Learning Goals/Actions

• Understand guidelines for NYS and federal compliance with teacher certification
• Understand different types of NYS teaching certificates
• Understand the various pathways to obtain NYS teacher certification
• Explore common hiring problems
• Use of NCLB and “highly qualified” core subject assignments
Hire Right

- You found the perfect candidate, but does this person have the necessary credentials to be hired?
NYS charter schools are regulated with respect to whom they can hire to work in their schools

• To be compliant with Federal, State and authorizers’ regulations, charter schools must ensure:
  – All teachers are New York State certified
  • A very small number of uncertified teachers can work in charter schools; all uncertified teachers must meet one of the uncertified teacher exemption criteria:
    – All teachers of core No Child Left Behind subjects are “highly qualified” for their assignments
    – All teaching assistants have applicable New York State certification
What does this mean?

• It is always easiest for charter schools to be compliant if they hire:

   Teachers who are New York State certified in the subject and grade level for their assignment
CERTIFICATION
Know the basics about certification: subject and grade

- A teaching certificate is issued for a particular subject and grade level
  - For example: Childhood Ed 1-6, Middle School Generalist 5-9, Academic subjects 5-9 and/or 7-12, Students with Disabilities 1-6 and the new Students with Disabilities Generalist 7-12.

- Charter schools ARE allowed to have certified teachers teaching out of their certification subject or grade level
  - In a charter school, a teacher certified in childhood education (grades 1-6) CAN teach eighth grade math
  - However, the charter school teacher MUST prove that s/he is NCLB Highly Qualified for his/her assignment
  - Special education – it is best to hire certified special ed teachers
Understand NYS certification types

• There are many “types” of certificates
  – Initial, Conditional Initial, Professional, Permanent, Trans B, Internship, etc.
  – Certificates are valid for varying lengths of time (2 years, 3 years, 5 years, no expiration date)
    • a teacher with an expired certificate is UNCERTIFIED
  – Some certificates are only valid if the certificate holder is currently in a specific educational program (Trans B, Internship)
  – Some certificates require the holder to take tests within a specific period of time (Conditional Initial)
# Overview of NYS teaching certificate types – entry level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Entry Level</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>All charter school teachers must have state and federal clearance on TEACH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Completed approved teacher prep program (or equivalent), passed all New York State certification exams, completed Child Abuse Identification and Violence Prevention workshops (+ Autism for special ed). Leads to Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional Initial</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Out-of-state certified teachers eligible for reciprocity and have 2 years to successfully complete all of the applicable New York State certification exams and workshops. Must have a Level II Teaching Certificate from another state AND EITHER completed a comparable teacher prep program OR have 3 years of teaching within the past 7 years. Kindly note that teachers who completed traditional out-of-state teacher prep programs but who did not obtain that state's teaching certificate must pass all of the comparable NYS certification exams up front to be eligible to apply for a full Initial based on reciprocity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overview of NYS teaching certificate types

- **BE VERY CAUTIOUS WHEN HIRING THOSE TEACHERS** who completed an out-of-state alternative program such as TFA AND have a Level 2 out-of-state certificate but only have two years of teaching in that state. A TFA alum who completed a full master’s in education such as at the University of Arizona and received a level 2 Arizona certificate upon completion of the program should simply apply for the (Conditional) Initial comparable certificate based on reciprocity as if s/he completed a traditional out-of-state program. Those who have a Level 2 out-of-state certificate but completed an alternative program such as TFA that **did not culminate** in a full master’s degree such as a district-based PD program, or a smattering of college coursework will **NOT** be eligible for a (Conditional) Initial based on reciprocity UNLESS they have **3 years of teaching in that state and state certificates covering all three years**.

- Please be advised that many out-of-state teachers who completed alternative teaching programs in a secondary subject and possess a Level 2 certificate in the specific subject such as secondary math will **not** be eligible to apply for the comparable NYS certificate in the secondary subject unless the person has completed 24-30 credits in that subject on the undergraduate or graduate level. NYS does **NOT** accept PRAXIS results nor certificate endorsements from other states.
# Overview of NYS teaching certificate types – advanced level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advanced Level</strong> - All charter school teachers must have state and federal fp clearance on TEACH</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Master’s degree, 3 years of full time teaching, passed all New York State exams, completed both workshops. Will require a specific # of professional development hours to maintain the certificate. Master’s in the subject area OR in another area that COULD lead to an additional SED certificate are acceptable. A master’s degree in curriculum and instruction is also acceptable. If the master’s is in a totally unrelated area such as sociology, then 12 graduate credits in the subject of the teaching certificate will be required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Still issued to teachers who have provisional certs and to school social workers, guidance counselors, school psychologists.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Certification Pathways

- Approved teacher preparation program
- Individual evaluation
  - Cannot apply for Childhood Ed 1-6 as a first certificate via this pathway
- Individual evaluation for additional certificates
- National Board Certification – exempt from NYS certification exams for the comparable NYS certificate
- Interstate reciprocity
  - Conditional Initial - 2 years for NYS exams
  - Full reciprocity – includes NYS exams
What does it mean if a teacher has a certificate from another state?

