



Pennsylvania
Department of Education

Certifying Officer Training

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Agenda

1. Prerequisite Knowledge
2. Affirmation Basics
3. Affirmation Policy and Tips
4. General Tips



Prerequisite Knowledge

- Logging in to TIMS
- Searching and identifying students
- Selecting affirmations



Pennsylvania
Department of Education

Affirmation Basics



Affirmation

Recommendation for Certification

GET HELP!

Applicant Last Name: [REDACTED] First Name: [REDACTED] Date of Birth: [REDACTED] Gender: [REDACTED] PPID: [REDACTED] SSN: [REDACTED] Contact Phone: [REDACTED] Email Address: [REDACTED] Application ID: [REDACTED] Recommendation Status: Submitted To POE Application Status: Awaiting Evaluation Credential Type: Instructional I Certification Subject Area(s): Chemistry 7-12 (8420)

Certifying official details

Contact Official Information*

First Name: [REDACTED] Last Name: [REDACTED] Contact Phone: [REDACTED] Email Address: [REDACTED] Name*: [REDACTED] Date*: 09/04/2024

I affirm by signing below that I am the appropriate, authorized person, as designated by this institution to provide this affirmation. I understand that this authorized electronic signature has the same legal validity and enforceability as a written signature.*

Recommendation Details

The Applicant has indicated attendance of the following educator preparation program(s) at your institution.

Degree Conferred	Conferred Date	Degree GPA	Program GPA	Educator Preparation Program Attended	Program Type	Attendance Start Date	End/Anticipated Graduation Date
Bachelors	05/2023	3.41	3.41	Instructional I Chemistry 7-12	Masters-Traditional	08/01/2023	05/01/2024

Do you affirm the candidate is known and regarded by the preparing institution as a person of **Good Moral Character** that possesses the personal qualities that warrant issuance of the requested certificate? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

NOTE: Unless you are aware of a specific GMC issue, answer "Yes"
If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Do you affirm the candidate completed the required student teaching or practicum and achieved a satisfactory rating on the PA statewide evaluation form for student professional knowledge and practice? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Do you affirm the candidate's Grade Point Average (GPA) ? *

☐ Yes ☒ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Do you affirm the candidate completed an approved program and do you recommend them for the certificate(s) requested ? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Comments: (Including SAT or ACT scores)

Disclaimer: Please note the following information in regard to your Social Security Number (SSN) DATA REQUIRED BY THE FEDERAL PRIVACY ACT (5 U.S.C. Section 552a note) AUTHORITY: 24 P.S. Section 1224.

5/28/2025

5



Verify Applicant Identifying Information

Applicant Last Name:	[REDACTED]	PPID:	[REDACTED]	Recommendation Status:	Submitted To PDE
First Name:	[REDACTED]	SSN:	[REDACTED]	Application ID:	[REDACTED]
Date of Birth:	[REDACTED]	Contact Phone:	[REDACTED]	Application Status:	Approved
Gender:	[REDACTED]	Email Address:	[REDACTED]	Credential Type:	Instructional I
				Certification Subject Area(s):	Social Studies 7-12 (8875)



Input Certifying Officer Identifying Information

Certifying official details

Contact Official Information*

First Name

Last Name

Contact Phone

Email Address

☒ I affirm by signing below that I am the appropriate, authorized person, as designated by this institution to provide this affirmation. I understand that this authorized electronic signature has the same legal validity and enforceability as a written signature.*

Name*

Date*

02/09/2024



Verify Applicant Education Information

Recommendation Details

The Applicant has indicated attendance of the following educator preparation program(s) at your institution.

Degree Conferred	Conferred Date	Degree GPA	Program GPA	Educator Preparation Program Attended	Program Type	Attendance Start Date	End/Anticipated Graduation Date
Bachelors	05/2022	2.97	2.39	Instructional I Social Studies 7-12	Undergraduate-Traditional	09/01/2017	05/01/2022



Answer Qualifying Metrics

Do you affirm the candidate completed the required student teaching or practicum and achieved a satisfactory rating on the PA statewide evaluation form for student professional knowledge and practice? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Do you affirm the candidate's Grade Point Average (GPA) ? *

☐ Yes ☒ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Program GPA is 2.39

Degree GPA * Program GPA *

Do you affirm the candidate completed an approved program and do you recommend them for the certificate(s) requested ? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Comments: (Including SAT or ACT scores)

Basic Skills Test requirements was met using ACT 136 waiver.



