



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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TO: Chief School Administrators
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Directors, Private Schools for the Disabled
Deans and Directors of Teacher Preparation Programs

FROM: Isaac Bryant, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Student Services

Richard C. Ten Eyck, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Educational Programs and Assessment

DATE: July 8, 2005

SUBJECT: Special Education/Limited Emergency Certificates

As the 2004 – 2005 school year ends and preparation for the new school year begins, we want to update you about teachers in your employ who are working under emergency special education certification. If requested and approved by the county superintendent of schools, emergency special education certification will be renewed for the upcoming academic year. In addition to renewals, the Office of Licensure and Credentials will issue new emergency special education certificates for the upcoming school year if they are requested by the district no later than September 1, 2005.

In an earlier memorandum, these teachers were divided into groups based on the options available to them in completing certification requirements. A brief recap of those groups and the requirements necessary for continued employment when the emergency certificate expires are as follows:

Group A refers to those whose emergency certificates (Teacher of the Handicapped) were requested by district superintendents and issued between January 20 and September 1, 2004. This group also includes emergency certified teachers whose certificates were issued prior to January 20, 2004. The certification options available are:

1. **Candidates with degrees who met the Grade Point Average (GPA) requirement in effect at the time of the issuance of their emergency certificate.** These teachers *were evaluated under the former rules* at N.J.A.C. 6:11-8.3 and are allowed to complete the requirements for the Teacher of the Handicapped outlined in the evaluation completed by the staff of the Office of Licensure and Credentials.
2. **Candidates who did not meet the GPA requirement** must complete a traditional college approved special education program with a 2.75 or higher GPA and be recommended for the certificate by the college.

Group B refers to teacher whose emergency certificates were requested by district superintendents and issued after September 1, 2004. This group is evaluated under the current rules at N.J.A.C. 6A:9-11.3. Any candidate issued a new emergency certificate will fall under one of the three categories listed below.

1. **Holders of instructional certificates of eligibility, certificates of eligibility with advanced standing or standard certificate(s) in the subject field or grade level of the teaching assignment.** These teachers must complete six credits in special education pedagogy for the special education certificate of eligibility to be issued. If the teacher does not hold a certificate of eligibility, certificate of eligibility with advanced standing or standard certificate in the subject field or grade level of the teaching assignment, the teacher must also complete the academic and test requirements for the appropriate instructional endorsement.
2. **Teachers who hold no instructional certificates but meet the GPA requirement.** These candidates must complete the requirements for the appropriate instructional endorsement and six credits in special education pedagogy for the required certificates of eligibility to be issued.
3. **Teachers who hold no instructional certificate and do not meet the GPA requirement of 2.50 or higher for graduates before September 1, 2004 or meet the GPA of 2.75 for graduates September 1, 2004 or later.** These candidates must complete one of the department approved college/university based special education programs which includes the new code requirement for a six-credit orientation component. The entire program must be completed by January 20, 2006 with a GPA of 2.75 or higher for the special education certificate of eligibility to be issued. These candidates must also complete the test and academic requirements for the appropriate instructional endorsement.

To assist the teachers in your district, we are attaching a list of New Jersey colleges and universities that have approved six credit special education modules which meet the study requirement for the special education Certificate of Eligibility. While it is not required that teachers complete the six credits in special education pedagogy through one of these modules, it is beneficial to the teacher because the study in these modules will satisfy six of the 21 – 27 credits in each New Jersey approved special education

program. There is no guarantee that courses taken in other colleges, either in-state or out-of-state, will be accepted in transfer to one of the approved New Jersey programs.

We encourage you to support your teachers in meeting the minimum requirements for continued employment in special education. We share the goal of having well-prepared and highly qualified teachers for all children in New Jersey.

If there are any other questions about the licensing aspects of this issue, please contact Michael Klavon, director, Office of Licensure and Credentials for clarification at 609-292-3787. For questions of clarification regarding the college based programs, please contact Lois Smith, manager of the Bureau of Higher Education and Quality Initiatives at 609-984-4855.

RCT:MKK:specialedemergency7-01-05

Attachment

c: Members, State Board of Education
William L. Librera, Commissioner
Richard Rosenberg
J. Michael Rush
Regional Assistant Commissioners
Assistant Commissioners
County Superintendents
NJ LEE Group
Garden State Coalition of Schools
Jay Doolan
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Erika Leak
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Lois Smith