

NON-CERTIFIED EDUCATOR DESIGNATION FOR CHARTER SCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS AND CONTRACTED EDUCATIONAL PROVIDERS AND STAFF MEMBERS

As you know, Act 168 of 2014 (effective December 22, 2014) amended the Act of March 10, 1949 (P.L. 30, No.14), known as the “Public School Code of 1949,” to provide for employment history review processes and for monitoring of electronic public safety and criminal justice information for educators. Specifically, Act 168 requires the Department of Education (“Department”) to obtain and monitor public safety and criminal justice information, including, but not limited to, arrest and disposition information, for all educators falling under the jurisdiction of the Professional Standards and Practices Commission (“Commission”) and to use the information for certification and discipline purposes. Act 168 also requires school entities and their contractors to, among other things, inquire whether the Department has received notification of pending criminal charges before hiring an applicant for a position involving direct contact with children. Information concerning pending criminal charges is available in the Teacher Information Management System (“TIMS”).

Effective February 18, 2014, the Commission has jurisdiction over all certificated educators, all educators who serve in charter or cyber charter schools in a position for which certification is waived but who would be required to hold certification in a traditional public school and all contracted educational providers and contracted educational provider staff members who provide direct educational services to students under a contract with a school entity and who would be required to hold certification in a public school. The information concerning pending criminal charges reflected in TIMS has been received by the Department from the Pennsylvania Justice Network (“JNET”), which currently provides the Department with public criminal justice information only for individuals identified in TIMS (individuals who hold public or private academic school certification or who have been assigned a Professional Personnel Identification number (“PPID”).

In order to allow the Department to obtain and monitor information related to charter school staff members and contracted educational providers and staff members and to make that information available to hiring entities as required by Act 168, the Department has created a “Non-Certified Educator Designation” in TIMS. In order to register for the designation, individuals must first register in TIMS and receive a PPID. The registration process is free and only takes a few minutes to complete. No proof documents are required. Detailed registration instructions are attached. Once the registration is reviewed and approved by the Department, registrants will be able to print a copy of the designation as proof of registration.

We ask that as the chief administrator of a charter school or contracted educational provider, you distribute this letter and attachment to all staff members in your employ who do not hold a certificate but who would be required to hold a certificate if they worked in a traditional public school. Staff members who currently hold a certificate and employees serving in positions for which certification is not required in a traditional public school should not register for this designation. **You are responsible for ensuring that all applicable staff members are properly registered.** In addition, as the chief administrator, you should register for the “Non-Certified Educator Designation” if you do not hold a certificate.

If you have any questions about this information or about the process of registering, please contact the Pennsylvania Department of Education’s Office of Chief Counsel at 717-787-5500.