

**Professional Education  
Frequently Asked Questions:  
Implications of TCNJ's Curricular Transformation  
And the NJ Administrative Code Changes  
As of 10/2/06**

Note to students enrolled in the Deaf Education dual certification program:  
Answers that apply to elementary education students would apply to you as well.

1. If I am an Elementary/Psychology major, can I teach a subject area in grades 6-8?

Based on currently available State information, a student who completes a program in Elementary/Psychology or Elementary/Sociology may teach at the K-5 level in any subject. To teach at the 6-8 level, the State has developed middle school specialization certifications for elementary teacher candidates. The middle school specialization areas: Language Arts Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and a single world language. These require 15 earned credits in the subject field and a passing score on the appropriate State test in that content area.

2. If I am an Elementary/Math major, can I teach a subject area in grades 6-8?

Based on currently available State information, a student who completes a program in Elementary education with a content major in Math, History, English, Biology, Art, Music, or Spanish may teach at the K-5 level in any subject, and may take a subject area Praxis exam, apply for, and receive an additional New Jersey endorsement for teaching the content major subject in any grade (K-12).

3. If I am an Elementary/Psychology major, can I teach Psychology in high school?

No. People who teach psychology or sociology in high school are eligible to do so with a social studies certificate. You would need 30 credits in social studies. The State defines the social studies major as: at least 4 history courses, including 1 course in US history and 1 course in European/Western history, and at least 1 course (each) in areas of economics, government/political science, sociology, and study in geography.

4. If I am an Elementary education major, will I have field placements in middle school settings?

All elementary education majors will take a math/science methods course block which will include a middle school field component.

5. If I know I want to teach in a middle school, should I be a secondary education student or an elementary education student?

Some school districts prefer to hire secondary certified teachers to work in their middle schools, while other school districts prefer to hire elementary certified teachers who also hold a single subject area endorsement, or hold a middle school specialization endorsement. In New Jersey, a secondary certificate covers grades K-12 for specific content area. See #1 for an explanation of how an elementary education student could obtain a New Jersey endorsement to teach at the middle school level.

Please note that a NJ endorsement obtained through completion of major courses and a Praxis exam only, does not necessarily transfer to another state. What is accepted by other states is the specific program in which the student is enrolled.

6. If I am an Elementary/Spanish major and I take the Spanish Praxis test, can I teach Spanish in a New Jersey high school?

Yes. You would apply for and receive a K-12 NJ endorsement.

7. Will Elementary/Early Childhood majors receive one or two degrees?

A student earns a single degree for completing a program of study of 128 credits. A student with a double major still earns a single degree. A student with a double major will see two majors listed on his/her transcript. Note: The degree states "Bachelor of Arts," for example; it does not indicate the major.

8. Can I take a Praxis subject exam even if I don't have the 30 credits in that subject?

ETS will allow you to register for, pay for, and take any test you'd like to take. The question is: What can you do with your scores? The state of NJ will not certify you unless you meet all requirements for certification, including a "coherent academic major" (at least 30 credits) in the subject area for which you are seeking certification.

9. If I am an Early Childhood/Psychology or Sociology major, am I only eligible to teach PK-3?

No. You are eligible to be certified and teach any subject in PK-3 & K-5. Your focus will be on early childhood education.

10. If I am an Early Childhood/Math major and I take the Math Praxis, can I teach Math in a New Jersey high school?

Yes. If you pass the Math Praxis, you will receive a K-12 NJ endorsement in Math.

11. What if I want to teach in Pennsylvania or in another state?

When you apply to another state for certification, that state will ask you to have TCNJ's Certification Officer complete and "institutional recommendation form," verifying that you completed an approved program of teacher preparation at TCNJ. 46 states participate in an "Interstate Contract," meaning approved programs are accepted from out-of-state institutions. However, each state sets its own requirements regarding testing. Candidates should research required tests in their certification area in prospective states where they may teach.

12. What do I need to do if I'm a Special Education major?

The new New Jersey Administrative Code requires that Special Education majors also have a content major. Special Education teachers will need to be certified in the subject they wish to teach.

13. What does it mean to be highly qualified as defined by the Federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Legislation?

The essence of the new federal legislation (NCLB) is that all elementary, middle and high school teachers must be “highly qualified” in the subject matter they teach. Upon completion of an Early Childhood/Elementary or Elementary program at TCNJ, candidates are considered **highly qualified in all subjects for grades K-5 (See #1 below)**. The ways for **elementary education candidates to be eligible to teach in middle schools are summarized in #2 below**:

1. Since elementary education certificate holders have already passed the Praxis general knowledge test in order to receive the certification, these candidates are “highly qualified” to teach all subjects, **grades K-5**, and to teach reading, writing, math, and spelling, for *basic skills purposes only*, in grades 6-12.
2. Upon completion of an elementary education program **INCLUDING** an arts/science major (at least 30 credits) in art, biology, English, history, math, music, or Spanish – candidates can pass the appropriate subject matter Praxis exam and then apply directly to the State for NJ endorsement in the subject area. Candidates are then considered “highly qualified” to teach grades **K-12 in the subject area major** (in NJ only) in addition to being able to teach all subjects in grades K-5.