



CALIFORNIA

CERTIFICATION

Teachers in California are certified by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC). If candidates have completed a teacher preparation program in California, they must secure formal recommendation from the college or university where they completed the program. Specific program requirements are set by individual commission-accredited institutions in California. The state has a two-tier certification structure. The five-year preliminary credential is issued after a candidate meets the basic licensing requirements. A professional clear credential is issued after all credentialing requirements have been met. The following sequences of requirements must be met in order to become licensed.

Elementary

The requirements for a five-year Preliminary Teaching Credential include

- ❖ bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited college or university;
- ❖ complete a multiple subject teacher preparation program including student teaching, with a minimum grade of "C" and obtain the formal recommendation for credential;
- ❖ pass the CBEST (California Basic Educational Skills Test);
- ❖ complete the Developing English Language Skills, including reading requirement (specific course);
- ❖ pass the RICA (Reading Instruction Competence Assessment);
- ❖ complete two semester units on the U.S. Constitution or pass an exam given by a regionally accredited community college, college, or university;
- ❖ verify subject-matter competence by passing the Praxis exam or by completing a commission-approved liberal arts subject-matter program or its equivalent; and:

- ❖ complete computer education course work.

A Professional Clear Teaching Credential is valid for five years and may be renewed once the teacher completes professional growth and service requirements. It includes the Preliminary requirements and the following requirements:

- ❖ course on health education;
- ❖ course work on special education;
- ❖ advanced computer education; and
- ❖ a fifth year of study (30 semester hours beyond bachelor's degree) and recommendation of a commission-accredited college or university.

Single Subject, Standard Secondary, and Special Secondary Credentials

Holders of a single subject credential are authorized to teach the specific subject in departmentalized classes in middle and high schools. They can also be assigned to teach this subject in any grade, K–12. A single subject credential is available in social science. The following sequence of requirements must be met in order to become licensed.

The requirements for a five-year Preliminary Teaching Credential include:

- ❖ bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited college or university;
- ❖ complete a single subject teacher preparation program including student teaching, with a minimum grade of "C" and obtain the formal recommendation for credential;
- ❖ pass the CBEST (California Basic Educational Skills Test);
- ❖ complete the Developing English Language Skills, including reading requirement (specific course);
- ❖ pass the RICA (Reading Instruction Competence Assessment);
- ❖ complete two semester units on the U.S. Constitution or pass an exam given by a regionally accredited community college, college, or university;
- ❖ verify subject-matter competence by passing the Praxis exam or by completing a commission-approved single subject-matter program or its equivalent; and
- ❖ complete computer education course work.

A Professional Clear Teaching Credential is valid for five years and may be renewed once the teacher completes professional growth and service requirements. It includes the Preliminary requirements and the following requirements:

- ❖ course on health education;
- ❖ course work on special education;
- ❖ advanced computer education; and
- ❖ a fifth year of study (30 semester hours beyond bachelor's degree) and recommendation of a commission-accredited college or university.

Candidates must also satisfy one of the following requirements:

Option 1:

- ❖ Twenty semester units (or 10 upper-division semester units) of non-remedial course work in the subject. Twenty semester units are required if a combination of upper- and lower-division units are completed (page 12 of the teacher standards says 30 units of core course work are required with 15 units of course work providing breadth and perspective to supplement the core);
- ❖ the “introductory” subjects require at least one course in each of the specified areas listed—the balance of the 10 or 20 units may be in any course within the subject category;
- ❖ a grade of “C” or higher is required in every course used to meet this requirement;
- ❖ education and education methodology classes and courses outside the subject area requested will not be counted unless the applicant can get a letter from the chair of the subject area department stating that the course is equivalent to one offered by that department; and
- ❖ non-remedial courses are those which are applicable to a bachelor’s degree or a higher degree.

Option 2:

- ❖ a collegiate major from a regionally accredited college or university in a subject directly related to the subject to be listed.

To obtain credentialing in a subject, the teacher must verify at least one course in each of the areas listed under that subject. Introductory social science includes United States history, California history, world history, geography, United States government, and economics. It appears that beginning in January 2003 candidates will be required to demonstrate subject-matter competence for Single and Multiple Subject Teaching Credentials by passing the CSET (California Subject Examination for Teachers). This examination is aligned with the subject matter in California’s K–12 student content and skills standards.

STANDARDS

Standards for Teachers

Specific content standards that stand alone for teachers are being revised and will be aligned with the content standards for students. The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing issues credentials and certificates based on its Standards for Educator Preparation and Standards for Educator Competence. These standards represent the level of quality and effectiveness that the state expects its teachers to demonstrate after completing the state-approved preparation programs. The commission reviews educator preparation programs in the state to ensure that these programs comply with the standards. Standards exist in California for subject matter preparation for elementary teaching and for social science teacher preparation.

The social science teacher preparation standards provide an overview of the requirements for a commission-approved teacher education program. The standards are divided into two categories: Curriculum and Content of the Program and Essential Features of Program Quality. The document also includes a section in which specifications are made regarding subject matter knowledge and competence of social science teachers. These specifications are based on knowledge required for two sections of a test: a two-hour knowledge examination and a two-hour performance assessment. The three major parts of the social science competence specifications include:

- ❖ a content outline of the domains of subject-matter knowledge, skills, and abilities that are included in the commission’s standardized assessment;
- ❖ specifications for the knowledge section of the assessment; and
- ❖ specifications for the performance section of the assessment.