• A teacher who has an out-of-state certificate is UNCERTIFIED to teach in New York until s/he applies for comparable NYS certification

• Teachers with out-of-state certificates should apply on TEACH for the comparable NYS certificate via the Interstate Reciprocity pathway
  – No guarantee that the teacher will be eligible for New York State certification
  – Many candidates who received out-of-state certification through an alternative certification program ARE NOT ELIGIBLE for New York State reciprocity
Common Hiring Problems

• Hiring a teacher who
  – Is from out of state but ineligible for reciprocity or;
  – Has completed a NYC DOE Trans B program but never completed the ATS-W and will not be recommended for certification at time of hire; or
  – Has an expired certificate and has applied for a time extension but still needs to take and pass the applicable CST before the extension will be issued; or
  – Has an expired certificate, still has not met the full requirements and even if granted a time extension, that would have also expired.
NCLB HIGHLY QUALIFIED
What is NCLB Highly Qualified?

• The Federal government gives enormous amounts of money to states under various Title programs – Title I, Title II, etc.

• In 2001, Congress passed the “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB) which requires states to meet certain academic standards to continue receiving these federal funds

• One key requirement is that teachers of NCLB core subjects must prove that they are “highly qualified” for their assignments
What are the NCLB core subjects?

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<th>NCLB Core Academic Subject Areas</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Languages other than English (LOTE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The arts: art, dance, music, theatre (including public speaking), drama</td>
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</table>
How does a school prove a teacher is “highly qualified” for an assignment?

USE THE NCLB CHECKLIST

• The easy way
  – The teacher is certified in the subject and grade level of his/her assignment

• The more complicated way
  – Teacher is certified in something other than assignment and must demonstrate HQ status depending on level of the assignment and “newness’ to teaching.
  – Teacher is uncertified
  – Teacher cannot prove HQ status via applicable exam or having majored in the subject so needs to use the HOUSSE to document 100 points on the rubric
NCLB CHECKLIST

• Federal guidelines stipulate that the school must maintain HQ records on file for **six years** after the teacher is no longer employed in the school
• The NCLB checklist is portable within New York State
• The burden of proof is on the SCHOOL
• Charter school leaders/ops directors should check the TEACH database to verify the information
• **MAKE SURE THAT YOU REVIEW THE BEDS SURVEYS BEFORE SUBMISSION TO THE SED AND ENSURE THAT THIS INFORMATION CORRELATES WITH THE NCLB CHECKLIST**
Using the NCLB Checklist

NEWNESS TO THE PROFESSION

New

• Certified: Inside the first year following the effective date of the teacher’s first ever (in-state or out-of-state) teaching certificate of first year of employment in a public school
• Uncertified: Inside the first year that s/he meets the certification exemption
Using the NCLB Checklist (cont.)

Not new

- Certified: After the first year following the effective date of the teacher’s first ever teaching certificate OR after the first year of full-time equivalent teaching in a public school
- Uncertified: After the first year following the date that s/he has met one of the certification exemption criteria
What about UNCERTIFIED teachers?

• A school must still prove that any uncertified teachers are NCLB Highly Qualified for their core subject assignment(s)

• However, if a school has ONE teacher over the allowable number of uncertified teachers
  – New York State will not consider the teacher to be Highly Qualified
  – School is no longer 100% Highly Qualified
  – School is out of compliance!!!
CANDIDATE PROFILES
Typical certification status of candidates

1. New York State certified
   a. in a subject that is the same as his / her assignment
   b. in a different subject from his / her assignment
2. Certified in a state other than New York and has completed a *traditional teacher preparation* program
3. Certified in a state other than New York and has completed an *alternative teacher certification* program
4. Uncertified
Candidate 1: New York State certified

- Always check Entry Level certificates for EXPIRATION date
- Candidate 1a: Certified and teaching in same subject/grade level
  - Good to go!
- Candidate 1b: Certified and teaching in different subject/grade level
  - Remember: charter schools are allowed to have certified teachers teaching out of their certification subject/grade level
  - Teacher must be Highly Qualified for his/her teaching assignment(s) if teaching an NCLB core subject
Candidates 2 and 3: Out-of-state candidates

• Candidate can apply via interstate reciprocity for a comparable New York State teaching certificate
  – HOWEVER reciprocity is not guaranteed
  – SED is not consistent in granting reciprocity
  – If a candidate has an out-of-state certificate but is found to be ineligible for a New York State certificate, s/he is UNCERTIFIED!

