



Community Schools Guidance Letter #2010-3 Effective date: June 29, 2010, 2010 Updated September 6, 2011

Licensure and HQT Requirements for Community Schools

Objective

To address Ohio licensure and Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) requirements for community schools.

Definitions

- Community School: means a public school created under Chapter 3314. of the Revised Code, independent of any school district and part of the state's program of education. Community Schools (often called "Charter Schools" in other states) are part of the state's system of public education, offering an education that is regarded as equivalent to that of Ohio's traditional public schools and private schools approved by the state department of education. Community schools are public nonprofit, nonsectarian schools that operate independently of any school district but under a contract with an authorized sponsoring entity that is established by statute or approved by the Ohio Department of Education. Community Schools are public schools of choice and are state and federally funded. There are two types of community schools: new start-up community schools and conversion community schools.
- New start-up community schools are established in a contract between a sponsoring entity established by statute or approved by ODE and the governing body of the community school. New start-up community schools are limited in their location to what are referred to as "challenged school districts." These districts include the eight largest urban school districts, as well as districts in academic emergency, academic watch, and districts in the original pilot project area, Lucas County. A new start-up community schools also must have an "operator" in place before the sponsor can enter into a contract to open a new start-up community school. An "operator" is a person or organization that has previously managed the daily operations of another community school in Ohio, or charter school out of state, and can demonstrate that the other community or charter school was academically successful by virtue of a state rating.
- Conversion community schools: Community schools that are created by converting
 all or a portion of an existing traditional public school, including a joint vocational school,
 or building operated by an educational service center (ESC) to a community school.
 Conversion community schools may be opened by any school district in the state, and
 they are considered to be districts for many purposes. Because community schools are
 by law "independent of any school district" (O.R.C. 3314.01 (B)), once created,

Expiration date: Ongoing Page 1

conversion community schools operate independently from the sponsoring school district or ESC.

- District conversion community schools are created by converting all or a portion
 of an existing traditional public school or building to a community school. Conversion
 community schools may be opened by any school district in the state. Conversion
 community schools operate independently of the sponsoring district and are
 considered their own district for many purposes.
- **ESC conversion community schools** are created when an ESC converts all or part of a building that it owns or operates into a community school. ESC-sponsored conversion community schools may be opened in any district in the state in which the ESC owns or operates a facility.
- Joint Vocational School District (JVSD) conversion community schools are
 created when a joint vocational school district converts all or part of a building that it
 owns or operates into a community school. Joint vocational school district-sponsored
 conversion community schools may be opened in any district in the state in which the
 joint vocational school district owns or operates a facility.
- Internet- or computer-based community school is a community school established
 under this chapter in which the enrolled students work primarily from their residences on
 assignments in non classroom-based learning opportunities provided via an internet- or
 other computer-based instructional method that does not rely on regular classroom
 instruction or via comprehensive instructional methods that include internet-based, other
 computer-based, and non computer-based learning opportunities.
- **Sponsor:** An entity able to establish a community school. A sponsor has legal obligations to provide sufficient technical assistance, oversight and monitoring, including taking steps to intervene in a school's operations, to ensure that the community schools it sponsors meet all legally mandated fiscal, academic and operational requirements. Sponsors are called authorizers in other states, as their entering into contracts legally authorizes the establishment of the charter or community school.
- Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT)¹: For community schools, HQT is a federally required designation given to Ohio teachers who have at least a bachelor's degree, a teaching certificate/license other than a short-term substitute or non-tax, and the ability to demonstrate their subject area expertise in the core academic subjects they teach (English, language arts, reading, science, mathematics, government and civics, history, economics, geography, music, visual arts, dance, drama, foreign language).
- Intervention Specialist: A teacher who meets HQT requirements and teaches students with disabilities and/or collaborates with other teachers who teach students with disabilities in a public school.
- **Related Service Personnel:** Professionals with qualifications consistent with state-approved or state-recognized certification, licensing, registration or other comparable

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¹ All community school special education teachers and intervention specialists must meet the HQT requirements consistent with traditional public schools.

requirements that apply to the professional discipline in which those personnel are providing special education or related services, such as Speech/Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, School Nurse.

• **Special Education Teacher:** A teacher who meets HQT requirements and teaches students with disabilities and/or collaborates with other teachers who teach students with disabilities in a public school.

Policy

Community schools are required to meet ODE licensure and federal HQT requirements.

Guidance

The U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) requires all recipients of federal grant funds to meet state licensure standards, including federal HQT requirements, except when applied to public charter school teachers. It also requires charter school teachers to meet the certification and licensure standards set forth in each state's public charter school law.

Although Ohio's community school law allows some flexibility in meeting teacher licensure requirements, ODE requires all community school teachers to meet HQT requirements for the core academic classes they are assigned to teach in a community school.

ODE issues both short-term and long-term substitute teaching licenses. These licenses are issued to qualified bachelor's degree holders upon the request of an employing Ohio school district.

