

**CONNECTICUT GUIDELINES
FOR THE ISSUANCE OF
CONTINUING EDUCATION UNITS
REQUIRED FOR CERTIFICATION**

Connecticut State Department of Education

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Introduction

Context

“One of the greatest challenges facing the United States as it looks toward the new millenium is the development of human capacity, specifically, the need for a highly educated, globally aware community of citizens who can lead the country into an era of increasing technological, moral, scientific, political and social complexity. Chief among the developers of our nation’s human capacity are teachers, who, along with parents, share responsibility for the growth of knowledge among the nation’s more than 50 million school-age youth.” *The Numbers Game - Ensuring the Quantity and Quality in the Teaching Workforce*, NASBE, October, 1998.

While more is expected from today’s students and teachers, there is growing evidence that the investment in the professional development of teachers (building human capacity) is woefully inadequate and often is viewed by many people in the public and private sectors as not cost beneficial. Business and industry appears to have just the opposite view. They spend considerable dollars on training and building human capacity to maintain profitability and competitiveness.

Connecticut’s CEU guidelines strengthen the connection between the investment in ongoing teacher professional development and improved student learning. They also build on and strengthen Connecticut’s unwavering commitment to equity and excellence in education. The following principles have guided the design of these guidelines:

- Student learning is directly affected by teacher competence;
- Teacher competence is enhanced by ongoing professional development and continuous learning; and
- Teachers, like students, must be continual learners.

Purpose of CEUs

The intent behind the statutory requirement for CEUs is to ensure that educators are provided with high quality, rigorous professional development experiences linked to advancing student learning. The awarding of CEUs is the final step in the development and implementation of professional development plans, as reflected in Connecticut’s *Guidelines for Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development*. The appropriate awarding of CEUs signifies that the professional development activities have met the highest standards and are contributing to the enhanced quality and ability of Connecticut’s educators.

What's New in these Guidelines?

This document replaces the Guidelines and Procedures for CEUs published in July 1, 1992. These guidelines also reflect current statutory requirements related to professional development, CEUs and the continuation of professional educator certificates (see Appendix A).

The new guidelines **require that professional development for which CEUs are issued focus on improving student learning**. Furthermore, the definition of what constitutes professional development for which CEUs can be offered has been broadened to include such things as time spent in learning, problem-solving, experimenting, interacting with colleagues, developing curriculum, and writing journal articles.

In addition, the contents of the new guidelines are framed by four recently released Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) policy documents:

1. *Connecticut's Common Core of Learning (CCL)*, which clearly establishes high expectations for the learning for *all* of Connecticut's children;
2. *Connecticut Framework: K-12 Curriculum Goals and Standards*, which expands the CCL by establishing student content and performance standards across all disciplines by grade span (e.g., K through grade 4, grades 5 through 8, grades 9 through 12).
3. *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching (CCT)*, which defines effective teaching practice throughout the career continuum of teachers--from *pre-service*, through *induction*, as well as for the evaluation and continued professional development of experienced teaching staff; and
4. *Connecticut Guidelines for Teacher Evaluation and Professional Development*, which provide criteria and processes for the development and implementation of local district teacher evaluation and professional development plans.

Using these documents as the focus for professional development establishes a critical link between effective teaching and increased learning. The quality of a district's school improvement initiative will be enhanced and become more coherent when all the components—that is, teacher evaluation, school improvement processes, professional development, including those learning experiences documented by CEUs--are developed from a common framework.

These guidelines are divided into three sections:

- A. Responsibilities of Local and Regional Boards of Education Granting CEUs for Professional Development Activities;
- B. Responsibilities of Educators Seeking CEUs for the Continuation of the Professional Educator Certificate; and
- C. Responsibilities of Approved CEU Providers.

A. Responsibilities Of Local And Regional Boards Of Education
Granting CEUs For Professional Development Activities

Statement of Purpose:

TO ENSURE THAT ALL STUDENTS HAVE COMPETENT, HIGH-QUALITY AND CARING TEACHERS, WE MUST PROVIDE MEANINGFUL LEARNING EXPERIENCES WHICH ENABLE EDUCATORS TO CONTINUOUSLY RAISE THEIR EXPECTATIONS FOR THEIR STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT AND FOR THEIR TEACHING. THEREFORE, THE CENTRAL FOCUS OF ALL CONTINUING EDUCATION UNITS MUST BE TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING.

