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## Teacher Certification

The two national organizations primarily concerned with teacher certification are the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification and the National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards. The State Directors are responsible for granting teacher certificates and supervision of teacher education in the states. State Directors, professors of education, administrators, and teachers in elementary and secondary schools attended the recent annual meeting of the National Commission. Members of academic departments in colleges and universities were notably absent, not because they would not have been welcome, but because in recent years they have not been active in teacher certification.

At one session of the State Directors' meeting, papers were presented by representatives of the Modern Language Association, the American Historical Association, and the AAAS. This session was planned to give academic professional organizations an opportunity to submit their views on teacher certification. One member of the audience suggested that it would be helpful if State Directors could appear on programs of meetings of academic organizations when certification was to be discussed. He referred to what he considered an unfortunate situation in his state when teacher certification had been discussed at an Academy of Science meeting without the presence of any state certification officer. National officers of NASDTEC have encouraged the AAAS to seek the appointment of scientists to teacher certification boards in the 48 states. The June meeting indicated full cooperation by State Directors.

The State Directors passed a resolution disagreeing with a recently published statement that one-third of the states authorize the teaching of mathematics in high school by persons with no college preparation in the field. The resolution expresses concern that such a statement be published before pertinent information had been obtained from appropriate professional agencies. It is true that 17 of the 48 states grant a general teaching certificate, without indication of the subjects the recipient is qualified to teach. In some states this certificate is valid for teaching in either elementary or secondary school. The certificate is issued upon recommendation of an approved college or university which does require a teaching major or minor. Even though the certifying agency considers subject-matter preparation an important part of the qualification for general certification, this practice leaves much to the discretion of the superintendent or principal and lends itself to easy misinterpretation by laymen. The issuing of general certificates raises a problem that needs examination.

The National Commission meeting was organized around four problems to be considered by discussion groups, which were directed to formulate goals for the decade ahead. If any aspect of the discussions might have disappointed scientists, it would have been the hesitancy of classroom teachers to speak for the importance of training in subject matter. One of the most effective ways for scientists to advance the view that subject-matter preparation is exceedingly important for teachers is by their voluntary participation in their state teacher-certification commissions, affiliates of the National Commission. Attendance of a considerable number of scientists at the 1957 annual meeting of the National Commission would also be highly desirable.—J. R. MAYOR, *AAAS Science Teaching Improvement Program*.