

TO: University/College Representatives

FROM: Office of Licensure and Credentials and Division of Early Childhood Education

SUBJECT: New Regulations Governing Pre-Service Instruction for Preschool through Grade Three (P-3) Candidates Seeking Alternate Route Certification

Adopted in December 2008, N.J.A.C. 6A:9-11(a)4 states requirements for those seeking a Certificate of Eligibility for Preschool through Grade Three (P-3) certification. The following requirements are in effect as of January 7, 2009:

Effective September 1, 2009, P-3 alternate route candidates must demonstrate knowledge of basic pedagogy skills appropriate to preschool education, including, but not limited to, classroom management, teacher-child interaction, preschool and early elementary curricula, New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards and Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards, and developmentally appropriate assessment through successful completion of a minimum of 24 hours of study offered through a state-approved provider (college or university) or through equivalent coursework as documented on the transcript of a regionally accredited four-year college or university.

These regulations stem from a concerted effort by the department to enhance the quality of alternate route teacher preparation and provide potential teachers with information they may need to determine whether a career in early childhood education is right for them. The pre-service regulations serve to:

- Better inform candidates regarding the regulations governing participation in the program;
- Create a recruitment opportunity for districts;
- Help candidates reflectively evaluate teaching as a career choice;
- Reduce stress and concerns by addressing the challenges common to new teachers (i.e. classroom management, interactions with parents, diversity of students, and curriculum implantation);
- Provide opportunities to observe teaching strategies, e.g., video clips from teachers and principals on the realities of teaching, virtual tour of a model classroom, or actual classroom visits;
- Provide opportunities for directed classroom observations; and
- Prepare candidates to understand the culture of the teaching profession.

In addition to the 24 hour pre-service course, the program should provide the participant with a "clinical" opportunity through structured observations in a school setting. Collaboration with school districts will provide both a real-life experience for the candidate and a potential recruitment tool for the district.

The curriculum for the 24 hour pre-service course will be consistent in content throughout the state to maintain the integrity of the evaluative process for issuance of the Certificate of Eligibility by the Office of Licensure and Credentials on behalf of the State Board of Examiners. The curriculum will be aligned with the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers.

The department will be seeking applications from New Jersey colleges and universities who wish to be approved providers of the P-3 Pre-service Course. Application details will be available on the website soon. If you have questions, please contact Karen Nemeth or Renee Whelan (609) 777-2074.