1. All learning experiences for which CEUs are awarded should enrich or improve the skills, knowledge and abilities of educators **to improve student learning**. The content of professional development and related learning experiences should be guided by:
 - **expectations for student performance** as reflected in *Connecticut's Common Core of Learning (CCL)* and *Connecticut Framework: K-12 Curriculum Goals & Standards*, as well as in school or district-wide goals;
 - **actual student performance**, as evidenced by a variety of indices, including, but not limited to, the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT); and
 - **what teachers need to know and be able to do** to improve instruction that advances student learning.
2. Learning experiences should have clear and concise written statements of intended **learning outcomes**;
3. Professional development activities should provide **information, strategies or applications** (e.g., materials, curriculum designs, instructional strategies) designed to enhance the capabilities of educators to **improve** student learning;
4. Each district should annually offer teachers and administrators significant opportunities to enhance their abilities to promote student mastery of **literacy¹ and numeracy² as they apply to all content area(s) or job assignment(s) in which the educator works**;
5. Opportunities should be provided for educators to receive district-provided professional development which fulfills the **special requirements for certified educators** as mandated under Subsection (k) (l) (1) of Section 10-145b of the Connecticut General Statutes (refer to page 10 for a list of these requirements).

¹ Literacy is defined as the knowledge, skills and dispositions that enable students to construct meaning and make sense of the world through reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing and enacting.

² Numeracy is defined as the knowledge, skills and abilities that enable students to represent physical events, work with data, reason, communicate mathematically and make connections within mathematics and to other content areas, as well as the world around them in order to solve problems.

Statutory Requirements (related to local school districts)

Subsection (k)(1)(1) of Section 10-145b of the Connecticut General Statutes: "...Each local and regional board of education shall make available, annually, at no cost to its certified employees not fewer than eighteen hours of professional development activities for continuing education credit. Such activities may be made available by a board of education directly, through a regional educational service center or cooperative arrangement with another board of education or through arrangements with any continuing education provider approved by the State Board of Education. Local and regional boards of education shall grant continuing education credit for professional development activities which the certified employees of the board of education are required to attend, professional development activities offered in accordance with the plan developed pursuant to section (b) of section 10-220a, or professional development activities which the board may approve for any individual certified employee..."

This minimum annual requirement of eighteen (18) hours of district-provided professional development activities may be offered in a variety of ways, not just through workshops or presentations. These include structured, planned activities in which educators are problem-solving, experimenting, developing curriculum, and interacting with colleagues around teaching and learning. Local districts may offer additional professional development activities to their educators, but for which CEUs should not be granted.

Local District Administrative Requirements for Offering Professional Development Eligible for CEUs

1. **Planning Process:** The local board of education shall implement a process for **identifying the learning activities that address the professional development needs of all participants in the school community** (including central office administrators, school leaders, teachers, and other certified staff). This process shall provide an opportunity for the advice and assistance of teachers, administrators, and a teacher bargaining unit representative in formulating the plan, administering the learning activities, and evaluating learning activities to ensure CEU criteria are met;
2. **Evaluation:** Opportunities are provided for participants to evaluate the **relevance and usefulness of the learning activities** and provide other forms of feedback about the professional development. An annual evaluation of all district-provided CEU activities will be conducted and will incorporate participant feedback about the impact of the learning activities on **improving student learning and opportunities to apply knowledge in the context of their job responsibilities**;
3. **Eligible Activities for CEUs:**
 1. **Workshops and Seminars:** eligible for CEUs only if there are opportunities for participants to **learn and investigate, experiment, consult or evaluate practices which promote student learning.**
 2. **Activities Involving Application of Learning in School-based Settings:** e.g., action research, study teams, curriculum development, teacher visitations, problem-solving groups, extended curriculum-based learning, school-wide improvement initiatives, and professional development activities which meet the criteria of **enhancing the ability of educators to increase student learning.**

4. **Documentation of CEUs:** The documentation of CEUs is based on the amount of time spent on learning activities which **enhances teacher competence and ability and leads to greater student learning**. The calculation of this time spent on learning should only include the actual time devoted to learning either in a formal setting or through activities involving the collaboration of educators, committees, or study teams.

