



The New York State Board of Regents and
The New York State Education Department

Growing Tomorrow's Leaders Today

Frequently Asked Questions

School Leadership Preparation (Part 52) Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why is the State Education Department revising the requirements for school leadership preparation?

A: With an increased focus on instruction, standards, and accountability, the role and responsibilities of school and district leaders have changed significantly. In considering school leadership in New York State, and across the country, the Board of Regents commissioned the Blue Ribbon Panel on School Leadership to critically review New York's regulations governing school leadership preparation and certification.

Program Providers

Q: Can organizations other than Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) offer leadership preparation programs?

A: No. Other organizations may, however, partner with an Institution of Higher Education to jointly develop a leadership preparation program offered by an IHE.

Q: Must Institutions of Higher Education collaborate with school districts or other organizations to register a program?

A: Yes. Programs will have to document substantive relationships with distinguished practitioners and scholars in education and other fields.

Credits for Certification

Q: Has the State Education Department stipulated a specific number of graduate credits for building level certification?

A: To be eligible for the school building leader certificate, candidates must have earned a master's degree, which requires a minimum of 30 graduate credits.

Q: Has the State Education Department stipulated a specific number of graduate credits for district level certification?

A: Yes. State law requires district level leaders, including business leaders, to have 60 graduate credits prior to certification.

Q: Will a master's degree in educational administration be accepted for permanent/professional certification as a classroom teacher?

A. Up to 2004, individuals holding a provisional certificate in a classroom teaching title may complete a graduate program in educational leadership for permanent certification in their classroom teaching title.

Candidates holding an *initial* certificate in a classroom teaching title may complete a graduate program in educational leadership for professional certification in the classroom teaching title provided the candidate ALSO completes 12 semester hours of graduate study in the content core of the initial classroom teaching certificate.

Admissions

Q: In what cases can a preparation program grant credit for prior learning?

A: The preparation program has discretion when granting credit for prior learning. All higher education programs registered in New York are currently able to grant such credit. The State Education Department envisions this being a critical part of creating individual plans of study for aspiring leaders. For example, a business teacher who has been teaching advanced accounting in the local high school might not have to complete the same budgeting and finance courses as a teacher with no experience with budgets or accounting. The preparation program may recommend that the business teacher complete study in another area where additional skills are needed.

Leadership Experiences

Q: Do all candidates in educational leadership programs have to complete a 15-week full time leadership experience in addition to the leadership experiences required throughout the program?

A: Yes, unless the program has approval to offer another model of leadership experiences that is substantially equivalent.

Q: What activities are acceptable for the leadership experiences?

A: The regulations specify that leadership experiences must

- occur throughout the program of study,
- be tied to coursework,
- include experiences in districts serving students at different developmental levels and with a variety of characteristics and socio-economic backgrounds, and
- be jointly planned with and supervised by program faculty and school district leaders.

Q: Must the 15-week full-time leadership experience occur at the end of the program?

A: Leadership experiences must occur throughout the program. In addition to leadership experiences tied to coursework, the 15-week full-time leadership experience

is intended to be a capstone experience that allows a candidate to perform as a school or district leader. However, programs may receive approval to offer a substantially equivalent model that is structured differently.

Partnerships

Q: What is a “formal” relationship with practitioners and scholars in the field of education and in other fields?

A: Preparation programs should be able to demonstrate collaborations that enhance the learning of aspiring leaders. Programs may create partnerships with other schools/departments in their institution, K-12 districts in their region, the business community, and others. These partnerships might take the form of advisory committees, regional leadership preparation consortia, review boards, etc. Partnerships must extend beyond placing students in leadership experiences.

Exceptionally Qualified School District Leader Candidates from Other Fields

Q: Will preparation programs have to register a separate program for exceptionally qualified candidates?

A: Yes. However, most of the registration requirements will be similar to programs for traditional candidates. A preparation program that offers this type of will have to describe the criteria used to determine whether the candidate is “exceptionally qualified.”

Q: What are the steps for a district that wants to hire an exceptionally qualified candidate who has not yet started or completed a preparation program?

A: Candidates will have to enter a registered alternative preparation program, prepare for and pass the state written assessment, get a written commitment from the school district for supervision and mentoring, and then apply to the State Education Department for a Transitional D certificate. Once the candidate holds the certification, the district may hire the candidate.

Q: Can an exceptionally qualified candidate be certified as a school building leader (i.e. principal) through an alternative program?

A: No. The alternative program leads only to school district leadership certification.

Q: Must all alternative program candidates hold a Transitional D certificate?

A: No. There are two paths to certification for exceptionally qualified candidates. Through the first path, the candidate will work with a school district and his/her preparation program to pass the state assessment and get a Transitional D certificate prior to completing his/her preparation. In the second path, the candidate will successfully complete the preparation program and the state assessment, after which he/she is eligible for the professional certificate.

Q: Do exceptionally qualified candidates need to hold a post-baccalaureate degree prior to admission to a school leadership preparation program?

A: Yes. Candidates must hold a graduate degree (academic or professional).

Q: Will exceptionally qualified candidates have to pass the same state assessments as candidates with 3 years of teaching/pupil personnel experience to be recommended for the professional certificate?

A: Yes. Exceptionally qualified candidates who apply for the Transitional D certificate will have to pass the written component of the state assessment to be recommended for the Transitional D certificate. All exceptionally qualified candidates will have to pass both the state written and the state performance assessment to be recommended for the professional certificate.

Q: Will exceptionally qualified candidates who apply for the Transitional D certificate be completing coursework concurrently with serving as a district level leader?

A: It is up to the preparation program and the candidate to decide when the candidate is sufficiently prepared for the state written assessment. This may happen before all coursework is completed, in which case the candidate would be responsible for completing the remaining program requirements while in a leadership position.

Q: Who will act as mentor and supervisor for a superintendent who holds a Transitional D certificate?

A: The candidate will be supervised by a college supervisor and mentored by a BOCES district superintendent or a regional superintendent (NYC), or a designated superintendent (subject to the approval of the employing authorities).

Q: Will the Commissioner's process for awarding district level certification based on "substantially equivalent experience" still exist?

A: Yes, this provision remains in education law.

Internship Certificates

Q: What is the internship certificate?

A: A student in a registered preparation program who has completed at least 50% of the semester hour requirements may, at the request of the institution, be issued an internship certificate. The internship certificate allows the certificate holder to be employed in a school district, under appropriate college supervision, in the area for which the certificate is valid (i.e., school building leader, school district leader, or school business leader). The certificate is valid for two years.

Q: Must a candidate pass the state written assessment before being awarded an internship certificate?

A: Currently, the internship certificate does not require an assessment.

Q: Can someone serving under an internship certificate evaluate teachers?

A: Local bargaining agreements determine this.

Professional Development

Q: Are there professional development requirements for building and district leaders?

A: Professional development requirements may be included in certification regulations (Part 80), to be developed.

Assessments

Q: Have the state assessments been developed?

A: No. The assessments are being developed by National Evaluation Systems based on the regulatory requirements in CR 52.21 (c) with input from the higher education and preK-12 communities.

Q: Must school district leadership candidates pass the State assessment prior to completing a preparation program?

A: Yes. Successful completion of the written and performance components of the State assessment in school district leadership is a requirement for completing a program leading to school district certification.

Q: Must school district business leadership candidates pass the State assessment prior to completing a preparation program?

A: Yes. Successful completion of the written and performance components of the State assessment in school business district leadership is a requirement for completing a program leading to school business district certification.

Certification

Q: When will Part 80 certification requirements be available?

A: Please check the Teacher Certification website (www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/) periodically for information on certification requirements.