• How to determine if a candidate is likely to get certification:
  – Copy of out-of-state certificate(s) – LOOK AT DATES!
  – All transcripts: undergraduate and graduate (if applicable)
  – Resume showing number of years of teaching experience – check with references that this data is correct
Determining the likelihood that a candidate will be able to get interstate reciprocity

- Recognized certificate
- Educational background
  - Alternative certification
  - Traditional teacher prep program
  - Years and dates of teaching
  - Subject competency from coursework
Is the candidate’s out-of-state certificate recognized by New York State?

• There are two basic “levels” of out-of-state certificates
  – Level I – generally not acceptable for reciprocity
  – Level II – acceptable for reciprocity

• “Acceptable Certificates from Other States”: Use to look up if NY state will accept the out-of-state certificate for reciprocity

• If the certificate does not appear in the directory, check the expiration date of the certificate: no expiration date or generally 5 years are usually acceptable by New York State
What is the out-of-state candidate’s educational background?

• There are two types of teacher preparation programs

**Traditional**
- Can be undergraduate or graduate program in teacher education leading to state certification in a specific subject and grade level
- Includes student teaching

**Alternative**
- May or may not be affiliated with a college
- Often teach full-time while in program in lieu of student-teaching
- May or may not lead to a master’s degree in that state
How can I tell if a teacher completed an out-of-state traditional teacher prep program?

• Look at the transcript
  – Does it say that the teacher “completed an NCATE/state-approved program leading to certification...”
  – Is student-teaching listed on the transcript?
  – Did the individual major in education?

• If the candidate’s certificate is recognized and the educational background is traditional teacher prep
  ✓ New York is likely to grant reciprocity
How about candidates who complete out-of-state alternative certification programs?

Two more factors for reciprocity

1. Number of years teaching under the certificate
   – New York requires 3 years of teaching experience (I believe that 2 of these years must be in the subject and level of the NYS certificate sought)
   – This is often a deal breaker for TFA candidates, since TFA is only 2 years

2. Did the candidate major or do significant course work in the certificate subject?
   – New York does not accept other states’ subject matter tests
Candidate 4: The greatest teacher in the world... but uncertified

#1 - Make sure that school does not have too many uncertified teachers

#2 - Make sure that teacher meets one of the certification exemption criteria

#3 – Make sure that the teacher is HQ for her/his assignment

#4 - Move uncertified teachers to certification via individual evaluation OR NYC Trans B program OR completion of an approved New York State teacher prep master’s degree program
#1 – Do not hire too many uncertified teachers

• Charter schools are only allowed to hire a very small number of uncertified teachers
  – No school can have more than 5 teachers or 30% of the teaching staff uncertified, whichever number is lower

• The count of uncertified teachers is in October, when the BEDS surveys are completed

• A teacher who has applied for certification is UNCERTIFIED until certification has been issued and appears on the TEACH system with an effective date
#2 – The uncertified teacher exemption

- Uncertified teachers MUST meet one of the four exemptions to be able to work at a charter school:
  - Three years prior teaching experience; or
  - Tenure or tenure track college faculty; or
  - Two years TFA experience; or
  - Exceptional experience - possesses exceptional business, professional, artistic, athletic or military experience
#3 – Uncertified teachers must still be HQ for their assignment

- If the teacher is teaching an NCLB core subject, s/he must be HQ for all teaching assignments

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- Use the applicable NCLB checklist to verify that the teacher is HQ
#4 – Rapidly move uncertified teachers to certification

- The ability to hire uncertified teachers is precious – push uncertified teachers to become certified.
- SED’s Individual Evaluation pathway is how teachers can become certified without going through a teacher prep or alternative certification program.
- A candidate’s background can stop them from certification through the Individual Evaluation pathway. **Avoid teachers who:**
  - Would want their first certificate in Childhood Education, grades 1-6 via individual evaluation. SED does NOT permit this.
  - Have a GPA less than 2.5
  - Have foreign documents (a very lengthy SED evaluation process)
#4 – Rapidly move uncertified teachers to certification (cont.)