Districts must grant two types of CEUs:

- CEUs (as evidenced by a CEU certificate, stamped with the provider number of the issuing agent for professional development), for professional development activities that meet the requirements of these guidelines; and
 - CEU Equivalents, for learning experiences directly contributing to teacher competence and student learning (as awarded by a board of education or state agency and evidenced by a CEU certificate, stamped with the provider number of the issuing agent) that meet the requirements of these guidelines;
5. **Granting of CEU Equivalents:** Districts shall implement a process for the review and granting of CEU equivalents by the school district. Eligible activities include **planned continuing learning experiences related to student learning** as well as **service in specific roles**, examples of which include presenters/trainers, peer coaches, and facilitators of district learning activities;
 6. **Record-keeping:** Districts shall maintain a **complete record** of each individual's participation and be able to provide a copy of that record upon request for a period of at least fifteen (15) years; and
 7. **Annual reporting to CSDE:** In accordance with Subsection (k)(l)(2) of Section 10-145b of the Connecticut General Statutes:

Each local and regional board of education shall attest to the state Department of Education, in such form and at such time as the commissioner shall prescribe, that professional development activities for which continuing education credit is granted by the board: (A) are planned in response to identified needs, (B) are provided by qualified instructional personnel, as appropriate, (C) have the requirements for participation in the activity shared with participants before the commencement of the activity, (D) are evaluated in terms of its effectiveness and its contribution to the attainment of school or district-wide goals, and (E) are documented in accordance with procedures established by the State Board of Education. At the end of each five-year period each professional educator shall attest to the state Department of Education, in such form and at such time as the commissioner shall prescribe, that the professional educator has successfully completed ninety hours of continuing education.

The format for reporting will be provided by the Department.

**B. Responsibilities of Educators Seeking CEUs
For the Continuation of the Professional Educator Certificate**

Activities Through Which Educators May Meet the CEU Requirements

The required 90 hours of contact hours of continuing education may consist of the following (singly or in combination of):

- **Professional development activities eligible for CEUs** offered by the local board of education;
- **Professional development activities offered by approved CEU providers;**
- **CEU equivalents**, which are made available only to school personnel by mutual, pre-arranged agreement with the school district provider;
- **Application of learning through service in specific state roles:** (first-time participation as BEST Assessor, BEST Mentor, BEST Cooperating Teacher, BEST Portfolio Scorer, BEST Seminar Leader, BEST trainer, Higher Education Visiting Team Assessor, or other state service as approved by the Commissioner); and
- **Graduate course(s)**, taken from an approved college or university that are directly applicable to the current endorsement(s) or toward earning an additional endorsement.

Note that CEUs, CEU equivalents and graduate credit(s) earned during one five-year professional educator certification period may not be applied towards the required 90 contact hours of continuing education for the subsequent five-year period.

1. Professional Development Activities Eligible for CEUs Offered by the Local Board of Education

DESCRIPTION: Workshops, seminars and activities involving application of learning in school-based settings which provide opportunities for participants to **learn and investigate, experiment, consult or evaluate practices which promote student learning.**

CEU CALCULATION: CEU credits awarded to reflect the actual time spent in the learning process and the application of new learning in school-based settings.

DOCUMENTATION: Consists of documentation appropriate to series of workshops, practice sessions, application of learning in a school-based setting, and feedback attestation/evaluation. Supervisor prior approval for projects and project completions signed by participant(s) and verified (by principal, director, department head, or agent of Approved CEU Provider) for submission to CEU Coordinator.

EXAMPLES: Workshop series, Action Research, Study Teams, Curriculum Development, Teacher Visitations, Problem-Solving Groups, Extended Curriculum-based Learning, School-wide Improvement Initiatives, and professional development activities which meet the criteria of enhancing the ability of educators to increase student learning.

2. Professional Development Activities Offered By Approved CEU Providers

DESCRIPTION: Participation in professional development activities that maintain, enrich or improve the abilities of teachers, administrators or other certified school staff to improve student learning in the context of their responsibilities.

CEU CALCULATION: Actual time spent in learning activities and the application of new learning in school-based settings.

DOCUMENTATION: CEU certificate stamped with the provider number of the issuing agent for professional development.

3. CEU Equivalents

DESCRIPTION: A planned continuing education experience directly related to improving student learning, which meets the requirements of these guidelines, for which CEU credit is not otherwise available. Examples of activities include presenters/trainers who develop or facilitate a *unique or new* training activity that is directly related to student learning, independent study, a research project, preparation for National Board Certification, or participation in a New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) school evaluation, or preparation for a NEASC accreditation visit. CEU equivalents are only available to school district personnel by mutual, pre-arranged agreement with a school district provider.

CEU CALCULATION:

Presenters/Trainers:

First training event:

- Actual clock hours of institute/seminar/sessions, plus six hours of planning to account for workshop preparation and demonstration;

Second training event:

- Actual clock hours of institute/seminar/sessions, plus two hours of planning to account for refinement and revision of the learning activity.