Assess Good Moral Character

Do you affirm the candidate is known and regarded by the preparing institution as a person of **Good Moral Character** that possesses the personal qualities that warrant issuance of the requested certificate? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

NOTE: Unless you are aware of a specific GMC issue, answer "Yes"
If you answer "No", please provide an explanation



Good Moral Character

- **Policy:** The Department of Education is required by law to only issue Pennsylvania certificates to applicants who possess good moral character (24 P.S. § 1209, 22 PA Code § 49.12).
- **Action:** Certifying officers (COs) evaluate the applicant's moral character based on their own knowledge and judgment.
- **Example:** COs could review the applicant's known history of criminal and professional behavior, including adherence to ethical standards.



Utilize Notes

- **Tip:** Ensure accurate dates for degree conferred, program attendance, and completion.
- **Action:** Utilize the notes section to address discrepancies or inconsistencies. Notes can look different based on CO.

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

average (GPA) ? *

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation



Utilize Notes (cont.)

First Name

Contact Phone

Last Name

Email Address

provide this affirmation. I understand that this authorized electronic signature has the same legal validity and enforceability as a written signature.*

Name*

Date*

05/20/2024

Recommendation Details

The Applicant has indicated attendance of the following educator preparation program(s) at your institution.

Degree Conferred	Conferred Date	Degree GPA	Program GPA	Educator Preparation Program Attended	Program Type	Attendance Start Date	End/Anticipated Graduation Date
Masters	05/2024	4.00	4.00	Instructional I Social Studies 7-12	Graduate-Traditional	01/01/2024	05/01/2024

Do you affirm the candidate is known and regarded by the preparing institution as a person of **Good Moral Character** that possesses the personal qualities that warrant issuance of the requested certificate? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

NOTE: Unless you are aware of a specific GMC issue, answer "Yes"

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Do you affirm the candidate completed the required student teaching or practicum and achieved a satisfactory rating on the PA statewide evaluation form for student professional knowledge and practice? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Do you affirm the candidate's Grade Point Average (GPA) ? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

4.00

Do you affirm the candidate completed an approved program and do you recommend them for the certificate(s) requested ? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Comments: (Including SAT or ACT scores)

's "Attendance Start Date" should be: 08/2022



Utilize Notes (cont.)

The Applicant has indicated attendance of the following educator preparation program(s) at your institution.

Degree Conferred	Conferred Date	Degree GPA	Program GPA	Educator Preparation Program Attended	Program Type	Attendance Start Date	End / Anticipated Graduation Date
			4.00	Program Specialist English as a Second Language (ESL) PK-12	Post-baccalaureate-Non-traditional	05/01/2024	08/01/2012

Do you affirm the candidate is known and regarded by the preparing institution as a person of **Good Moral Character** that possesses the personal qualities that warrant issuance of the requested certificate? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

NOTE: Unless you are aware of a specific GMC issue, answer "Yes"
If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Do you affirm the candidate completed the required student teaching or practicum and achieved a satisfactory rating on the PA statewide evaluation form for student professional knowledge and practice? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Do you affirm the candidate's Grade Point Average (GPA) ? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Do you affirm the candidate completed an approved program and do you recommend them for the certificate(s) requested ? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Comments: (Including SAT or ACT scores)



Intern Protocol

- **Tip:** TIMS metrics do not align with intern affirmations.
- **Action:** PDE recommends the following protocol
 - **Q1 GMC:** Confirm the applicant's GMC.
 - **Q2 Student Teaching:** Answer "no" and note "Intern" in the comments section.
 - **Q3 GPA:** Answer what best makes sense for your IHE.
 - **Q4 Program Completion and Recommendation:** Answer "no" but confirm you recommend the applicant for an intern certification in the comments section.



Intern Protocol (cont.)

The Applicant has indicated attendance of the following educator preparation program(s) at your institution.

Degree Conferred	Conferred Date	Degree GPA	Program GPA	Educator Preparation Program Attended	Program Type	Attendance Start Date	End/Anticipated Graduation Date
			4.00	Intern Grades PK-4	Post-baccalaureate-Non-traditional	06/01/2023	06/01/2025

Do you affirm the candidate is known and regarded by the preparing institution as a person of **Good Moral Character** that possesses the personal qualities that warrant issuance of the requested certificate? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

NOTE: Unless you are aware of a specific GMC issue, answer "Yes"

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Do you affirm the candidate completed the required student teaching or practicum and achieved a satisfactory rating on the PA statewide evaluation form for student professional knowledge and practice? *

☐ Yes ☒ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

intern

Do you affirm the candidate's Grade Point Average (GPA) ? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Do you affirm the candidate completed an approved program and do you recommend them for the certificate(s) requested ? *

