



IOWA

CERTIFICATION

Iowa issues three main types of certificates for its teachers: initial, standard, and master. Initial certificates are valid for two years.

Elementary Certification

In general, Iowa teachers are required to complete a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution, an approved teacher preparation program, an approved human relations component, and the requirements for a teaching endorsement. A social sciences endorsement in history for grades K–6 requires

- ❖ the completion of 24 semester hours in history to include at least 9 hours in American history and 9 hours in world history.

A social sciences endorsement in social studies for grades K–6 requires

- ❖ the completion of 24 hours in social studies to include course work from at least three of the following areas: history, sociology, economics, American government, psychology, and geography.

Middle-Level Certification

The Board of Educational Examiners recently adopted a new endorsement that will allow the holder to teach all subjects in grades 5–8 except art, music, industrial arts, physical education, reading, and special education. The new endorsement can be earned by teachers who hold an Iowa license with a K–6 elementary endorsement or a secondary endorsement. In addition to middle school related courses in curriculum instruction and design, specific content courses are required. In social studies an applicant must have completed six hours of course work that includes American history, world history, and geography.

Secondary Certification

No specific information pertaining to secondary licensure has been located. Endorsements in social sciences for grades 7–12 related to history require the following:

- ❖ American history—completion of 24 semester hours in American history or 30 semester hours in the broad area of social sciences to include 15 hours in American history;
- ❖ world history—completion of 24 semester hours in world history or 30 semester hours in the broad area of social sciences to include 15 hours in world history; and
- ❖ social sciences:
 1. Nine hours in world history;
 2. Nine hours in American history;
 3. Nine hours in government;
 4. Six hours in sociology;
 5. Six hours in psychology other than educational psychology;
 6. Six hours in geography; and
 7. Six hours in economics.

STANDARDS

Standards for Teachers

In May 2002 the Iowa State Board of Education adopted the Iowa Teaching Standards and Model Criteria. These standards and supporting criteria are designed to represent knowledge and skills necessary for effective teaching. The second standard requires that teachers demonstrate “competence in content knowledge appropriate to the teaching position.” No specific content standards pertaining to the teaching of history or social studies have been located.

Standards for Students

As a policy the state of Iowa has not established content standards in history or social studies for its K–12 students. Iowa remains committed to local control.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION/EXIT EXAM

In order to graduate from high school in Iowa, students must earn one-half unit in U.S. government and 1 unit in U.S. history. Students must also receive instruction in the government of Iowa. It is important to note that in most areas of study the state regulates learning opportunities that must be made available to students in regard to course work. Individual schools can then set their policy in regard to graduation. In social studies the state does require students to earn credit in specific courses.

Exit Exam

No exit exam is required by the state.

ASSESSMENT

Assessments in Iowa are technically voluntary. However, the No Child Left Behind Act is moving Iowa toward assessment and it will be a de facto requirement. Statutes in Iowa do not currently specify statewide assessment. Iowa has a single accountability system, meaning that each school district can design its own assessment of student achievement in order to meet the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act. It is not practical for most school districts to develop independent assessments, so most districts will use the ITBS (Iowa Test of Basic Skills) for elementary students through the 8th grade or the ITED (Iowa Tests of Educational Development) for high school students. Assessment is required in reading and mathematics and will be required in science by 2006. Social studies is not assessed in Iowa.

