

## **Certification for Educators Prepared by Non Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) Approved Preparation Programs**

### **1. How do I obtain certification if I completed a non PDE approved preparation program?**

There are several routes to obtain certification. Refer to [Out of State Prepared](#) for more information about which route is best for you.

### **2. How do I qualify for certification?**

- Be of good moral character
- Be at least 18 years of age
- Be a United States citizen or a legal permanent resident holding a valid green card
- Hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree
- Meet all testing requirements
- Submit an online application through the [Teacher Information Management System \(TIMS\)](#)
- Submit all required documentation verifying program completion and work experience (if applicable)

### **3. Does Pennsylvania have reciprocity with other states?**

Pennsylvania, most states and U.S. territories have signed an Interstate Certification Agreement to recognize approved programs. Candidates from participating states must meet other Pennsylvania requirements.

### **4. What tests do I need to pass to qualify for certification?**

For more information, refer to your TIMS summary page or [Certification Testing and Scores](#).

### **5. When should I take the tests?**

All required tests must be taken and passed before a certificate can be issued.

### **6. How should I send my test scores to PDE?**

The testing company reports your scores electronically to PDE if you specify PDE as a score recipient when you register for your tests. If you have already taken your tests and did not request PDE as a score recipient, contact the appropriate company.

### **7. Are tests taken in other states acceptable for PA certification?**

Yes, if it is the same test required in Pennsylvania. You must meet the Pennsylvania qualifying score.

### **8. Do I need to submit separate applications to be certified in more than one subject area?**

Yes. A separate TIMS application must be submitted for each subject area.

**9. What documents do I need to submit to complete my application?**

Refer to your TIMS application coversheet and only send the required documents listed.

**10. Do I need to submit clearance documents to PDE?**

No. Submit clearance document to PDE only if you answered "yes" to any of the background questions on your application. Check your TIMS coversheet for a list of required documents.

**11. Should my college send transcripts directly to PDE?**

No. In order to avoid misrouting transcripts within PDE, you must mail all official college sealed transcripts with your TIMS application coversheet.

**12. May I obtain a temporary certificate while my application is under review?**

No. There are no provisions for a temporary certificate while an application is under review. You may not begin teaching until your certificate is issued. To substitute, a public school may ask you to obtain an emergency permit by submitting a permit request through TIMS.

**13. How do I check the status of my application?**

Access your TIMS dashboard and look to the left side of your screen under "Application(s) in Process." Your status will be in the third column. You may also check the status of your application on the public website at [www.teachercertification.pa.gov](http://www.teachercertification.pa.gov).

**14. Once my application has been approved, will my certificate be mailed?**

No. Paper certificates are no longer printed and mailed. You must access your TIMS dashboard to print an unofficial copy. Certification can only be verified through TIMS or the public website at [www.teachercertification.pa.gov](http://www.teachercertification.pa.gov).

**15. Who should I contact if I have questions regarding this process?**

If you have questions regarding the certification process, contact the Bureau of School Leadership and Teacher Quality.