☐ Yes ☒ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

intern

Comments: (Including SAT or ACT scores)



Endorsement Protocol

- **Tip:** TIMS metrics do not align with endorsement affirmations.
- **Action:** PDE recommends the following protocol
 - **Q1 GMC:** Confirm the applicant's GMC.
 - **Q2 Practicum:** If the endorsement has a practicum requirement, answer "yes" if the applicant completed it. If the endorsement does not have a practicum requirement, mark "no" and note that in the comments.
 - **Q3 GPA:** Affirm whether the GPA provided is correct or not.
 - **Q4 Program Completion and Recommendation:** Affirm that the applicant completed the endorsement program and recommend them for the endorsement



Endorsement Protocol (cont.)

Degree Conferred	Conferred Date	Degree GPA	Program GPA	Educator Preparation Program Attended	Program Type	Attendance Start Date	End/Anticipated Graduation Date
Masters	12/2023	3.85	3.85	Endorsement Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) Ed PK-12	Masters-Traditional	05/01/2022	12/01/2023

Do you affirm the candidate is known and regarded by the preparing institution as a person of **Good Moral Character** that possesses the personal qualities that warrant issuance of the requested certificate? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

NOTE: Unless you are aware of a specific GMC issue, answer "Yes"
If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Do you affirm the candidate completed the required student teaching or practicum and achieved a satisfactory rating on the PA statewide evaluation form for student professional knowledge and practice? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Do you affirm the candidate's Grade Point Average (GPA) ? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Do you affirm the candidate completed an approved program and do you recommend them for the certificate(s) requested ? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Comments: (Including SAT or ACT scores)



TIMS Attestation Changes

Starting in Fall 2025, EPP certification officers will be required to check boxes in TIMS attesting to one of the following:

☐ **The candidate completed at least 50% of their placement in Pennsylvania.**

Check this box when:

- A candidate completes 100% of their 12-week placement in PA; or
- A candidate completes 50% of their 12-week placement in PA and the EPP has submitted the *Out-Of-State/Out-Of-Country Placement Notification Form* to PDE.

☐ **The candidate did not complete at least 50% of their placement in Pennsylvania but had an approved waiver.**

Check this box when:

- A candidate completes 100% of their 12-week placement at an entity outside of PA and the EPP has submitted – and PDE has approved – the *Out-of-State/Out-Of-Country Waiver Form*.



Pennsylvania
Department of Education

Affirmation Policy and Tips



Signature Requirements

- **Tip:** PDE cannot accept program affirmations/recommendations as valid before an applicant has completed their program.
- **Note:** Please do not submit program affirmations/recommendations before a program has been completed.

Signature Requirements (cont.)



Certifying official details

Contact Official Information*

[Redacted]

First Name

[Redacted]

Contact Phone

[Redacted]

Last Name

[Redacted]

Email Address

[Redacted]

☒ I affirm by signing below that I am the appropriate, authorized person, as designated by this institution to provide this affirmation. I understand that this authorized electronic signature has the same legal validity and enforceability as a written signature.*

Name*

[Redacted]

Date*

04/18/2025

Recommendation Details

The Applicant has indicated attendance of the following educator preparation program(s) at your institution.

Degree Conferred	Conferred Date	Degree GPA	Program GPA	Educator Preparation Program Attended	Program Type	Attendance Start Date	End/Anticipated Graduation Date
Masters	04/2025	4.00	4.00	Instructional I Physics 7-12	Masters-Traditional	09/01/2021	05/01/2025

Do you affirm the candidate is known and regarded by the preparing institution as a person of **Good Moral Character** that possesses the personal qualities that warrant issuance of the requested certificate? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

NOTE: Unless you are aware of a specific GMC issue, answer "Yes"

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

[Redacted]

Do you affirm the candidate completed the required student teaching or practicum and achieved a satisfactory rating on the PA statewide evaluation form for student professional knowledge and practice? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

[Redacted]



Response Time

- **Tip:** Log in to TIMS bi-weekly.
- **Tip:** PDE recommends responding to all program affirmations/recommendations as soon as feasible or within four weeks at the latest.
- **Note:** Applies even if you are not able to endorse the applicant.
- **Note:** Applications close if there has been no movement a year from the date the application was opened.



Response Time (cont.)

