

# Enhancing Certification Reciprocity to Expand Connecticut's Educator Talent Pool

By Caitlin Beatson and Mel Wyles

*As every state in the nation struggles to recruit teachers, especially teachers of color, Connecticut opens its certification requirements and, with it, the opportunity for thousands more licensed educators beyond its borders to work in its schools.*

More educators licensed outside of Connecticut may now consider working in its schools since the state moved to give substantial reciprocity to educators from 11 nearby states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

This past spring, Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont and Education Commissioner Charlene Russell-Tucker announced the expansion of the northeastern reciprocity agreement to include certified educators throughout the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, and beyond. As of April 21, 2022, “educators in Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Virginia who hold an ‘active, valid certificate’ may apply and obtain a Connecticut certificate after verification by the State Department of Education,” according to a press release.

Previously, candidates certified in these states and territories were required to verify the completion of an approved educator preparation program and successful teaching and/or service within the last ten years. Some candidates were also required to pass certain assessments.

Research supports this policy change: licensed teachers who move in search of job opportunities are more likely to select states with reciprocity because transition barriers and requirements for obtaining licensure are reduced.<sup>iii</sup>

To help further inform the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) recommendation that the State Board of Education adopt the enhanced reciprocity policy, the Region 2 Comprehensive Center (R2CC) developed the “Teacher Certification Reciprocity Tool,” which compares certification requirements among the identified states and territories. The tool also significantly reduces the time required for CSDE analysts to approve out-of-state candidates for certification. The tool will continue to be refined over time to reflect the ever-changing landscape of educator certification.

While the revised certification policy may attract more teachers to Connecticut classrooms, R2CC notes that it represents only one strategy in a larger collection of strategies necessary to help schools meet staffing demands, including diversification.

A caution—limited teacher certification reciprocity among states is one of many possible [root causes of educator shortages](#) and a lack of diversity within the educator workforce. States should take a multi-faceted, evidence-based approach to both build and sustain a diverse, high-quality educator workforce.

For example, CSDE, with support from the R2CC and the Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast and Islands (REL-NEI), piloted in 12 districts a [hiring and selection guidebook](#) intended to support efforts to increase the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of their educator workforce. Based on practical lessons learned from the pilot, CSDE, in collaboration with R2CC and REL-NEI, developed a companion toolkit,

[“Creating an Action Plan and Sustaining Efforts to Increase Educator Diversity: A Toolkit for District & School Leaders,”](#) that will help district and school leaders clearly define and communicate data-informed goals, strategies, and indicators of progress, and detail how they engage in cycles of continuous improvement to sustain efforts and achieve goals. The toolkit includes the Increasing Educator Diversity Plan Template and the Increasing Educator Diversity Plan Progress Monitoring and Self-Evaluation Tool.

For additional CSDE strategies focused on expanding and diversifying the educator talent pool, see [“11 Ways CSDE is Leading Educator Recruitment & Diversification Efforts.”](#)

# Connecticut Teacher Certification Reciprocity Tool

## Using the Tool

This tool is organized in three sections. The first section is a glossary of terms; the second section is an overview of Connecticut’s teacher certification requirements for out-of-state applicants; the third section is a scan of the regional and Mid-Atlantic teacher reciprocity agreements completed by the Region 2 Comprehensive Center.<sup>iii</sup> Following the scan are individual state tables divided by the regional and Mid-Atlantic states and territory with more information. Additionally, each individual table is linked to the state’s out-of-state certificate requirements homepage.

## Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
<b>Reciprocity</b>	Allows candidates who hold an out-of-state license to earn a license in a receiving state, subject to meeting state-specific requirements.
<b>National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) Agreement</b>	The state signed into a regional or interstate reciprocity agreement.
<b>Full Reciprocity</b>	The state has full reciprocity by statute.
<b>Required Coursework</b>	The state has coursework requirements in place for out-of-state teachers. Some or all candidates must take additional coursework prior to entering—or within a certain number of years of teaching in—a classroom.
<b>Required Assessment</b>	The state has assessment requirements for out-of-state teachers. Some or all candidates must take additional coursework prior to entering—or within a certain number of years of teaching in—a classroom.
<b>Different Requirements Based on Experience</b>	The state has different requirements for experienced and inexperienced out-of-state teachers.
<b>Evidence of Effectiveness</b>	The state requires experienced out-of-state teachers to provide evidence of effectiveness.
<b>Special Reciprocity: Advanced Credentials</b>	The state provides special licensure portability for out-of-state teachers with advanced licensure credentials. This does not include special licensure mobility for teachers with national board certification.
<b>Special Reciprocity: Military Spouses</b>	The state provides special licensure portability or supports for military spouses.

## Connecticut Teacher Certification Requirements for Out-of-state Applicants

Requirement	Explanation
<b>NASDTEC Agreement</b>	Connecticut’s NASDTEC agreement reflects the 2020–2021 school year.
<b>Full Reciprocity</b>	Connecticut does not offer full reciprocity in any area of certification/licensure.
<b>Required Coursework</b>	Only coursework resulting in credit awarded to an official transcript of a regionally accredited college or university can be accepted to meet certification requirements. If an applicant has not completed a teacher preparation program or has not met the experience needed to wave the planned program requirement, they should seek academic advisement from a regionally accredited college or university with a state approved program.
<b>Required Assessment</b>	Out-of-state applicants who meet all certification criteria except Connecticut assessment requirements may be issued a nonrenewable interim certificate with a deferral for the required tests. The deferral will be for three years for educators with less than two years of appropriate teaching experience. Applicants must complete all required tests before the expiration date of the certificate.
<b>Different Requirements Based on Experience</b>	Completion of 30 school months of successful service within the last 10 years under a valid out-of-state certificate is required to be eligible for a testing exemption. Completion of 20 school months of successful service under a valid out-of-state certificate is required to be eligible for a provisional-level certificate, with a three-year testing deferral, if the educator’s out-of-state tests are not deemed equivalent.
<b>Evidence of Effectiveness</b>	Verification of appropriate experience under a teaching certificate from the district(s) where service was provided.
<b>Special Reciprocity: Advanced Credentials</b>	Out-of-state certificate holders with 30 school months of successful service within the last 10 years are eligible for testing exception. Out-of-state certificate holders with 20 school months of successful service within the last 10 years are eligible for a provisional-level certificate, with a three-year testing deferral, if the educator’s out-of-state test are not deemed equivalent.
<b>Special Reciprocity: Military Spouses</b>	Yes

## Connecticut NASDTEC Agreement

Connecticut’s NASDTEC agreement is current as of 2021. The NASDTEC Interstate Agreement facilitates the mobility of educators among the states and other jurisdictions that are members of NASDTEC and have signed the agreement. Although there may be conditions applicable to individual jurisdictions, the agreement makes it possible for an educator who completed an approved program and/or who holds a certificate or license in one jurisdiction to earn a certificate or license in another state or jurisdiction. According to Connecticut’s NASDTEC agreement, the following criteria is required for out-of-state applicants who wish to gain a Connecticut teacher’s certificate

### Connecticut NASDTEC Agreement Requirements

Experienced Teachers	Inexperienced Teachers
Requirements for <b>experienced teachers</b> with 30 months or more of experience within the past 10 years under an appropriate certificate	Requirements for <b>inexperienced teachers</b> with less than 30 months of experience within the past 10 years under an appropriate certificate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>documentation of completion of a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university</li> <li>verification of 30 months or more of appropriate experience under a teaching certificate from the district(s) where service was provided</li> <li>copy of an appropriate certificate covering 30 months or more of service time</li> <li>successful passage of state-adopted or equivalent out-of-state assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>documentation of completion of a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university</li> <li>recommendation from state-approved teacher preparation program documenting completion of a program</li> <li>verification of appropriate experience under a teaching certificate from the district(s) where service was provided</li> <li>copy of an appropriate certificate covering service time</li> <li>successful passage of state-adopted or equivalent out-of-state assessments</li> </ul>

