shall hold a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university, except candidates enrolled in a combined bachelor's and graduate-degree program may be pursuing a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university.

- (d) The candidate shall have achieved a minimum score established by the Department on a Commissioner-approved test of basic reading, writing, and mathematics skills, except:
1. Programs may determine how a candidate admitted to a program that starts before the academic year 2015-2016 is required to demonstrate acceptable levels of proficiency in the use of the English language, both oral and written, and mathematics.
 2. A candidate who starts a program in or after academic year 2015-2016 may demonstrate proficiency in the use of the English language and in mathematics by achieving a minimum score established by the Commissioner on the SAT, ACT, or GRE pursuant to (d)2i below.
 - i. The Department shall maintain on its website a list of qualifying minimum scores for each test, which shall be approximately equal to the top-third percentile score for all test takers in the year the respective test was taken, for each year the data is available.
 - ii. A candidate shall qualify for the exception at (d)2 above only if he or she achieves at least the minimum qualifying score posted pursuant to (d)2i above.

6A:9A-4.4 Clinical component and candidate supervision for CEAS educator preparation programs

- (a) CEAS educator preparation programs shall assign to clinical practice candidates in the preparation program who have completed the following minimum clinical experience requirements:

1. All candidates starting clinical practice in academic year 2018-2019, or thereafter, shall have completed at least 50 hours of clinical experiences in a preschool, elementary, middle, and/or secondary school setting prior to clinical practice.
 - i. For candidates in preparation programs who start clinical practice prior to academic year 2018-2019, programs may determine acceptable levels of teaching proficiency in junior clinical experiences.
 2. The clinical experiences shall:
 - i. Be incorporated into any higher education course taken prior to the start of clinical practice;
 - ii. Include at least two different classroom settings, with at least one in a special education setting, consisting of a classroom where students with IEPs are educated: either an inclusive setting, resource room, or a special classroom; and
 - iii. Increase in intensity, or control of the students, and duration as the candidate advances through the program.
- (b) For candidates who start clinical practice before academic year 2018-2019, clinical practice shall be one semester.
- (c) For candidates starting clinical practice in academic year 2018-2019, or thereafter, clinical practice shall:
1. Occur during at least two semesters, according to the placement school district's schedule, including professional development days with the school district prior to the first day of class for students;
 2. Occur at the same school site for the entire experience, if possible; and
 3. Include at least 175 hours prior to one full-time semester. At least 100 hours of the 175 hours shall be completed throughout the semester immediately preceding the semester of full-time clinical practice.

- (d) The candidate shall be placed within the endorsement subject he or she will pursue for certification and under the direct and continuous personal supervision of an appropriately certified cooperating teacher.
- (e) School districts shall be responsible for accepting and placing clinical interns as part of the continuum of professional education and development.
- (f) A clinical supervisor shall:
 - 1. Have had experience supervising, consulting, or otherwise working in an elementary and/or secondary school in contact with classroom teachers within the previous two years for all instructional certificate programs with the exception of the preschool endorsement; for preschool programs, the supervisor shall have had experience supervising, consulting, or otherwise working in an early childhood setting; and
 - 2. Be employed by the program or university with demonstrated expertise in the field he or she is supervising.
- (g) Clinical supervisors shall observe each assigned candidate at least once every other week during the candidate's semester of full-time clinical practice.
- (h) A school district cooperating teacher assigned to guide and direct candidates shall:
 - 1. Be approved by the chief school administrator or his or her designee with input from the teacher candidate's CEAS educator preparation program;
 - 2. Have a minimum of three years of teaching experience, including one within the school district;
 - 3. Possess a standard instructional certificate;
 - 4. Have appropriate certification that coincides with the area of instruction for which the candidate is being prepared;
 - 5. Be a full-time school district faculty member with demonstrated expertise in the field of mentoring/supervision; and

6. Be rated, beginning August 1, 2016, as effective or highly effective on his or her most recently received summative evaluation, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:10-4.
 - i. A cooperating teacher in a school or school district not required pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:10-1 to issue summative evaluations shall demonstrate at least one year of effective teaching on his or her most recent evaluation as determined by his or her supervisor.
- (i) School district cooperating teachers shall:
 1. Provide continuous guidance and direction and weekly conferences to assist candidates in professional development; and
 2. Consult the chief school administrator or his or her designee regarding the candidate's placement; however, the chief school administrator or his or her designee shall make all final placement decisions regarding candidate and cooperating teacher pairings.
- (j) CEAS educator preparation programs shall make available to cooperating teachers professional development opportunities and experiences that increase cooperating teachers' expertise in the field.