Recommendation for Certification



Applicant Last Name: [REDACTED]
First Name: [REDACTED]
Date of Birth: [REDACTED]
Gender: [REDACTED]

PPID: [REDACTED]
SSN: [REDACTED]
Contact Phone: [REDACTED]
Email Address: [REDACTED]

Recommendation Status: Submitted To
Application ID: [REDACTED]
Application Status: [REDACTED]
Credential Type: Instructional I
Certification Subject Area(s): Social Studies 7-12 (8875)

Certifying official details

Contact Official Information*

First Name

Last Name

Contact Phone

Email Address

☒ I affirm by signing below that I am the appropriate, authorized person, as designated by this institution to provide this affirmation. I understand that this a signature has the same legal validity and enforceability as a written signature.*

Name*

Date*

09/03/2024

Recommendation Details

The Applicant has indicated attendance of the following educator preparation program(s) at your institution.

Degree Conferred	Conferred Date	Degree GPA	Program GPA	Educator Preparation Program Attended	Program Type	Attendance Start Date	End/Anticipated Graduation
			3.40	Instructional I Social Studies 7-12	Graduate-Traditional	01/01/2023	04/01/2024

Do you affirm the candidate is known and regarded by the preparing institution as a person of **Good Moral Character** that possesses the personal qualities that warrant issuance of the requested certificate? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

NOTE: Unless you are aware of a specific GMC issue, answer "Yes"

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Do you affirm the candidate completed the required student teaching or practicum and achieved a satisfactory rating on the PA statewide evaluation form for student professional knowledge and practice? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Do you affirm the candidate's Grade Point Average (GPA) ? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Do you affirm the candidate completed an approved program and do you recommend them for the certificate(s) requested ? *

☐ Yes ☒ No

If you answer "No", please provide an explanation

Student is missing three required certification courses. He withdrew from them prior to student teaching. He registered for them again after student teaching but withdrew from them a second time.

Comments: (Including SAT or ACT scores)

Student is missing three required certification courses. He withdrew from them prior to student teaching. He registered for them again after student teaching but withdrew from them a second time. Has his M.Ed but will not get certified until he takes those courses.



Confirming Program Requirements

- **Tip:** For applications that are not immediately submitted around the date of program completion, confirm that the completed program meets current requirements.
- **Action:** In the comments section, note that a review of the coursework completed determined that the applicant meets the requirements of the current approved program.
- **PDE Protocol:** Certification Services will reach out to Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs) via the Division of Professional Education and Teacher Quality (PETQ) to verify recommendations for programs completed five or more years ago if no note is present.



Dual Certification Programs

- **Tip:** Confirm program completion for absent dual certification areas in comments if not selected on TIMS.
- **Example:** If an applicant completed a dual program in PK-4 and Special Education PK-12 and only selected PK-4 on their application, a Certifying Officer should note the completion of the Special Education PK-12 program in the notes section of the application and PDE would find that acceptable.



Test Scores and Completing Affirmations

- **Tip:** Passing test scores do not need to be uploaded or matched in TIMS for a Certifying Officer to complete an affirmation/recommendation.
- **Action:** Complete affirmation/recommendation once official results are in hand.



Check Testing Requirements

- **Tip:** Verify current test requirements on the PDE website before referral via the Certification Test Score Requirements table.
- **Policy:** Assessments are periodically updated and replaced with a more current version. Results for assessments that have been discontinued or replaced will be considered if the assessment was taken at the time it was required or up to six months after the effective date of its replacement.
 - A candidate who registered for an assessment prior to the effective date of its replacement is not subject to the six-month window.
 - A candidate who takes the replaced assessment within the six-month window and fails will be given an additional six months. These allowances are subject to the availability of the replaced assessment.
- **Reference:** See [CSPG 21](#) and [Certification Test Score Requirements](#) for updates.



Testing Examples

- **Example 1:** The current testing requirement for the Mathematics 7-12 certification is the (5165) test but Jane Doe would still qualify because she passed the (5161) test in 2015 which was the required test at the time for the Mathematics 7-12 certification.
- **Example 2:** The Social Studies content test (5081) was discontinued for a new test (5581) which became effective 09/01/2024. John Doe registered to take the Social Studies content test (5081) in January 2025 and received a passing score. John Doe's 5081 score would be accepted since it was completed within the six months of the 5581 becoming effective.



Pennsylvania
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General Tips



GPA Scale

- **Tip:** The GPA scale allows applicants to use their teacher preparation program GPA to meet a qualifying score for their required certification tests. This is only usable with the completion of an educator preparation program.
- **Tip:** The GPA Qualifying Scores **may not** be used with:
 - Add-on applications
 - Intern applications
- **Tip:** TIMS will not apply the GPA Scale.
- **Resource:** See [CSPG 21](#) for more information.