Other Equivalent Activities

CEU credits are based on the duration and completion of the mutually agreed upon activity.

DOCUMENTATION: submission of attestation, project/program/workshop outline and supporting documentation to District CEU Coordinator.

4. Service In A Specific State Role

DESCRIPTION: Application of learning through service in specific state roles: (first-time participation as BEST Assessor, BEST Mentor, BEST Cooperating Teacher, BEST Portfolio Scorer, BEST Seminar Leader, BEST trainer, Higher Education Visiting Team Assessor, or other state service as approved by the Commissioner).

CEU CALCULATION:

Participants in the State Service Roles:

- 0.4 CEUs each for the first two CCI assessments completed by a CCI Assessor following both initial training and update training
- 1.6 CEUs for the first placement event for BEST Mentors or support team leaders following both initial training and update training
- 1.0 CEUs for first placement event for Cooperating Teachers following both initial training and update training
- 1.0 CEUs for first BEST portfolio scorer event following both initial training and update training
- 1.0 CEUs for first BEST seminar leader workshop
- 1.0 CEUs for the first Higher Education Visiting Team Assessment following initial training

DOCUMENTATION:

Participation in State Service:

- BEST Assessors, Mentors, Portfolio Scorers, and Seminar Leaders: CSDE documentation of participation (e.g., assessment documentation, district recording of mentor placements, training completed);³
- Cooperating Teachers: signed confirmation of student teacher placement forms submitted by district to CSDE;
- Higher Education Visiting Team Assessors, documentation of participation.

5. Graduate Courses

DESCRIPTION: Graduate level (or above) courses taken from an approved College or University directly applicable to current endorsement or toward earning an additional endorsement:

CEU CALCULATION: Calculation determined by course completion at rate of 1 Graduate Credit = 15 hours towards fulfillment of 90 hour requirement. 3 Credit Graduate Course = 45 hours.

DOCUMENTATION: Official College/University Transcript indicating course completion and credit hours awarded. The Bureau of Certification and Professional Development does the calculation.

³ CEU Certificates of Completion will be produced for placements reported in accordance with BEST Program policies. The Bureau of Certification and Professional Development will accept only Cooperating Teacher, Mentor and Assessment placements as CEU credits toward fulfillment of the 90 hours of Professional Development, if accompanied by a valid CEU Certificate for Support Training completed within the same 5-year certificate term and prior to the placement event. Both documents need to be submitted together in order to validate the CEUs earned for placement.

Statutory Requirements (related to Professional Educator Certificate Holders)

Subsection (k)(1)(1) of Section 10-145b of the Connecticut General Statutes as amended by Public Act 99-211: “For certified employees of local and regional boards of education ... each professional educator certificate shall be valid for five years and continued every five years thereafter upon the successful completion of professional development activities which shall consist of not less than ninety hours of continuing education, as determined by the local or regional board of education in accordance with this section, during each successive five year period. (A) Such continuing education completed by certified employees with an early childhood nursery through grade three or an elementary endorsement who hold a position requiring such an endorsement shall include at least fifteen hours of training in the teaching of reading and reading readiness and assessment of reading performance, including methods of teaching language skills necessary for reading comprehension skills, phonics, and the structure of the English language during each five year period. (B) Such continuing education requirement completed by certified employees with elementary or middle grades endorsements who hold a position requiring such an endorsement shall include at least fifteen hours of training in the use of computers in the classroom during each five-year period. (C) Such continuing education completed by (i) the superintendent of schools, and (ii) employees employed in positions requiring an intermediate administrator or supervisory certificate, or the equivalent thereof, and whose administrative or supervisory duties equal at least fifty per cent of the assigned time of such employee, shall include at least fifteen hours of training in the evaluation of teachers pursuant to section 10-151b during each five-year period. (D) In the case of certified employees with a bilingual education endorsement who hold positions requiring such an endorsement (i) in an elementary school and who do not hold an endorsement in elementary education, such continuing education taken on or after July 1, 1999, shall only count toward the ninety hour requirement if it is in language arts, reading and mathematics, and (ii) in a middle or secondary school and who do not hold an endorsement in the subject area they teach, such continuing education taken on or after July 1, 1999, shall only count toward the ninety hour requirement if it is in such subject area or areas...”

Subsection (k)(1)(2) of Section 10-145b of the Connecticut General Statutes: “ ... At the end of each five-year period each professional educator shall attest to the State Department of Education, in such form and at such time as the commissioner shall prescribe, that the professional educator has successfully completed ninety hours of continuing education.”

