

## Teacher Certification Requirements for Charter Schools

Pennsylvania law requires that at least 75 percent of the professional staff members of a charter school must hold appropriate State certification -24 P.S. § 17-1724-A

The statute specifies the type of professional staff who must be included in the calculation of the requirement of 75 percent.

- **Principals** - 24 P.S. § 11-1109
- **Special Education Teachers/Supervisors** - 22 Pa. Code § 711.4 Supervision, and § 711.5 Personnel; 24 P.S. § 1732-A (c) (2) and § 1749-A (b) (8)
- **School Nurses** (valid/current license in PA as an RN)
  - The Public School Code, Article XVII-A, Section 1732-A, requires charter schools to follow specific provisions of the Public School Code, including Article XIV, School Health.
  - Article XIV, Section 1401(8) of the Public School Code defines a school nurse as a “licensed registered nurse properly certificated...” and Section 1402(a.1) states that “Every child of school age shall be provided with school nurse services...”
- **School Psychologists** - 22 Pa Code § 711.5; 24 P.S. § 1732-A (c) (2) and § 1749-A (b) (8)

Note: The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of a charter school is not deemed a “professional staff member” under 24 P.S. 17-1703-A; therefore, the CEO should not be counted in the analysis of the 75 percent rule. However, a person’s title does not necessarily convey the person’s job duties and responsibilities. For example, if a person listed as CEO actually performs the duties of a principal, that person must hold appropriate State certification as a principal.

In addition, professional certificates must be **active and valid** to be counted toward the required 75 percent certified educators who must be **properly certified for all areas / subjects being taught**, OR hold emergency permits for the proper area/subject being taught to be counted toward the required 75 percent.

In the event of an audit of the school by the Office of the Auditor General or other entity, the calculation that 75 percent of the professional staff of a charter school must hold appropriate state certification should be as follows:

- The charter school will provide a roster of professional staff which identifies the active and valid professional certificate(s) for each individual;
- The number of professional personnel who hold active and valid certificates in the areas/subjects being taught 100 percent of the time shall be counted.
- If 75 percent or more of the professional staff hold active and valid certificates in the areas/subjects they teach, then no additional calculations are needed

- If fewer than 75 percent of the professional staff hold active and valid certificates in the areas/subjects they teach 100 percent of the time, then the percentage for the remaining professional personnel who do not hold active and valid certificates in the areas/subject being taught shall be calculated.
- An aggregate total of partially certified personnel will be added to the number of fully certified staff to determine whether 75 percent of the professional staff holds appropriate State certification.

Please see the example below.

**Calculation Example:**

A charter school has thirty (30) teachers. Twenty-two (22) teachers, or 73 percent, hold active and valid professional certificates for the areas/subjects they teach 100 percent of their time. Three (3) other teachers are only partially properly certified because they work part of the time in areas for which they do not hold appropriate State certification. To determine if the partially properly certified teachers enable the school to reach the requirement of 75 percent or higher, calculate the aggregate percentage for part time people as in the example below.

- There are 40 periods per week in the school.
- Teacher A, certified in Chemistry, teaches Chemistry 35 periods per week (7 periods per day properly certified) and Mathematics 5 periods per week (1 period per day not properly certified)
- Teacher B, also certified in Chemistry, teaches Chemistry 3 periods per week properly certified, and other courses for 37 periods for which the teacher is not properly certified
- Teacher C, certified in English, teaches English 20 periods per week properly certified, and other courses for 20 periods for which the teacher is not properly certified
- Calculate the following:
  - The properly certified periods for partially certified personnel (Teacher A) 35 + (Teacher B) 3 + (Teacher C) 20 = 58
  - Divide the total number of properly certified periods by the total number of periods per week:  $58/40 = 1.45$  additional fully certified “staff”
  - Recalculate the percentage: 22 fully certified + 1.45 partially certified = 23.45 teachers or 78 percent of all professional staff. The school is in compliance.