



NJDOE News

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State Board of Education Approves Higher Standards for Teachers; Reciprocity for out-of-state Administrators

The State Board of Education today approved amendments to the state's Professional Licensure and Standards Code that raise the grade point average (GPA) for future teachers and make it easier for talented out-of-state administrators to obtain positions in New Jersey schools.

The amendments will raise the grade point average for teacher candidates from 2.5 or a C average to 2.75 or a B. The new, higher GPA would be required of all prospective teacher candidates, including alternate route candidates, as a condition for licensure. Governor Whitman proposed that the GPA be raised in her 1999 State of the State message.

"It is my belief that raising the standard for entering the teaching profession will therefore ensure that school districts will have a higher quality pool of teaching candidates to choose from. As we continue to see our rigorous academic standards phased in across the state it becomes vital that we have the highest quality teachers we can possibly have," said Governor Whitman."

The code amendments will also allow certified, out-of-state chief school administrators and principals who do not now meet New Jersey certification standards to become certified in New Jersey. These administrators will become certified here if they can officially document five years of successful experience under a comparable out-of-state certificate, satisfy the test requirement and complete a mentoring program focused on New Jersey finance and law.

"This change will allow talented and experienced out-of-state school administrators into New Jersey," said Commissioner of Education David Hespe. "Our children deserve the benefit of their leadership."

The board has also approved a requirement that all teachers assigned as swimming instructors in the public schools hold a valid CPR certificate issued by the American Red Cross, a valid life guard certificate issued by the Red Cross, and a valid Red Cross water safety certificate.

"It has always been my position that the health and safety of our students is our number one priority," said Hespe. "These new rules will guarantee that our children are adequately protected when they take swimming classes."

Finally, the proposed amendments establish requirements for school certification for athletic trainers employed in public school districts. These requirements are a bachelor's degree based upon a four-year curriculum in an accredited college or university and satisfactory completion of the requirements established by the State Board of Medical Examiners for registration as an athletic trainer.