Fundamental Subjects Test Requirement

- **Tip:** The Fundamental Subjects test is **not required** for initial dual certifications if one area is PK-4 or Grades 4-8. Also, it is not required following the issuance of an initial certification.
- **Example:** An applicant would still need to take the Fundamental Subjects test if their initial certification is a dual certification in English 7-12 and Special Education PK-12.
- **Resource:** See [Required Testing \(pa.gov\)](https://www.pa.gov/education/testing/required-testing) for more information.



Fundamental Subjects Test Requirement (cont.)

Instructional Certification Subject Area	INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT TEST NAME & CODE	Is Fundamental Subjects Required?†	Qualifying Score 2.80-2.99 GPA	Passing Score	Qualifying Score 3.01-3.25 GPA	Qualifying Score 3.26-3.50 GPA	Qualifying Score 3.51-3.75 GPA	Qualifying Score 3.76-4.0 GPA	Test Registration Link
Agriculture PK-12	Agriculture (5701)	Yes	155	147	146	145	144	141	ET
Art Education PK-12	Art: Content Knowledge (5134)	Yes	164	158	157	155	154	152	ET
Biology 7-12	Biology (5236)		161	154	153	151	150	148	ET
Business-Computer- Information Technology PK- 12	Business Education (5101)	Yes	159	154	153	152	150	149	ET
Chemistry 7-12	Chemistry (5246)		153	146	145	143	142	140	ET
Citizenship Education 7-12	Citizenship Ed: Content Knowledge (5087)		153	148	147	146	144	143	ET
Communications 7-12	Speech Communication (5221)		150	145	144	143	141	140	ET
Computer Science 7-12	Computer Science (5652)		156	149	148	146	145	143	ET
Cooperative Education 7- 12	Cooperative Work Education (5961 or 5962)		650	644	643	641	640	638	Contact Program
Earth and Space Science 7- 12	Earth and Space Sciences (5572)		161	154	153	151	150	148	ET



Testing Reminders for Your Students

- **Tip:** Remind students to verify personal information on tests.
- **Tip:** If a test is taken in PA, the score will automatically be sent to PDE. If a test is taken outside of PA, the applicant should use PDE's testing recipient code: 8033.
- **Note:** Inaccurate or missing social security numbers are one of the most common causes of application processing delays.



Military/Veterans Preference

- **Tip:** Preference is available to active-duty members, veterans, and spouses.
- **Note:** Preference grants the expediting of application processing and a sizable fee reduction.
- See website for documents required for verification:
[Veterans Preference \(pa.gov\)](https://www.pa.gov/veterans-preference)



Multiple Certification Areas

- **Tip:** Inform applicants they can apply for up to three certification areas per Instructional I application.
- **Tip:** Applicants can also apply for up to two areas per Instructional Add-On application.

Review New Credential Application

Credential Type: In-State Instructional I

Application ID: [REDACTED]

Application Status: Approved

Subject Area(s): Grades 4-8 (All subjects 4-6, Science 7-8) (3100) ,
Grades 4-8 (All subjects 4-6, English Language Arts and
Reading 7-8) (3100) , Special Education PK-12 (9231)

Name: [REDACTED]

PPID: [REDACTED]

SSN: [REDACTED]

DOB: [REDACTED]

Educator Status: [REDACTED]

Discipline Status: [REDACTED]

[View Application Summary](#)
[View Applicant Tests On File](#)
[View Applicant's Complete Profile](#)
[View Applicant's History](#)
[Match Test Scores](#)

[View Background Questions History](#)



TIMS Status

- **Incomplete:** Missing payment, applicant education information, etc.
- **Submitted for IHE/LEA Verification:** Waiting on IHE/LEA to confirm information.
- **Pending Additional Documentation:** Applicants were prompted to submit more information.
- **Pending Test Score:** Waiting on a passing test score.
- **Awaiting Evaluation/Ready for Review:** Waiting in queue to be assessed. Additional information might still be required upon review.



Thank you!

For more information, please visit PDE's website at www.education.pa.gov.

- **Certification Services:** ra-edcertquestions@pa.gov
- **Higher Ed Liaisons:** ra-edprepprograms@pa.gov

The mission of the Department of Education is to ensure that every learner has access to a world-class education system that academically prepares children and adults to succeed as productive citizens. Further, the Department seeks to establish a culture that is committed to improving opportunities throughout the commonwealth by ensuring that technical support, resources, and optimal learning environments are available for all students, whether children or adults.