A long-term substitute license is issued for a specific teaching area in which a person has completed the necessary prerequisite coursework for the teaching area that is requested. Long-term substitute teaching licenses are issued as one-year licenses or as five-year licenses. The only difference in the licenses is the cost.

Ohio law allows schools to employ staff who hold a bachelor's degree to teach in specific areas of expertise such as music, art or specialty areas for a maximum of 12 hours per week; however, this person will not meet HQT requirements. Also, The 12 hour permit is only for NON LICENSED OR NON CERTIFICATED people. Anyone who holds a teaching license is not eligible for a 12 hour permit.

Community schools in Ohio have an element of flexibility regarding Section 2 on the HQT worksheet, except for special education teachers and intervention specialists.²

Attachment 1 includes specific information on Licensure and HQT requirements for community schools.

Expiration date: Ongoing Page 3

² HQT Worksheet Section 2: Do you hold full state certification/licensure in your teaching assignment?

Community School Special Education Teachers and Intervention Specialists

An analysis³ of special education licensure requirements for community schools revealed that community schools are not exempt from the special education teacher and intervention specialist licensure provisions and requirements of Ohio law.⁴

Community schools are required to provide special education services in accordance with Ohio Revised Code (ORC) Chapter 3323. Ohio's *Operating Standards for Educational Agencies serving Children with Disabilities* require special education teachers and intervention specialists to be adequately prepared and trained, have content knowledge and skills, and hold appropriate licensure as defined by Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 3301-24.

Community school special education teachers, intervention specialists and related service personnel are required to meet ODE licensure and HQT requirements consistent with special education teachers, intervention specialists and related service personnel of traditional public schools.

Related service personnel must have qualifications consistent with state-approved or state-recognized certification, licensing, registration or other comparable requirements that apply to the professional discipline in which those personnel are providing special education or related services, which includes meeting ODE's Pupil Services Licensure requirements.

To prevent undue hardships on some community schools, these requirements may be phased in as noted in **Attachment 2**, *Community School Four-year Phased-in Implementation Plan Timeline*, which provides specific dates and requirements for special education teachers and intervention specialists.

References

Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3314
Ohio Revised Code 3314.19, 3323.11, 3319.301
Ohio Administrative Code 3301-51-09 Delivery of services (H)(2), (I)(2), (H)(3),
Ohio Administrative Code 3301-24 Licensing and Education Programs

Attachments

- 1. Educator Licensure Credential Table
- 2. Community School Four-year Phased-in Implementation Plan Timeline

Expiration date: Ongoing

³ Prompted by clarifications of Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 3323.11 as amended by HB 119 in September 2007.

⁴ ORC 3323 Education of Children with Disabilities, per Research Memorandum (R-125-1824).

Attachment 1

Educator Licensure Credential Table

Below is an Educator Licensure Credential Table that addresses questions associated with specific licenses and transitions for community school teachers.

First-time applicants for licenses, certificates or permits issued by ODE are required to have Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCI) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) criminal background checks on file at ODE. Both background checks must have been completed within 365 days of the date of application.

House Bill (HB) 1 changed certain background check requirements for licensed educators in Ohio effective Jan. 1, 2010, resulting in fewer checks being needed for many educators who hold multiple credentials, or who hold only credentials of fewer than five years' duration. As a result of HB 1, all educator criminal background checks are now on a five-year cycle. Major changes are:

- Educators who are renewing a license or permit, have lived continuously in the state of Ohio for the previous five years and have a BCI background check on file with ODE will need to complete only an FBI criminal background check once every five years. (Previously, the law required BCI and FBI checks whenever they renewed.) Educators who are renewing a license or permit and who have not lived continuously in the state for the past five years will need to complete both a BCI and FBI background check once every five years.
- Educators with *multiple licenses* only need to submit the required background checks when they are applying for the renewal of the license or permit that is of the *longest duration*.
- Educators who hold an eight-year professional certificate, permanent certificate or non-tax certificate are still required to submit the required background checks once every five years. Certificate holders who have lived continuously in Ohio for those five years, however, will only need to submit FBI background checks.
- Initial applicants for their first educator license must complete both BCI and FBI criminal background checks. These checks need to be less than 365 days old to be considered valid for licensing purposes.
- Educators who currently hold a license or permit and are applying for an initial license in a different field only need to have an FBI background check less than five years old if they answer "Yes" to the residency question. If they answer "No," they must have *both* a BCI and FBI background check less than five years old

Type of License, Certificate or Permit	Valid as teacher of record in community school?	Subject to HQT require- ments?	BCI/FBI background check required?	Citation/Comments
Permanent Teaching Certificate	Yes	√	V	HQT status reported in area of instruction
Eight Year Professional Teaching Certificate	Yes	V	V	HQT status reported in area of instruction