## Teacher Reciprocity: State and Territory Scan

Locale	State	NASDTEC Agreement	Full Reciprocity	Required Coursework	Required Assessment	Different Requirements Based on Experience	Evidence of Effectiveness	Special Reciprocity: Advanced Credentials	Special Reciprocity: Military Spouses <sup>iv</sup>
Regional	<b>Connecticut</b>	Yes	No	Yes, but not for all candidates	Yes, but not for all candidates and not immediately	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	<b>Maine</b>	Yes	No	Yes, but not for all candidates	Yes	No	No	No	No
	<b>Massachusetts</b>	Yes	No	Yes, but not for all candidates and not immediately	Yes, but not immediately	No	No	No	Yes
	<b>New Hampshire</b>	Yes	No	No	Yes, but not for all candidates	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	<b>New York</b>	No	No	Yes	Yes, but not for all candidates	Yes	Yes	No	Yes <sup>v</sup>
	<b>Rhode Island<sup>vi</sup></b>	Yes	No	No	Yes, but not immediately	No	No	No	Yes
	<b>Vermont</b>	Yes	No	Yes, but not for all candidates	Yes, but not for all candidates	No	No	Yes	No

Locale	State	NASDTEC Agreement	Full Reciprocity	Required Coursework	Required Assessment	Different Requirements Based on Experience	Evidence of Effectiveness	Special Reciprocity: Advanced Credentials	Special Reciprocity: Military Spouses
Mid-Atlantic	Delaware	Yes	No	No	Yes, but not for all candidates and not immediately	Yes	Yes, but not for all candidates	No	Yes
	Maryland	Yes	No	Yes, but not for all candidates	Yes, but not for all candidates	Yes	Yes	No	Yes, but not for all candidates and not immediately <sup>vii</sup>
	New Jersey	Yes	No	No	Yes, but not for all candidates and not immediately	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Pennsylvania	Yes	No	Yes, but not for all candidates	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Virginia	Yes	No	Yes	Yes, but not for all candidates	Yes	No	Yes	No <sup>viii</sup>
	Washington, DC	Yes	No	No	Yes, but not for all candidates	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Territory	Puerto Rico	No	No	Yes, but not immediately	No	No	No	No	No

## Regional States

<b>Connecticut<sup>ix</sup></b>	
<b>NASDTEC Agreement</b>	Yes
<b>Full Reciprocity</b>	No
<b>Required Coursework</b>	Yes, but not for all candidates
<b>Required Assessment</b>	Yes, but not for all candidates and not immediately
<b>Different Requirements Based on Experience</b>	Yes
<b>Evidence of Effectiveness</b>	Yes
<b>Special Reciprocity: Advanced Credentials</b>	Yes
<b>Special Reciprocity: Military Spouses</b>	Yes

<b>Maine<sup>x</sup></b>	
<b>NASDTEC Agreement</b>	Yes
<b>Full Reciprocity</b>	No
<b>Required Coursework</b>	Yes, but not for all candidates
<b>Required Assessment</b>	Yes
<b>Different Requirements Based on Experience</b>	No
<b>Evidence of Effectiveness</b>	No
<b>Special Reciprocity: Advanced Credentials</b>	No
<b>Special Reciprocity: Military Spouses</b>	No

<b>Massachusetts<sup>xi</sup></b>	
<b>NASDTEC Agreement</b>	Yes
<b>Full Reciprocity</b>	No
<b>Required Coursework</b>	Yes, but not for all candidates and not immediately
<b>Required Assessment</b>	Yes, but not immediately
<b>Different Requirements Based on Experience</b>	No
<b>Evidence of Effectiveness</b>	No
<b>Special Reciprocity: Advanced Credentials</b>	No
<b>Special Reciprocity: Military Spouses</b>	Yes