Summary of Special Requirements for Continuation of the Professional Educator Certificate:

Early childhood nursery through grade three or elementary-endorsed teachers:

Of the 90 hours of training every five years, at least 15 hours in the teaching of reading and reading readiness and assessment of reading performance, including methods of teaching language skills necessary for reading comprehension skills, phonics, and the structure of the English language.

Elementary and middle-school endorsed teachers: Of the 90 hours of training every five years, at least 15 hours of training in the use of computers in the classroom.

Superintendents of schools and employees employed in positions requiring an intermediate administrator or supervisory certificate: Of the 90 hours of training every five years, at least 15 hours of training in the evaluation of teachers.

Bilingual educators:

- (a) bilingual educators who hold positions in an elementary school, but who do not hold an endorsement in elementary education: all ninety hours of training must be in the area of language arts, reading and mathematics; and
- (b) bilingual educators who hold positions in a middle or secondary school, but who do not hold an endorsement in the subject area they teach: all ninety hours of training must be in the subject area or areas corresponding to the ones they teach.

C. Responsibilities of Approved CEU Providers

Approved CEU Providers are identified as organizations, institutions, businesses, corporations and institutions of higher learning who have submitted a formal application to the Connecticut State Department of Education and are approved to offer CEUs under the aegis of the Department.

Learning experiences offered by Approved CEU Providers must:

- Enrich or improve the skills, knowledge and abilities by educators to improve student learning.
- Focus the content of all activities offered for CEUs upon the *Connecticut Framework: K-12 Curriculum Goals and Standards*, *Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching (CCT)* and/or *Connecticut's Common Core of Learning (CCL)*.
- Define clear and concise intended learning outcomes specific to applications in a public school-based setting.
- Design the content of all activities offered for CEUs towards direct application in a school-based setting (e.g., materials, curriculum designs, and instructional strategies) and the enhancement of content-area knowledge in tangible ways directly transferable to increasing student learning.
- Document all activities in accordance with state policies and procedures including, but not limited to, the submission of biannual reports to the Department of activities offered for CEUs.
- Obtain evaluations from each participant which assess the activity's relevance and usefulness to the acquisition of new skills, knowledge and abilities directly related to their professional responsibilities as educators to improve student learning.

See Page 8, Section 2, *Professional Development Activities Offered by Approved CEU Providers* for additional information.

CEU Calculation and CEU Certificates: All CEU calculations are based upon a direct accounting of time-on-task to achieve the stated learning objective of the activity. CEU Certificates must be issued to participants who successfully complete an activity within 90 days of completion and be stamped with the Connecticut State Department of Education Provider stamp in a color other than black.

Reporting: Approved Providers are responsible for reporting information about all activities offered for CEUs on a twice yearly basis, i.e., July for all activities offered between January and June, and December for all activities offered between July and December. Inactivity or lack of reports will result in the automatic revocation of status as an Approved CEU Provider.

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APPENDIX A

History of CEUs

A Continuing Education Unit (CEU) is a nationally recognized unit of measure used for the purpose of documenting successful participation in a not-for-college-credit professional development or continuing education activity. The licensing board of each profession determines the providers and types of CEU activities acceptable as continuing educational experiences for the professional growth of its membership, as applied to the licensure process for that profession.

The conceptual base for continuing education units was developed, tested, and clarified in the early to mid-1970's, by a national task force studying professional development. In 1977, the Council on the Continuing Education Unit, a nonprofit membership organization, was incorporated and assumed responsibility for advancing the concept and application of CEUs. In 1986, the Council on the Continuing Education Unit published "The Continuing Education Criteria and Guidelines," Third Edition. The criteria and guidelines, outlined in this publication, form the basis for the Connecticut regulations governing the awarding of CEUs by CEU providers. These guidelines stipulate that CEUs be awarded only for the acquisition of new learning. The calculation of CEUs was determined by clock hours. The unit of measure being: one (1) CEU for 10 clock hours of learning.

In 1986, the Connecticut General Assembly enacted the Education Enhancement Act. One element of this legislation changed the certification continuum for teachers and administrators from a two-tier to a three-tier sequence. The sequence culminates in the issuance of the Professional Educator Certificate. During the same year, the CEU Criteria Advisory Committee provided philosophical and content advice on the application of the CEU concept. The first Continuing Education Unit (CEU) Guide was based, in part, upon this work. The issuance of the Professional Development Certificate to teachers and administrators below the level of superintendent, and the use of the CEUs to document professional development activities, linked personal professional growth and development with continuing education and the licensure process.