6A:9A-4.5 Recommendations for a certificate of eligibility with advanced standing (CEAS)

- (a) CEAS educator preparation programs shall recommend to the Department certification only for candidates who have:
 1. Completed the CEAS educator preparation program approved pursuant to this chapter;
 2. Completed all requirements pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-8 through 13. Higher education institutions and/or their CEAS educator preparation programs also may apply the exceptions in N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-8.1(a)2i, iii, or iv; and

3. Demonstrated continued competence, aptitude, motivation, and potential for outstanding success in educating students.
- (b) CEAS educator preparation programs shall have up to one year from the date the candidate completed the approved program to recommend him or her to the Department for issuance of a certificate.

6A:9A-4.6 Post-baccalaureate and graduate-level educator preparation programs

- (a) An educator preparation program at a post-baccalaureate or graduate level, including a State-approved Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT), shall meet all of the requirements in this subchapter and in N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-3.
- (b) A candidate who completes one of the following experiences shall be exempt from the clinical component at N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-4.4:
1. A prior clinical practice experience through a CEAS educator preparation program;
 2. A standard instructional certificate pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-8; or
 3. Demonstrates at least one year of effective teaching under a valid in- or out-of-State license or certificate. The candidate shall provide an original letter documenting completion of at least one year of effective teaching from his or her supervisor(s), principal(s), or employing school district(s) human resources officer.

SUBCHAPTER 5. CE EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS

6A:9A-5.1 CE educator preparation program implementation

- (a) CE educator preparation programs shall implement the subchapter's requirements, which shall be:
 - 1. Applied equitably and in a non-discriminatory manner to all candidates, including transfer candidates. All admissions and retention processes shall be consistent with State and provider affirmative action policies and goals; and
 - 2. Considered minimum educator preparation program requirements. CE educator preparation programs may require candidates to demonstrate higher levels of proficiency or competency for program admission and completion.
- (b) CE educator preparation programs shall develop procedures in compliance with this subchapter. The program procedures and components shall include:
 - 1. Admission to the CE educator preparation program, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-5.2;
 - 2. A pre-professional component, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-5.3;
 - 3. Curriculum and coursework requirements, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-5.4;
 - 4. Completion of the program, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-5.5; and
 - 5. Submission of educator preparation program data at the Department's request.

6A:9A-5.2 Admission to CE educator preparation programs

- (a) A candidate shall be admitted to a CE educator preparation program only if he or she has completed by the start of the program the requirements for a CE, including the endorsement requirements listed in N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-9.
 - 1. Candidates in programs for documented areas of teacher shortage shall complete the endorsement requirements in N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-5.6.

- (b) Any CE educator preparation program enrolling candidates for academic year 2017-2018, or thereafter, shall accept candidates as a cohort. Each candidate within the cohort shall begin the educator preparation program at the same time.
 - 1. CE educator preparation programs enrolling candidates for academic years prior to 2017-2018 shall operate under existing agreements between the Department and the alternate-route educator preparation program or provider.

6A:9A-5.3 Pre-professional component for CE educator preparation programs

- (a) Effective for candidates starting the CE educator preparation program in academic year 2017-2018, or thereafter, the program shall ensure the candidate completes 50 hours of pre-professional experience, which occurs prior to the candidate's full-time professional teaching experience. The pre-professional experience shall include at least:
 - 1. Fifteen hours in coursework;
 - 2. Twenty hours of clinical experience(s), which shall include at least 10 hours of planning and delivering instruction through an individual or co-teaching model; and
 - 3. Fifteen hours determined by the program that may include, but is not limited to, additional hours of coursework and clinical experience(s).
- (b) A candidate starting a CE educator preparation program prior to academic year 2017-2018 shall have completed, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-8.3(a)6, at least 24 hours of study prior to the candidate's full-time professional teaching experience.

