

Appropriate Certification in Pennsylvania

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Appropriate Certification:

Appropriate certification is required of all persons who are assigned as full or part-time professional educators in Pennsylvania public PK-12 entities and who have responsibility for direct interaction with pupils during the school day. This includes instructional, educational specialist, vocational, supervisory, or administrative educators. Licensed/credentialed professionals approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) such as the school social worker and orientation and mobility specialist do not require certification.

Certification Documentation:

Appropriate certification required to qualify an individual for an assignment is determined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) through:

- A position description (job description) that lists specific duties to be performed/fulfilled;
- An organizational chart;
- A course description based on standards and curriculum.

Categories of Courses, Programs, Services:

The following descriptions can be utilized when considering the nature of planned courses, programs and services:

- Traditional courses for which graduation credit is awarded in the same content area as the certificate. For example: Mathematics is a traditional course. Mathematics credit is awarded to the student and a Mathematics certificate is required.
- Non-traditional courses for which the graduation credit is awarded and a certificate exists. For example: Diet and Nutrition is a non-traditional course. Health credit is awarded and a Health or Health and Physical Education certificate is required.

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- Student Service/Programs for which no graduation credit is awarded and a certificate exists to provide such services. For example: Peer Mediation is a student service. No graduation credit is awarded and a School Counselor certificate is required.
- Special Service/Program for which no graduation credit is awarded and no certificate exists. For example: the after-school sports program is a special program for which no graduation credit is awarded and no certificate is required to manage the program.

School Entity Responsibility:

In the event of an audit citing a position assignment as an irregularity, the school entity is responsible for presenting a position description and any additional evidence necessary to the Bureau of School Leadership and Teacher Quality to support the fact that the assignment is appropriate.

Homebound Instruction:

A “homebound instruction” teacher is governed by the same certification regulations as all other teachers. When regularly employed professional staff cannot be assigned to homebound instructions, persons on the substitute roster holding appropriate certification may be used. If no certified person is available, an emergency permit may be issued to qualify a person to teach homebound students.

Extended homebound instruction will require the homebound teacher to receive curricular materials from specific content area teachers who must also provide final grades.

Alternative Education:

Alternative education teachers and service providers are required to be properly certified in accordance with the [2013-15 Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth Program Guidelines](#), page 9, #10.

Additional Local Requirements:

School entities can, as required, establish a specific prerequisite to a certificated position, as well as special training, education, experience, skills or abilities that a person in a stated position must possess to perform the assigned duties.

Certification Determinations:

The Certification and Staffing Policy Guidelines (CSPGs) contain appropriate certifications required in Pennsylvania.

CSPG No. 1

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PDE determines the appropriate certification, license or credential for educational assignments after reviewing planned course content and/or student services being provided.

The Bureau of School Leadership and Teacher Quality in the Pennsylvania Department of Education reserves the right to determine which certificate or license/credential is required to meet position description functions and duties.

Non-Certificated Positions:

Professional certification is not required to assign staff performing services outside the regularly established instructional day, i.e. extra-curricular activities.

Staff assigned to a locally-titled, non-educational school position do not need certification provided the assignment includes no duty or function reserved to a public school certificate, letter of eligibility, or license/credential as determined by PDE.

Examples of non-certificated positions that do not require a license/credential:

- Business manager;
- Director of human resources;
- Director of food service;
- Director of transportation;
- Director of athletics;
- Director of adult education.

Licensed or Credentialed Staff:

PDE determined that some positions do not require certification as they hold state or nationally recognized licenses or credentials. Examples include:

- Occupational therapist;
- Physical therapist;
- Social worker (CSPG #201);
- Orientation and mobility specialist (CSPG #301).

Sample Position Description Format:

- 1. Name of school entity (address, contact persons, phone number, email address)**
- 2. Position title, grade level, organizational information**
- 3. Date the job description is official**
- 4. Job goal or summary**
- 5. Duties and functions**

- List the duties and functions of the position that occur as part of the instructional school day. Provide clear and specific details.
- List **the number of months** the individual will be employed to perform duties (9 of 12 months, 11 of 12 months, etc.) or whether the position is a supplemental contract.
- In certain positions, the individual will perform instructional duties after school hours for school credit (such as credit recovery and alternative education programs). Please make special note of these situations.
- If the position includes duties performed during summer months of the school year, list this information (ESY).

6. Role relationships

- Identify the supervisor to whom this person reports.
- Identify position titles of personnel that this person supervises.
- Provide an organizational chart if necessary.

7. Certification requirements

- Certificate(s) required.
 - This may need to be adjusted through the Bureau's review.
- Additional local requirements, if any.

8. Graduation credit type

- Subject area or elective

This revision supersedes all earlier CSPG's carrying this number and/or addressing this subject. Previous printing dates on this subject: 7/04, 8/04.

Summary of Changes

Date of Revisions	Major Changes to CSPG #1
8/2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reorganization and updates to CSPG • Further clarification of what the school entity should provide to the bureau for a staffing determination • Listing of non-certificated positions and licensed or credentialed staff as approved by the department • The addition of a sample position description format
7/2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combined information from CSPG #80, 80A and 82 into a new CSPG #1, effective 7/2004 • Specific staffing changes were made regarding several titles listed in CSPG #80 that only required any level I or II certificate
1/1987 and 10/1990	Information in current CSPG #1 was found in CSPG #80, 80A and 82
3/1975	Information in current CSPG #1 was found in CSPG #45, 70, 71 and 72