

“It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge.”

Albert Einstein

CONGRATULATIONS, NEW GRADUATE!

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) is proud to support you as you embark on your career as an educator.



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A MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR

CONGRATULATIONS,
FUTURE EDUCATORS

[A Message to Future Educators from Governor Wolf](#)

PDE's Division of Certification Services is here to support you on your journey as an educator!

OBTAINING CERTIFICATION

1. Before applying for your teaching certificate, make sure you have completed the testing associated with your program. Visit our [Certification Testing webpage](#) for help and information.
2. Once you complete your exam(s), apply for certification in the [Teacher Information Management System \(TIMS\)](#), which contains all your information as an educator.
3. To start, you'll need to [create an account with a username and password in TIMS](#).
4. Need help? We offer [online user guides](#) with step-by-step instructions on how to apply for your certificate within TIMS.
5. Officially submit your application for your teaching certificate!

MAINTAINING CERTIFICATION

Did you know educators must maintain both an **Active** and **Valid** certification to be employed in Pennsylvania public schools? Do you know what the difference is between the two?

Review the [Valid vs. Active chart on the next page and on PDE's website](#) to learn more about these two important certification categories for educators.

Our website features a collection of resources and tools for new educators:
education.pa.gov/certification.
Visit it often for help and support.

Active Certification	Valid Certification
<p>What is Active Certification?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maintain active certification, educators need to engage in continuing education every 5 calendar years from the date your initial certificate was issued, regardless of whether you are working in PA as an educator. • You'll need to earn 6 collegiate credits or 180 hours of professional development (2- or 4-year colleges, Intermediate Unit credits, or in-service hours from approved providers). • PDE will notify you at the 4- and 5-year marks about your active certification status. • Check your date and requirements on the Professional Education Record Management System (PERMS) that houses continuing education records and time periods. • Visit our Answers to FAQs webpage for information on how to maintain Active certification. <p>If not completed, certificate becomes INACTIVE</p>	<p>What is Valid Certification?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your initial, or Level I certificate, is valid for the first six years if you work in a Pennsylvania public school. After that, you must apply to obtain a Level II certificate in order to keep teaching. • Apply and complete the following for Level II Permanent Certificate prior to the completion of 6 service years: 24 credits earned after initial bachelor's degree, 3 years of satisfactory PA service, PDE-Approved Induction Program • Work with your school or district to keep track of your years of employment. • Visit our Level I to Level II webpage for more information on what you need to convert your Level I certification to Level II to ensure your certificate remains Valid. • Find more information on maintaining certification on the back of your certificate. <p>If not completed, certificate becomes LAPSED</p>



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

PDE's certification website is designed to support potential and current educators by providing access to the tools needed to become certified and maintain an [Active](#) and [Valid](#) certificate. We encourage you to bookmark the [Certification homepage](#) and the [TIMS login webpage](#).

There are many other helpful items on [PDE's Certification](#) website, including:

- [Instructional Add-Ons](#)
- [Endorsements](#)
- [Administrative and Supervisory Certification](#)
- [Career and Technical Certification](#)
- [English As a Second Language \(ESL\)](#)
- [Private Academic Certification](#)

Explore everything our website has to offer now and as you navigate the path you will create in your professional journey.

Thank you for working hard to get to this point and for pursuing a career that will change lives every day in Pennsylvania!

*Division of Certification Services
Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education
Pennsylvania Department of Education
education.pa.gov/certification*



Every child deserves a champion:
an adult who will never give up on
them, who understands the power
of connection, and insists that they
become the best that they can
possibly be...

- Rita Pierson



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