Specific content is outlined for

- ❖ world history;
- ❖ United States history;
- ❖ geography;
- ❖ political science;
- ❖ economics; and
- ❖ California history.

The standards for elementary teachers of multiple subjects are provided in a program outline format. Specific knowledge related to history and the social sciences is provided in a list in order to prepare teachers for credentialing examinations.

Standards for Students

The History-Social Science Standards in California were approved in October 1998. When writing the standards, the State of California Academic Standards Commission and the State School Board followed the topics and chronology outlined in the critically acclaimed California History-Social Science Curriculum Framework first adopted in 1987 and renewed after slight revisions in 1997.

California’s standards are organized by grade level. There are no standards in grade 9 (students typically choose an elective that year), and there are two sets of standards in grade 12 (civics and government, and economics). According to the state board’s introduction, the standards “emphasize historical narrative, highlight the roles of significant individuals throughout history, and convey the rights and obligations of citizenship.” A narrative organizes the standards and calls attention to the “story of America as a noble experiment in a constitutional republic.” The standards serve as the basis for statewide assessments, curriculum frameworks, and instructional materials. Teaching methods associated with the standards are developed at the local level.

The California History-Social Science Standards are designed to promote the development of core knowledge and critical thinking. Students should learn to “distinguish the important from the unimportant, to recognize vital connections between the present and the past, and to appreciate universal historical themes

and dilemmas.” The standards are organized into sections for grades K–5, 6–8, and 9–12. At the beginning of each section, “history and social sciences analysis skills” are outlined. In addition to the standards, students are required to demonstrate intellectual, reasoning, reflection, and research skills related to

- ❖ chronological and spatial thinking;
- ❖ research, evidence, and point of view; and
- ❖ historical interpretation.

Knowledge and skills in the standards are designed to increase in complexity from kindergarten through grade 12. In grades K–3 basic concepts of history, geography, civics, and economics are introduced to students. In grade four and thereafter, the four disciplines are woven together in the standards. Specific content at each grade level includes the following.

- ❖ Kindergarten: Learning and Working Together Now and Long Ago
- ❖ Grade One: A Child’s Place in Time and Space
- ❖ Grade Two: People Who Make a Difference
- ❖ Grade Three: Continuity and Change
- ❖ Grade Four: California: A Changing State
- ❖ Grade Five: United States History and Geography: Making a New Nation
- ❖ Grade Six: World History and Geography: Ancient Civilizations
- ❖ Grade Seven: World History and Geography: Medieval and Early Modern Times
- ❖ Grade Eight: United States History and Geography: Growth and Conflict
- ❖ Grade Ten: World History, Culture, and Geography: The Modern World
- ❖ Grade Eleven: United States History and Geography: Continuity and Change in the Twentieth Century
- ❖ Grade Twelve: Principles of American Democracy and Economics

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION/EXIT EXAM

Students in California are required to meet minimal state requirements. Other course work may also be required as determined by the governing board of the school district. In social studies three years comprising four courses are required. These courses include

- ❖ United States history and geography;
- ❖ world history, culture, and geography;
- ❖ a one-semester course in American government and civics; and
- ❖ a one-semester course in economics.

Golden State Examinations (GSE) in California are rigorous tests designed to recognize students who achieve high honors. Students who score at a particular level on the exams are recognized as Golden State Scholars. The Golden State Seal Merit Diploma recognizes students who have mastered the high school curriculum. To qualify, students must achieve high honors, honors, or recognition on at least six of the Golden State Examinations. These exams must include written

composition or reading/literature, U.S. history, a mathematics exam, a science exam, and two other examinations of the student's choice. To be eligible for the Golden State Diploma, students must score a 4 or above on the GSE in U.S. history. The GSE is also offered in economics and government/civics.

Exit Exam

Students in California are required to take the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) in order to graduate from high school. The CAHSEE is aligned to the English-language arts and mathematics content standards. In 2000 the language arts blueprint was aligned with connections in social science, but no specific history/social science test exists. Students take this test in grade 10 and are allowed to repeat the exam until they earn a passing score.

ASSESSMENT

California's STAR Program (Standardized Testing and Reporting) is comprised of three elements: a nationally normed achievement test, the California Standards Tests, and a Spanish-language nationally normed test. According to the California Department of Education's Standards and Assessment Division the STAR Program will undergo major revisions over the next two years. Increasing emphasis will be placed on the standards tests. During the 2001–02 school year California students participated in the Stanford 9 norm-referenced test in grades 2–11. Those students in grades 9–11 were tested in history-social science. Students in grades 9–11 also took the standards based California Standards Test in History-Social Science. California students in grades 4 and 8 participated in the NAEP criterion-referenced exam in U.S. history in 2000. Beginning in 2003, California students will no longer take a norm-referenced social science test. The California Standards Tests in History-Social Science will be the sole testing instrument for history-social science. These tests will be administered in grade 8 (covering the standards for grades 6–8) and grades 10 and 11 (covering the standards for those grades, respectively).