<b>New Hampshire<sup>xii</sup></b>	
<b>NASDTEC Agreement</b>	Yes
<b>Full Reciprocity</b>	No
<b>Required Coursework</b>	No
<b>Required Assessment</b>	Yes, but not for all candidates
<b>Different Requirements Based on Experience</b>	Yes
<b>Evidence of Effectiveness</b>	Yes
<b>Special Reciprocity: Advanced Credentials</b>	Yes
<b>Special Reciprocity: Military Spouses</b>	No

<b>New York<sup>xiii</sup></b>	
<b>NASDTEC Agreement</b>	No
<b>Full Reciprocity</b>	No
<b>Required Coursework</b>	Yes
<b>Required Assessment</b>	Yes, but not for all candidates
<b>Different Requirements Based on Experience</b>	Yes
<b>Evidence of Effectiveness</b>	Yes
<b>Special Reciprocity: Advanced Credentials</b>	No
<b>Special Reciprocity: Military Spouses</b>	Yes

<b>Rhode Island<sup>xiv</sup></b>	
<b>NASDTEC Agreement</b>	Yes
<b>Full Reciprocity</b>	No, however they have interstate flexibility with 16 states
<b>Required Coursework</b>	No
<b>Required Assessment</b>	Yes, but not immediately
<b>Different Requirements Based on Experience</b>	No
<b>Evidence of Effectiveness</b>	No
<b>Special Reciprocity: Advanced Credentials</b>	No
<b>Special Reciprocity: Military Spouses</b>	Yes

<b>Vermont<sup>xv</sup></b>	
<b>NASDTEC Agreement</b>	Yes
<b>Full Reciprocity</b>	No
<b>Required Coursework</b>	Yes, but not for all candidates
<b>Required Assessment</b>	Yes, but not for all candidates
<b>Different Requirements Based on Experience</b>	No
<b>Evidence of Effectiveness</b>	No
<b>Special Reciprocity: Advanced Credentials</b>	Yes
<b>Special Reciprocity: Military Spouses</b>	No

## Mid-Atlantic States

<b>Delaware<sup>xvi</sup></b>	
<b>NASDTEC Agreement</b>	Yes
<b>Full Reciprocity</b>	No
<b>Required Coursework</b>	No
<b>Required Assessment</b>	Yes, but not for all candidates and not immediately
<b>Different Requirements Based on Experience</b>	Yes
<b>Evidence of Effectiveness</b>	Yes, but not for all candidates
<b>Special Reciprocity: Advanced Credentials</b>	No
<b>Special Reciprocity: Military Spouses</b>	Yes (Provisional)

<b>Maryland<sup>xvii</sup></b>	
<b>NASDTEC Agreement</b>	Yes
<b>Full Reciprocity</b>	No
<b>Required Coursework</b>	Yes, but not for all candidates
<b>Required Assessment</b>	Yes, but not for all candidates
<b>Different Requirements Based on Experience</b>	Yes
<b>Evidence of Effectiveness</b>	Yes
<b>Special Reciprocity: Advanced Credentials</b>	No
<b>Special Reciprocity: Military Spouses</b>	Yes, but not for all candidates and not immediately

<b>New Jersey<sup>xviii</sup></b>	
<b>NASDTEC Agreement</b>	Yes
<b>Full Reciprocity</b>	No
<b>Required Coursework</b>	No
<b>Required Assessment</b>	Yes, but not for all candidates and not immediately
<b>Different Requirements Based on Experience</b>	No
<b>Evidence of Effectiveness</b>	Yes
<b>Special Reciprocity: Advanced Credentials</b>	Yes
<b>Special Reciprocity: Military Spouses</b>	Yes