- The Charter Center offers online monthly workshops to help teachers get certification.
- These workshops are only available for teachers employed in charter schools that participate in the Center’s Certification Services program which runs from July 1st through June 30th.
- New schools receive these services AT NO COST for their first year of operation.
- **School leaders/Ops/HR**: Forward this link to your teachers seeking New York State teaching certification.

[www.nyccharterschools.org/certification](http://www.nyccharterschools.org/certification)
FINGERPRINTING

- All employees must be fingerprinted and cleared for employment
- Employees must apply and pay the $94.25 application fee on TEACH
- Founders must follow the guidelines established by their authorizer
- Provide a copy of the Center’s Fingerprint Flowchart to staff so they can determine the appropriate pathway.
- Volunteers cannot be printed at the Center inasmuch as the SED is responsible for clearance for school employees.
Useful Resources

• Pre-hire checklist for teachers
• Hire Right: Pre-Hire flowchart
• NCLB Checklists and HOUSSE rubrics
• Administrative TEACH account form
• Fingerprint Flowchart for Charter School Staff

All of the above documents will be available on the Center’s website
Fingerprint Instructions for Charter School Staff

FOR DISTRIBUTION TO ALL NEW HIRES

Never Fingerprinted

REGISTER on TEACH website:
http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/teach/
PAY the Fingerprint Application fee of $94.25 using a credit card.
For ANY problems with this registration or payment, call TEACH at 518-486-6041

PAY $20 to the Charter Center using a credit card at:
www.nyccharterschools.org/fingerprinting
You do not need a PayPal account. Print your payment confirmation.

Email your preferred appointment time (plus two alternatives) to sphelps@nyccharterschools.org, using the subject line “Fingerprinting Appointment”. Appointments run in 10-minute intervals on most Wednesdays between 9am and 4:30pm, with a break from 12:30pm to 1pm. At your scheduled time, bring print-outs of your TWO payment confirmations to:
New York City Charter School Center
111 Broadway Suite 604
New York, NY 10006

After being printed, your school can check your clearance on TEACH in 24-48 hours.

Previously Fingerprinted?

If you are already cleared by DOE or BOE but not yet in TEACH...
Complete OSPRA 104 Form
www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/pdf/ospra104.pdf
Mail or FAX to the address given on the form.
Charter School can request clearance on TEACH in 2-4 weeks.

If you were fingerprinted by any agency other than NYCDOE/BOE or NYSED, your records are not transferrable and you must be printed again. Refer to “Never Fingerprinted”

Clearance is immediate if person has no fingerprinting issues.

If you are already cleared by SED and in TEACH...
Charter School uses TEACH access to request clearance.

Some types of employees, including volunteers, should NEVER have their backgrounds or fingerprints handled by the Charter Center or the state.

Read the details at:
www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/ospra/fingerprintingcharts.html
Useful Resources: Links

• New York State Certification
  [www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert](http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert)
• New York State Teacher Certification Exams
  [www.nystce.nesinc.com](http://www.nystce.nesinc.com)
• Commonly Used Online Workshops – Child Abuse Identification, Violence Prevention and Autism (Students with Disabilities titles)
  [www.workshopsexpress.com](http://www.workshopsexpress.com)
  [www.laboratoryconsultationservices.com](http://www.laboratoryconsultationservices.com)
• NYC Charter School Center
  [www.nyccharterschools.org](http://www.nyccharterschools.org)
• List of acceptable out-of-state certificates
Useful Resources: Links

• Updated NCLB Fact Sheet

• Everything you need to know about NYS certification and some things you don’t need to know
  http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/topics_az.html

• Guide to “Who Must Be Fingerprinted”
  www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/ospra/fingerprintingcharts.html
HOT OFF THE PRESS FROM THE NYSED!

• The NYSED has established a new certificate title – Teachers of Students with Disabilities, grades 7-12 Generalist which is replacing the SWD 5-9 Generalist.

• There will be a Multi-Subject 7-12 Content Specialty Test but it is currently in development so applicants who apply before this CST is available will be exempt.

• The SED is entering a transition period between current certification and the development of new exams.

• Interested individuals may view the requirements on TEACH in “Search Certification Requirements” via the following link:
  http://eservices.nysed.gov/teach/certhelp/CertRequirementHelp.do