6A:9A-5.4 Additional curriculum and course requirements for CE educator preparation programs

(a) Effective for candidates starting a CE educator preparation program in academic year 2017-2018, or thereafter, the CE educator preparation program for all instructional certificates shall include:

1. A minimum of 350 formal instructional hours or 24 semester-hour credits, which shall be completed over a minimum of two academic years.
 - i. A CE educator preparation program may accept, at its discretion, up to 100 out of the total 350 formal instruction hours or up to six semester-hour credits from another educator preparation program approved pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-3 or 6A:9B-8.2(b);
2. Curriculum devoted to professional educator preparation that builds upon the content and skills of an individual candidate; and
3. Curriculum aligned with the Professional Standards for Teachers, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9-3.3.

(b) For candidates starting a CE educator preparation program prior to academic year 2017-2018, the CE educator preparation program for all instructional certificates shall meet the requirements of (a)2 and 3 above and shall include a minimum of 200 formal instructional hours or 13 semester-hour credits except:

1. Candidates who are holders of an elementary school (K-6 and N-8) CE shall complete over two years a minimum of 290 hours of formal instruction or 20 semester-hour credits, which shall include a minimum of 45 hours of study or three semester-hour credits in the teaching of English language arts at the K-6 level and a minimum of 45 hours of study or three semester-hour credits in teaching mathematics at the K-6 level, except if:
 - i. The candidates have completed 45 hours of study or three semester hour credits in each area of study as documented by a CE educator preparation program provider or on a transcript from a higher education institution; or

- ii. For each area of study, the candidates document the equivalent of at least one year of successful full-time teaching experience during which the area of study is regularly taught, among the other subjects for which a K-6 teacher would be responsible. The successful full-time teaching experience shall take place within three years prior to receiving the CE. The candidate shall submit to the Office documentation demonstrating completion of the teaching experience.

6A:9A-5.5 Completion of CE educator preparation program

- (a) To complete a CE educator preparation program, a candidate shall:
 - 1. Complete the minimum hours of instruction, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-5.4; and
 - 2. Effective for candidates who begin a program in academic year 2017-2018, or thereafter, pass a Commissioner-approved performance assessment.
- (b) A candidate who fails to complete the CE educator preparation program after two years may renew his or her provisional license, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-8.5, and may either remain in his or her current program or apply and be accepted to a new CE educator preparation program.

6A:9A-5.6 CE educator preparation programs for documented areas of teacher shortage

- (a) CE educator preparation programs may be developed to serve school districts to place teachers in documented areas of teacher shortage and may be established by New Jersey colleges and universities, educational organizations, or other entities approved by the Commissioner.
- (b) The Commissioner may approve CE educator preparation programs for:

1. Middle school with subject-matter specialization in any documented area of teacher shortage for which an endorsement is available. Each endorsement shall be valid for a teaching assignment area in grades five through eight; or
 2. Preschool through grade 12 in any documented area of teacher shortage for which an endorsement is available.
- (c) The Commissioner may approve CE educator preparation programs that meet all requirements described in N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-3.
1. In addition to the documentation in N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-3.3(b) demonstrating alignment to and compliance with this chapter, programs approved pursuant to this section also shall demonstrate to the Commissioner evidence the program provides content-specific courses and content-based pedagogy that prepare a candidate to teach in the subject that he or she is or will be teaching.
- (d) The Commissioner may approve CE educator preparation programs that meet all requirements in this subchapter.
1. The endorsement requirement within the admission criteria for candidates admitted to the program shall be met in the following ways:
 - i. Candidates for CE educator preparation programs for documented teacher shortage areas approved pursuant to this section shall complete the content-based subject test but may not complete all course requirements for an endorsement in a shortage area.
 - ii. In addition to the pre-professional requirements in N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-5.3, candidates shall complete alternative program coursework in lieu of the courses required for an endorsement.
- (e) Subject-specific coursework hours provided by a preparation program pursuant to this section may be applied to the minimum 50 hours of pre-professional and/or 350 formal instructional hours required pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-5.4.