



## PROCEDURES FOR ASSURING PROPER TEACHER CERTIFICATION AND RESOLVING NON-CERTIFICATION ISSUES

### A Guideline for Administrators

This document is intended to (1) summarize the statutory requirements in law requiring certification of teachers, (2) outline procedures for assuring that all teachers and administrators hold Nebraska certificates valid for the position, and (3) explain the process for preventing or resolving problems that can result if teachers or administrators lack valid certificates.

### PROCEDURES FOR ASSURING PROPER TEACHER CERTIFICATION

#### Statutory Requirements

Nebraska statute § 79-802; “. . . no person shall be employed to teach in any public, private, denominational, or parochial school in this state who does not hold a valid Nebraska certificate or permit issued by the Commissioner of Education legalizing him or her to teach the grade or subjects to which elected. . . .” Further, § 79-804 requires that “**each teacher or administrator shall register his or her certificate with the public, private, denominational, or parochial school in which the teacher or administrator is employed,**” and § 79-805 holds the school board or board of education “personally liable for all public money paid to teachers or administrators who are not qualified. . . .”

#### Procedures for Assuring Certification of Staff Requiring Certificates

The following procedures are required by Nebraska statutes:

1. “**Each teacher or administrator** shall register his or her certificate with the public, private, denominational, or parochial school in which the teacher or administrator is employed. The **superintendent or administrator of the school** shall endorse upon the certificate that it has been registered and the date of registration. No employment of a teacher or administrator shall be valid until the certificate is so registered.” (§ 79-804) The head teacher of a non-aligned nonpublic school shall make such endorsement.
2. On or before September 15 of each year, the **public, private, denominational, and parochial schools** shall file with the State Department of Education NSSRS Staff Reporting in the NDE Portal (formerly the Fall Personnel Report) which shall specify the names of all individuals employed by the school who are required by law to hold a certificate. The **superintendent or administrator of the school** shall transmit within ten days to the State Department of Education the name of the teacher or administrator to be employed, together with the position to which employed, if the teacher or administrator is employed after the submission of the NSSRS Staff Reporting.
3. “The Commissioner of Education shall certify to the school the name of any teacher or administrator who has not been issued a certificate or given evidence of application to the State Department of Education and qualification for a certificate or permit. The teacher or administrator shall not be reimbursed for any services to the school after the receipt of notification by the school.” (§ 79-804).

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### Procedures for Assuring Certification of Staff Requiring Certificates Continued:

4. “The Commissioner of Education shall notify the county treasurer to withhold all school money belonging to any district employing an uncertificated teacher or administrator until the teacher or administrator has obtained a certificate or has been dismissed by the board employing such teacher or administrator.”  
(§ 79-804)
5. **Nonpublic schools** should note that “all private, denominational, and parochial schools in the State of Nebraska, and all teachers employed or giving instruction in schools, shall be subject to and governed by the provisions of the general school laws of the state so far as the same apply to grades, qualifications, and certification of teachers. . . .” (§ 79-1601)

### Procedures for Obtaining Certification

Individual staff members are responsible for obtaining a valid certificate. Staff members are also responsible for registering the certificate with **the school** in which they are employed. Persons seeking certification should contact the Teacher Certification office, Nebraska Department of Education (NDE), for appropriate forms and procedures. (402/471-0739—or access the Teacher Certification home page: [www.education.ne.gov/TCERT](http://www.education.ne.gov/TCERT)).

Typically, an applicant completes an online application and fee payment. The applicant requests that supporting documentation be sent to the Department by email, e-transcript, mail or fax. The completed certificate can take up to six weeks to receive. A valid email address is required, as the completed certificate will be sent electronically.

Applicants are responsible for assuring that the needed documents arrive from external sources (colleges, schools), and should monitor the process of the application.

No action can be taken to issue a certificate if applications are improperly completed, unsigned, lack a supporting document, or lack payment of the non-refundable application fee. Therefore, persons seeking certificates should contact the Teacher Certification Office if they have received no communication regarding the certificate within four weeks after submitting the application.

If fingerprinting is required, the applicant should anticipate a delay in the issuance of the certificate. A conditional permit may, however, be issued to authorize teaching during the delay.

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### RESOLVING NON-CERTIFICATION ISSUES

#### Procedures for Preventing or Resolving Problems for Staff Members Not Holding Valid Certificates

School officials should follow the procedures below to help assure that all appropriate staff members have proper certification:

1. Annually review copies of certificates on file in the district and request updated copies from staff members as they are obtained. Assure that staff members with expiring certificates have initiated the renewal process.
2. Check with staff members in the process of seeking certification or renewal of a previous certificate to assure that the applications are progressing appropriately.
3. Please note: You may verify a current application or a current certificate on the Teacher Certification website:
  - <https://www.education.ne.gov/tcert/>
  - “**Current Application Status**” - verifies the process of an application on file in the Teacher Certification Office
  - “**Current Certificates & HR**” - verifies current certificates
4. Carefully check names and staff ID numbers for accuracy on the Nebraska Student and Staff Record (NSSRS) current Personnel Report. Errors on the reports may cause NDE records to indicate “no certificate” or “invalid certificate,” even when an individual holds a valid certificate. *(The most common error is caused by submitting an incorrect staff ID number, either on the certificate application or in the NSSRS Staff Reporting.)*
5. Report the names of teachers and administrators employed **after September 15** to the Department of Education at the time of contracting. Directions for submitting can be found at:
  - <https://www.education.ne.gov/dataservices/nssrs-resources/>
  - Instructions - Staff - Topic “Staff” 2018-19

#### Consequences of Non-certification on School Approval and Accreditation

Because teacher certification is required by state law, it is a mandatory requirement of both **approval** (Rule 14-004.01A) and **accreditation** (Rule 10-003.01). School systems continuing to use staff members without valid certificates are subject to (1) loss of approval and accreditation, and (2) end of legal operation during the current school year (Rule 14-004.01 and Rule 10-003).

#### Conditions Regarding the Use of Substitute Certificates

State substitute teaching permits may be used every day of the school year. The Local Substitute Teaching Certificate is valid for only 90 days in a school year and is valid only in the school system named on the certificate.

## Further Information and Copies of The Rules:

**For information or answers to non-certification questions, contact the following NDE offices or consult applicable NDE rules:**

Teacher Certification Office  
Nebraska Department of Education  
PO Box 94897  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4987  
Office Staff: (402) 471-0739  
Voice Mail: (402) 471-2496  
FAX: (402) 742-2359  
E-mail: [nde.tcweb@nebraska.gov](mailto:nde.tcweb@nebraska.gov)

Office of Accountability, Accreditation, and Program Approval  
Nebraska Department of Education  
PO Box 94987  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4987  
Phone: (402) 471-2444  
Email: [nde.accreditation@nebraska.gov](mailto:nde.accreditation@nebraska.gov)

**Rule 10** (*Regulations and Procedures for the Accreditation of Schools*) August 1, 2015

**Rule 14** (*Regulations and Procedures for the Legal Operation of Approved Nonpublic Schools*) July 28, 2012

**Rule 21** (*Issuance of Certificates and Permits to Teach, Counsel, Supervise and Administer in Nebraska Schools*) March 24, 2018

Printed copies of rules are not mailed. They may be viewed, printed, or downloaded from the NDE website:

<https://www.education.ne.gov/>

### Issued Jointly by:

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*and*

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