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# REQUIRED PREPARATION IN READING FOR SECONDARY TEACHERS

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## Introduction

In Fall, 1977, a survey was conducted on requirements for secondary teachers in the area of reading instruction. Information from state certifying agencies show a majority of states have some requirements. The results of the survey, when compared to results of two earlier surveys, show increasing interest in secondary reading.

## The Survey

As the Undergraduate Adviser for Secondary English and Reading, I was interested in the nature and extent of required preparation in instruction in reading. Officials responsible for teacher certification in all states and the District of Columbia were sent a questionnaire. The following information was requested: (1) whether or not there were requirements, (2) the number of required hours of course work, (3) the "content" of required courses, and (4) whether or not there was a move to establish requirements, in the event no requirements were in effect. All agencies responded. Six substituted or added statements from their offices which detailed requirements; the rest returned the completed questionnaire.

## Results

Of the 51 agencies, 30 had some kind of requirement, as reported in Table I. Twenty-three required 3 or more hours of course work. Three hours were the minimum required (by 15 states); 12 was the maximum. Seven agencies had an unspecified number of hours. Two agencies required a demonstration of knowledge or competence, but did not require course work.

Twenty-one agencies had requirements for all secondary teachers. Five had requirements only for secondary English teachers; 3, only for Secondary Reading teachers. One state indicated that only some (unspecified) teacher education programs had requirements.

Agencies were asked to indicate which of the following areas of reading were required: (1) content-area (i.e., reading directly related to subject-areas, such as English, Social Studies, Science, and Mathematics); (2) developmental reading (development of general areas of comprehension, vocabulary, and flexibility; not necessarily directly related to subjects); (3) remedial (for students with reading difficulties); and (4) beginning (for students unable to read). Four agencies required coursework which covered all four areas of reading. One state required the first three areas. Four required content-area and developmental reading. Eight required only

content-area reading; one agency, only developmental. Eleven states did not indicate the area of reading.

Twenty-one states had no requirements. Of those, 12 indicated that there was presently a consideration of the possibility of establishing requirements.

#### Conclusions

A study by Estes and Piercey, in 1973, found 17 percent of the states had requirements in reading instruction for secondary teachers. A study by Bader, in 1975, found 35 percent. The present study found 59 percent. The study by Bader found that 55 percent either had, or were considering having, requirements. The present study found that 82 percent had, or were considering having, requirements.

The majority of states with requirements had them for all secondary teachers. A minority limited requirements to secondary English and Reading teachers. The emphasis in course work was on content-area reading.

The results of three surveys show that secondary teachers are expected to be knowledgeable of reading instruction and to apply that knowledge in the context of content-area or subject-matter instruction. During the 1970's increasingly more states have established requirements.

#### REFERENCES

- Bader, A. "Certification Requirements in Reading: A Trend," *Journal of Reading*, vol. 19, 3 (December, 1975), 237-240.
- Estes, T. H. and D. Piercey. "Secondary Reading Requirements Report on the States," *Journal of Reading*, vol. 17, 1 (October, 1973), 20-24.

Table 1  
Secondary Reading Requirements

State	Hours	Notes	State	Hours	Notes
Alabama			Montana		
Alaska	*	Unspecified hours	Nebraska		
Arizona	6		Nevada		
Arkansas			New Hampshire		
California	4	Or by examination	New Jersey	6	
Colorado	*	Unspecified hours	New Mexico	3	6, 1980
Connecticut	3		New York		
Delaware			North Carolina	3	
D.C.	*	Unspecified hours	North Dakota		
Florida	*	One or more courses	Ohio	*	Unspecified hours
Georgia	5	Quarter Hours: Sec. Eng. only	Oklahoma		
Hawaii	*	Some programs	Oregon	3	
Idaho			Pennsylvania	3	
Illinois			Rhode Island		
Indiana	3		South Carolina	3	Sec. Eng. only
Iowa			South Dakota	3	
Kansas			Tennessee		
Kentucky	3	Sec. Eng. only	Texas	3	Sec. Eng. only
Louisiana	6		Utah	*	Competency required
Maine	9	Sec. Reading Teachers only	Vermont	6	Sec. Rdg. Tch. only
Maryland	3		Virginia	12	Sec. Rdg. Tch. only
Massachusetts			Washington		
Michigan			West Virginia	3	
Minnesota			Wisconsin	3	
Mississippi	3		Wyoming		
Missouri	3	Sec. Eng. only			