

law  
the Illinois requiring the examination  
of school teachers as to their qualifications, and providing for the  
granting of official certificates of authority to teach, had its  
origin with Lincoln. In the pioneer days, any person ~~whom~~  
~~whom~~ whom circumstances forced into the business was permitted  
to teach. On Dec. 2, 1840, Lincoln offered the following resolution  
in the Illinois House of Representatives:

"Resolved, That the Committee on Education be instructed to  
enquire into the expediency of providing by law for the examination  
as to the qualification of persons offering themselves as school  
teachers, that no teacher shall receive any part of the ~~school~~  
public school fund who shall not have successfully passed such examina-  
tion, and that they report by bill or otherwise."

A motion to table this resolution was defeated--~~yes 40, nays 40~~.  
Within the ensuing three months the legislature passed ~~the~~ "an act  
making provision for organizing and maintaining common schools"--the  
act which was the foundation of the common school system of Illinois.  
Section 81 of this act, providing for the qualification of teachers,  
embodied Lincoln's idea. This section made it the duty of the school  
trustees in every township "to examine any person proposing to teach  
school in their vicinity in relation to the qualifications of such  
person as a teacher", or they might appoint a board of commissioners

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to conduct the examination; and a certificate of qualifications was to be issued by a majority of the trustees or commissioners. Since ~~the~~ then, of course, all the states have passed laws providing for the examination of teachers. In Illinois, no material change has been made in Lincoln's plan (for this section of the law was very likely drawn by Lincoln), except that the power of examination has been transferred from the trustees or commissioners to the County Superintendent of Schools--an office then unknown.