<b>Pennsylvania<sup>xix</sup></b>	
<b>NASDTEC Agreement</b>	Yes
<b>Full Reciprocity</b>	No
<b>Required Coursework</b>	Yes, but not for all candidates
<b>Required Assessment</b>	Yes
<b>Different Requirements Based on Experience</b>	Yes
<b>Evidence of Effectiveness</b>	Yes
<b>Special Reciprocity: Advanced Credentials</b>	Yes
<b>Special Reciprocity: Military Spouses</b>	Yes

<b>Virginia<sup>xx</sup></b>	
<b>NASDTEC Agreement</b>	Yes
<b>Full Reciprocity</b>	No
<b>Required Coursework</b>	Yes
<b>Required Assessment</b>	Yes, but not for all candidates
<b>Different Requirements Based on Experience</b>	Yes
<b>Evidence of Effectiveness</b>	No
<b>Special Reciprocity: Advanced Credentials</b>	Yes
<b>Special Reciprocity: Military Spouses</b>	No

<b>Washington, DC<sup>xxi</sup></b>	
<b>NASDTEC Agreement</b>	Yes
<b>Full Reciprocity</b>	No
<b>Required Coursework</b>	No
<b>Required Assessment</b>	Yes, but not for all candidates
<b>Different Requirements Based on Experience</b>	Yes
<b>Evidence of Effectiveness</b>	Yes
<b>Special Reciprocity: Advanced Credentials</b>	Yes
<b>Special Reciprocity: Military Spouses</b>	No

## Territory Scan

<b>Puerto Rico<sup>xxii</sup></b>	
<b>NASDTEC Agreement</b>	No
<b>Full Reciprocity</b>	No
<b>Required Coursework</b>	Yes, but not immediately
<b>Required Assessment</b>	No
<b>Different Requirements Based on Experience</b>	No
<b>Evidence of Effectiveness</b>	No
<b>Special Reciprocity: Advanced Credentials</b>	No
<b>Special Reciprocity: Military Spouses</b>	No

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## Endnotes

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- <sup>i</sup> Arbury, C., Bonilla, G., Durfee, T., Johnson, M., & Lehninger, R. (2015). *The ABCs of regulation: The effects of occupational licensing and migration among teachers* [Master's thesis, University of Minnesota]. University of Minnesota Digital Conservancy.
- <sup>ii</sup> Goldhaber, D., Grout, C., Holden, K. L. (2017). Why make it hard for teachers to cross state borders? *Phi Delta Kappan*, 98(5), 55–60. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0031721717690367>
- <sup>iii</sup> Note teacher certification is another term used for licensure. For example, Connecticut applicants earn their license, then certification or endorsement area while Vermont applicants do not earn a license, they earn their certification and then an additional endorsement.
- <sup>iv</sup> States often offer specialized routes to certification for military members, veterans, and their spouses. Some states refer to these specialized routes to certification as reciprocity, while others categorize them as a pathway.
- <sup>v</sup> [New York Military Update](#)
- <sup>vi</sup> [Rhode Island Reciprocity Expansion](#)
- <sup>vii</sup> [Maryland Military Update](#)
- <sup>viii</sup> [Virginia Troops to Teachers](#)
- <sup>ix</sup> [Connecticut Department of Education](#)
- <sup>x</sup> [Maine Department of Education](#)
- <sup>xi</sup> [Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education](#)
- <sup>xii</sup> [New Hampshire Board of Education](#)
- <sup>xiii</sup> [New York State Department of Education](#)
- <sup>xiv</sup> [Rhode Island Department of Education](#)
- <sup>xv</sup> [State of Vermont Agency of Education](#)
- <sup>xvi</sup> [Delaware Department of Education](#)
- <sup>xvii</sup> [Maryland State Department of Education](#)
- <sup>xviii</sup> [State of New Jersey Department of Education](#)
- <sup>xix</sup> [Pennsylvania Department of Education](#)
- <sup>xx</sup> [Virginia Department of Education](#)
- <sup>xxi</sup> [District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education](#)
- <sup>xxii</sup> [Department of Education](#)