Type of License, Certificate or Permit	Valid as teacher of record in community school?	Subject to HQT require- ments?	BCI/FBI background check required?	Citation/Comments
Five Year Professional Teaching License, Senior Professional Educator License or Lead Professional Educator License	Yes	V	V	HQT status reported in area of instruction education.ohio.gov, search keywords: licensure applications
Two Year Provisional Teaching License	Yes	V	V	HQT status reported in area of instruction education.ohio.gov, search keywords: licensure applications
Long Term Substitute License (excluding career-technical)	Yes	V	V	HQT status reported in area of instruction education.ohio.gov, search keywords: licensure applications
Short Term Substitute License	No		V	Valid for teaching up to five days in a given teaching assignment HQT status not required education.ohio.gov, search keywords: licensure applications
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Four Year Resident Educator License	Yes	$\sqrt{}$	V	HQT status reported in area of instruction education.ohio.gov, search keywords: licensure applications
Alternative Resident Educator License (non career- technical)	Yes	V	V	HQT status reported in area of instruction – education.ohio.gov, search keywords: licensure applications
Alternative Resident Educator License (career-technical workforce development- formerly "route B")	Yes		√	HQT required if teaching related academic content area and proper endorsements – education.ohio.gov, search keywords: licensure applications
Supplemental Teaching License	Yes	V	V	HQT required in area of instruction – education.ohio.gov, search keywords: licensure applications

Type of License, Certificate or Permit	Valid as teacher of record in community school?	Subject to HQT require- ments?	BCI/FBI background check required?	Citation/Comments
One Year Out-of- State Educator License or Visiting International Teacher License	Yes	V	V	If teacher of record, must meet HQT requirements – education.ohio.gov, search keywords: licensure applications
12 Hour Teaching Permit	No		√	Must have a bachelor's degree. May teach in specific area for a maximum of 12 hours per week (see application) – education.ohio.gov, search keywords: licensure applications .
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Pupil activity supervisor permit	No		V	Valid for coaching and supervising extracurricular activities. Not valid for teaching – education.ohio.gov, search keywords: licensure applications
Educational Aide permit	No		V	Paraprofessionals who directly assist teachers with classroom activities; requires HS diploma or GED; must be ESEA qualified by passing Parapro or by having two years of study at an accredited institution of higher education or Associate Degree (or higher) from an accredited institution if position is funded by Title monies – education.ohio.gov, search keywords: educational aide permit
Student monitor aide permit	No		V	Requires high school diploma or GED; does not directly assist teachers with classroom tasks – education.ohio.gov, search keywords: licensure applications

- **Note 1:** Schools that have difficulty filling an intervention specialist (IS) position may hire a licensed teacher who is willing to apply for a supplemental IS license and work toward an IS license.
- **Note 2:** Career-Technical Workforce Development teachers are required to hold licenses appropriate to the subject matter they teach and have proper endorsements.
- **Note 3:** Related service personnel must have qualifications consistent with state-approved or state-recognized certification, licensing, registration or other comparable requirements that apply to

the professional discipline in which those personnel are providing special education or related services, which includes meeting ODE's Pupil Services Licensure requirements. Related service personnel are not included in the *Community School Four-year Phased-in Implementation Plan* exemption to meet ODE's Pupil Services Licensure requirement.

Attachment 2

Community School Four-year Phased-in Implementation Plan Timeline

Employing special education teachers and intervention specialists

2009-10

- Current special education teachers and intervention specialists who do not presently hold intervention specialist licensure may continue to teach on a long-term substitute or out-of-field license but must agree to work towards receiving an appropriate license.⁵
- Current special education teachers and intervention specialists who meet requirements for the alternative educator license or supplemental license must pursue appropriate license.

2010-11, 2011-12

- Current special education teachers and intervention specialists who have either an alternative license or one-year supplemental license must continue to work toward receiving full licensure.
- All newly hired special education teachers and intervention specialists must possess appropriate license.

2012-13

 All special education teachers and intervention specialists must possess appropriate license. EMIS checks instituted.

Related Service Providers

Related service personnel such as Speech/Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist and School Nurse are professionals who must have qualifications consistent with state-approved or state-recognized certification, licensing, registration or other comparable requirements that apply to the professional discipline in which those personnel are providing special education or related services, which includes meeting ODE's Pupil Services Licensure requirements. Related service personnel are not included in the *Community School Four-year Phased-in Implementation Plan* exemption to meet ODE's Pupil Services Licensure requirement.

Resources

Federal Title I, II-A, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Public Charter Schools Program professional development funds can be used to help special education teachers and intervention specialists meet the new licensure requirements.

For additional information on HQT, consult the Ohio Department of Education Web page at education.ohio.gov, search keyword: *HQT*.

⁵ Appropriate licensure for working as an intervention specialist or special education teacher is defined as one of the following: a two-year provisional, four-year resident educator or five-year professional IS license, an alternative resident educator license for IS, a supplemental teaching license for IS, or an eight-year professional or permanent teaching certificate for education of the handicapped.

⁶ Per Ohio Administrative Code 3301-51-09(H)(2).