



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Series 2011-2012
Circular Letter: C-8

TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Stefan Pryor
Commissioner of Education

DATE: May 7, 2012

SUBJECT: Certification Endorsement for School Marriage and Family Therapists

In accordance with Section 10-145d (h) of the Connecticut General Statutes, the State Board of Education adopted regulations for the certification of marriage and family therapists employed by local or regional boards of education. These regulations can be found in Sections 10-145d-566a through 566f, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (Regulations), and were effective September 9, 2008. We have enclosed a copy of these regulations for your information. This letter is being sent to clarify the permissible responsibilities for therapists who hold this endorsement.

Requirement for the School Marriage and Family Therapist Endorsement:

Provision of services by the holder of the certificate for school marriage and family therapist will be determined by the school building administrator and in consultation with the planning and placement team, as defined in Section 10-76a-1 of the Regulations, or in accordance with alternative procedures and programs (e.g., student assistance team, child study team, etc.) before a child is referred to a planning and placement team, as described in Section 10-76d-7 of the Regulations.

The intention of the above paragraph is to identify the process used for a building administrator to determine the provision of services to a child by a holder of the school marriage and family therapist certificate. The school administrator consults with those individuals who are appropriate to serve on a planning and placement team as defined by Section 10-76a-1, such as a school psychologist or school guidance counselor, to aide in this determination. This determination about provision of services should occur before children are referred to a planning and placement team.

As provided under Section 10-145d-566b of the Regulations, this endorsement is required when anyone is serving in the employ of a board of education and not providing services under an external contract. Section 10-145d-566c of the Regulations provides for individual or small-

group counseling services to students, families or parents/guardians in order to support the academic or behavioral functioning of the student. Such therapists are authorized to provide direct services to students and are not limited to providing services only to parents and guardians.

Supplanting of Services by School Social Workers, School Counselors or School Psychologists:

If your school board creates a position that is unique and specifically designed for the role of school marriage and family therapist, your human resource director and/or special education directors should ensure that such job description does not overlap or supplant services currently covered under those provided by school social workers, school counselors or school psychologists. Additionally, marriage and family therapists should not be hired into school social workers' or school guidance counselors' positions unless they hold appropriate certification in these areas as determined by the Department.

If you have questions regarding the certification requirements for this endorsement, feel free to contact Georgette Nemr, Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification, at 860-713-6716. If you have questions regarding the guidelines for differentiating roles between the school marriage and family therapist and other special service personnel, please contact Scott Newgass, Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, at 860-807-2044.

SP:nbn

cc: Marion H. Martinez, CSDE, Associate Commissioner
Scott Newgass, CSDE, Education Consultant

Enclosure

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**Concerning State Educator Certificates for
School Marriage and Family Therapist**

Section 1. The Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies are amended by adding new sections 10-145d-566a to 10-145d-566f, inclusive, as follows:

(NEW) Sec. 10-145d-566a. Applicable Provisions under Regulations Concerning State Educator Certificates, Permits and Authorizations

For purposes of sections 10-145d-566b to 10-145d-566f, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, the definitions, general conditions, code of professional responsibility, types of certificates, special authorizations, reissuance of certificates, and the appeal process provisions as described in Part I, Part II, Part III, Part IV, Part V, and Part XVII of sections 10-145d-400 to 10-145d-619, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies shall apply.

(NEW) Sec. 10-145d-566b. When required

This endorsement for school marriage and family therapist shall be required for anyone serving in the employ of a board of education as a school marriage and family therapist. Provision of services by the holder of this certificate for school marriage and family therapist will be determined by the school building administrator and in consultation with the planning and placement team, as defined in Section 10-76a-1 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, or in accordance with alternative procedures and programs, e.g., student assistance team, child study team, etc., before a child is referred to a planning and placement team as described in Section 10-76d-7 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. A licensed marital and family therapist providing services to a board of education through a personal services contract and not as an employee of the board of education shall not be required to hold a valid certificate.

(NEW) Sec. 10-145d-566c. Validity of certificate

This certificate for school marriage and family therapist authorizes the holder to provide services to families, parents and guardians in order to support the academic or behavioral functioning of the student. The holder of this certificate for school marriage and family therapist shall not be authorized to teach unless the person holds an appropriate teaching endorsement.

(NEW) Sec. 10-145d-566d. Initial educator certificate requirements

To receive an initial educator certificate to serve as a school marriage and family therapist, the applicant shall meet the following requirements:

- (a) Holds a bachelor's degree from an approved institution;
- (b) Holds a master's degree from an approved institution with a planned program in marriage and family therapy accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE);
- (c) Has successfully met Praxis I requirements;

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- (d) Holds a valid license from the Connecticut Department of Public Health pursuant to Section 20-195c of the Connecticut General Statutes to practice marriage and family therapy;
- (e) Has completed graduate coursework in the following areas:
 - (1) Child and adolescent development;
 - (2) Learning theories;
 - (3) School-based systems theory;
 - (4) Federal and state education laws including, but not limited to, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Americans with Disabilities Act Section 504, professional ethics and code of professional responsibility for educators, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and statutory requirements for mandated reporting, suspensions and expulsions, and school and district accountability; and
 - (5) 300 hours of school-based marriage and family therapy practicum jointly supervised by faculty of a program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) and a special service staff member of a board of education;
- (f) Has completed a course of study in special education comprised of not fewer than 36 clock hours, which shall include study in understanding the growth and development of exceptional children, including handicapped and gifted and talented children and children who may require special education, and methods for identifying, planning for and working effectively with special-needs children in the regular classroom.

(NEW) Sec. 10-145d-566e. Provisional educator certificate requirements

To receive a provisional educator certificate for school marriage and family therapist, an applicant shall present evidence of meeting the preparation and eligibility requirements for an initial educator certificate, and evidence of having completed the following:

- (a) 10 school months of successful service under the initial educator certificate or interim educator certificate; or
- (b) Within 10 years prior to application, at least 30 school months of successful service as a school marriage and family therapist in the employ of a public school in another state, approved nonpublic school in Connecticut or nonpublic school approved by the appropriate governing body in another state.

(NEW) Sec. 10-145d-566f. Professional educator certificate requirements

To receive a professional educator certificate for school marriage and family therapist, an applicant shall present evidence of having completed 30 school months of successful service under a provisional educator certificate or interim provisional educator certificate.

Effective Date: Upon filing with the Secretary of State.

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: To adopt regulations, as required by Section 10-145d(h) of the 2008 Supplement to the General Statutes, for the certification of marriage and family therapists employed by boards of education.