



ILLINOIS

CERTIFICATION

Illinois offers certification for its teachers at the initial, standard, and master level. The following requirements pertain to obtaining an initial certificate.

Elementary Certification

The general requirements for elementary certification in Illinois include a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited university, completion of an approved program in Illinois or a program or certificate comparable in another state, and a passing score on the basic skills and elementary examinations of the Illinois Certification Testing System. Elementary teachers may obtain middle-level endorsements by having 18 hours in the subject and also by meeting the middle grades course requirements.

Middle-Level Endorsement

Teaching in the middle grades requires 18 hours of course work in the main area of one's teaching assignment. If a middle-level instructor is assigned to teach in two areas, the teacher shall meet the 18-hour requirements in one area and have 9 hours in the other instructional area. Relevant course work in middle school philosophy is also required.

Secondary Certification

Secondary certificates enable teachers to teach in grades 6–12 in Illinois. In addition to a bachelor's degree, completion of an approved Illinois program or its equivalent in another state, and passing scores on the basic skills and subject matter knowledge exams of the Illinois Certification Testing System, candidates must have a major specialization of 32 semester hours. The minimum requirements for secondary teachers and specified subject-area teachers for social science include

- ❖ 24 hours in the field, including the semester hours indicated in each subject to be taught:

1. U.S. history—8 hours;
2. civics and political science—8 hours;
3. economics—8 hours;
4. geography—8 hours;
5. sociology—8 hours;
6. world history—8 hours in world history, 5 hours in U.S. history; and
7. anthropology—5 hours.

Every history teacher shall have 16 hours in history.

STANDARDS

Standards for Teachers

Illinois has developed Professional Teaching Standards and Content-Area Standards for its educators. Teacher preparation programs are required to have these standards in effect by July 1, 2003. Illinois has Social Science Content-Area Standards and a specific History Designation. Knowledge indicators and performance indicators are specified for each of the standards. All social science teachers in Illinois are required to demonstrate competency in the core social science standards. In addition to meeting these 29 core standards, teachers must demonstrate competence in at least one of the designation areas (economics, geography, history, political science, psychology, and/or sociology/anthropology). Practitioners who specialize in the teaching of history must demonstrate knowledge and performance competence for the following standards:

- ❖ Standard 1: The competent history teacher understands major trends, key turning points, and the roles of influential individuals and groups in United States history from the colonial era through the growth of the American republic.
- ❖ Standard 2: The competent history teacher understands major trends, key turning points, and the roles of influential individuals and groups in United States history from the Civil War through World War I.
- ❖ Standard 3: The competent history teacher understands major trends, key turning points, and the roles of influential individuals and groups in United States history in the 20th century and beyond.
- ❖ Standard 4: The competent history teacher understands major trends, key turning points, and the roles of influential individuals and groups in world history from prehistory to the Age of Exploration.
- ❖ Standard 5: The competent history teacher understands major trends, key turning points, and the roles of influential individuals and groups in world history from the Age of Exploration to the present.
- ❖ Standard 6: The competent history teacher understands major trends, key turning points, and the roles of influential individuals and groups in the State of Illinois from the colonial era to the present.
- ❖ Standard 7: The competent history teacher understands comparative history.

- ❖ Standard 8: The competent history teacher understands the major interpretations in the field of history.

Standards for Students

The Illinois Learning Standards identify six overarching goals that apply to each of the fields of study taught in Illinois' schools. The six overall goals include

- ❖ applications of learning;
- ❖ solving problems;
- ❖ communicating;
- ❖ using technology;
- ❖ working on teams; and
- ❖ making connections.

In Illinois content appropriate learning standards have been developed in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Physical Development and Health, Fine Arts, and Foreign Languages. The Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science are comprised of five goals that reflect history and the social science disciplines. They relate to the general goals outlined by the state and address specific content in the following areas:

- ❖ Goal 14: political systems;
- ❖ Goal 15: economics;
- ❖ Goal 16: history—understand events, trends, individuals, and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the United States, and other nations, specifically:
 1. apply the skills of historical analysis and interpretation;
 2. understand the development of significant political events;
 3. understand the development of economic systems;
 4. understand Illinois, United States, and world social history; and
 5. understand Illinois, United States, and world environmental history;
- ❖ Goal 17: geography; and
- ❖ Goal 18: social systems.

These five standards guide Illinois students' learning in history across five different grade clusters: early elementary, late elementary, middle/junior high school, early high school, and late high school. After Goal 16a, which focuses on the development of skills related to historical analysis and interpretation, the remaining goals (16b–16e) address the standard pertaining to both U.S. history and world history. These standards provide general examples of what students in Illinois should know and be able to do relative to history.

Illinois has also developed performance descriptors for the Social Science Learning Standards. The performance descriptors are aligned with each of the standards and identify what students should know and be able to do at 10 stages of development. These stages, labeled A through J, encompass the grade levels. The performance descriptors are an indispensable part of the learning standards because they contain much more detailed content information than the goals.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION/EXIT EXAM

Illinois students must take a minimum of 16 units in order to graduate. A minimum of two years of social studies is required. Of these two years, one year must be in United States history or a combined class consisting of United States history and government. Local school districts can make additional requirements.

Exit Exam

No graduation exam is required in Illinois.

ASSESSMENT

Illinois students undergo assessment in social science through two tests: the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) and the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE). Illinois also participates in NAEP testing.

The ISAT is administered in social science to students in grades 4 and 7. The PSAE is administered to students in the 11th grade. Illinois' tests are criterion-referenced and relate to the Illinois Learning Standards. The state provides performance definitions for the social science ISAT test at the 4th and 7th grade level. Definitions explain the qualifications of students who exceed standards, meet standards, fall below standards, or are considered in academic warning. The same definitions have been created for 11th graders taking the PSAE.