May 11th, 2020

Guidance Regarding COVID-19 Emergency Certification

and the edTPA Requirement

We hope that this memo finds you and your loved ones safe, healthy, and well.

We would like to update you on the NYSED certification protocols. On March 30th, NYSED released a guidance memo (http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/college-university-evaluation/nysed-covid-19-guidance-epp-clinical-experiences-certification-exams.pdf) highlighting the impact of COVID-19 on the NYSED certification requirements. Among the key prose from that memo was the following:

If we find that these test centers remain closed beyond May 1, 2020, the Department will exempt candidates in registered EPPs whose student teaching, leadership experience, or similar clinical experience in spring of 2020 was impacted by COVID-19 from taking their certification exams.

On May 1st, some testing centers did, in fact, open, which triggered new guidance from NYSED on May 4th (http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/covid19-emergency.html). Among the key points highlighted in the memo was the following:

This guidance is an update to the March 30th guidance and is issued in partial response to the reopening of some of the test centers on May 1, 2020. With the opening of test centers on May 1, candidates would be expected to take examinations again according to the March 30th guidance.

As highlighted in the May 4th guidance memo, the potential exemption from the certification examinations had been nullified as all candidates are now required to take the following examinations: Education All Students (EAS), The Content Specialist Test (CST), and the edTPA.

Emergency COVID-19 Certification

In order to provide candidates with a viable pathway towards the procurement of a teaching position in a NYS public school beginning in September, 2020, NYSED has instituted the Emergency COVID-19 certification. Candidates who have completed all NYSED certification requirements—with the exception of the EAS, CST, and/or edTPA--prior to the Fall 2020 semester, will be eligible to apply for the certification. The certification, valid for one year, provides candidates the opportunity to teach in a public school while they complete the
certification exam requirements. The Emergency COVID-19 certified teachers who have not passed the required certification exams within that year may apply for a one-time, one year extension if they are still employed in their teacher positions and receive a recommendation to renew the Emergency COVID-19 certificate from their principal.

Candidates in the following programs are eligible for the certification: Special Education extension, Initial or Professional certificate in classroom teaching service (e.g. Initial or Professional Childhood Education certificate), Initial or Professional certificate in the educational leadership service (School Building Leader, School District Leader), and Transitional B certificate. The full list can be found on NYSED Office of Teaching Initiatives (OTI) website: [http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/covid19-emergency.html](http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/covid19-emergency.html)

On or before September 1st, 2020, candidates are required to do the following: a) Apply for the certificate or extension sought (e.g., Initial Certification in Early Childhood, B-2); b) Apply for the Emergency COVID-19 certificate, under the same certificate area as the certificate or extension sought (e.g., Initial Certification in Early Childhood, B-2).

If candidates do not apply for both of the aforementioned, they will not be eligible for the Emergency COVID-19 certification; they would need to complete all certification requirements (i.e., pass all three certification examinations) if they wish to be certified by September 1st, 2020.

As of Monday, May 11th, NYSED has not released the Emergency COVID-19 certification application. Please check the following NYSED website with regularity: [http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/covid19-emergency.html](http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/covid19-emergency.html)

**edTPA Requirement: An Update**

For spring/summer 2020 student teachers, COVID-19 has had/will have a major impact on the capacity to complete the edTPA. As such, these candidates will be eligible to take the and pass the Assessment of Teaching Skills Written (ATS-W), in place of the edTPA requirement. (Alternatively, candidates are also able to use a previous passing score on the ATS-W.)

The Dean’s Office will compile a list of all candidates who completed student teaching in spring or summer, 2020. This list will be sent to NYSED Office of Teaching Initiatives (OTI). Subsequently, OTI will note in each candidates’ TEACH account her/his eligibility for the edTPA/ATS-W option.

To augment candidates’ understanding of the Emergency COVID-19 certification and the edTPA/ATS-W option, we have compiled the following list of FAQs.

1. **I did my student teaching in Spring 2020 (or Summer 2020). Do I have to take all three examinations (i.e., EAS, CST, and either the ATS-W or edTPA)?**
   Yes, all three certification exams must be taken. As highlighted above, NYSED has not waived the examinations required for certification (i.e., the EAS, CST, and edTPA) for candidates who engaged in student teaching in spring, 2020 (or will engage in student teaching in summer, 2020). As such, teacher candidates will be required to complete each of these examinations.
2. I did student teaching in Spring 2020 (or, I will do student teaching in Summer, 2020). Should I submit the edTPA or take the ATS-W?
NYSED has provided Spring and Summer 2020 candidates with the option to take either the edTPA or ATS-W. (Prior to COVID-19, all candidates were required to take the edTPA). More information regarding this safety net can be found here: [http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/certexamsafetynetdpas2020.html](http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/certexamsafetynetdpas2020.html)

3. Are the testing centers even open? When should I take the certification exams?
Currently, there are limited appointments available at some testing centers in the local area. Over time, it is anticipated that the number of appointments will continue to increase. However, it is also anticipated that the wait time to procure an appointment at these testing centers will be longer than normal. Candidates should continue to prepare for the examinations. For test center information, please visit Person website: [https://wsr.pearsonvue.com/testtaker/registration/SelectExamPage/NES?conversationId=260970](https://wsr.pearsonvue.com/testtaker/registration/SelectExamPage/NES?conversationId=260970)

4. I am on the verge of graduating and I have completed all my NYSED certification requirements except for the edTPA/ATS-W, CST, and/or EAS. I want to teach in fall 2020. What can I do?
To address the possibility that teacher candidates might not be able to obtain NYSED certification by September 1st, 2020, NYSED has implemented the Emergency COVID-19 certificate. [http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/covid19-emergency.html](http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/covid19-emergency.html). This certificate provides candidates the permission to work in NYS public schools/districts for one year while they complete the required certification exams. Please consult the NYSED website (link above) for more details.

5. How do I know if I should apply for the Emergency COVID-19 certificate?
We recommend that you apply for the Emergency COVID-19 certificate if: a. You intend to teach in a NYS public school in the 2020-2021 School Year; b. You still need to pass one or more of the NYS certification examinations, but have met all other certification requirements.

6. I heard that there is a list of student names that will be going to NYSED. What is this about?
The School of Education will compile and send a list of names of students who were enrolled (or will be) in a student teaching course in Spring and Summer 2020 to NYSED Office of Teaching Initiatives. NYSED OTI will make notation on the applicant’s NYSED TEACH Account.

7. How long will it take NYSED to document that I am eligible for these amended protocols?
As NYS slowly reopens, it is difficult to predict a specific timeline for the process. It can be assumed that NYSED will be inundated with a variety of request. So, a delay in processing might be expected.

8. I am scheduled to student teach (or engage in a similar clinical experience) in Summer 2020. Do the aforementioned points pertain to me, as well?
Yes, all the protocols that pertain to the Spring 2020 student teachers also pertain to the Summer 2020 student teachers.
9. I student taught in Fall, 2019 (or in a previous semester). Am I eligible to take the ATS-W and/or the Emergency COVID-19 certificate?

Candidates who enrolled in student teaching prior to spring 2020 are not eligible for the edTPA/ATS-W option. However, students who have completed the degree/advanced certificate requirements by or before Summer 2020 are eligible for the Emergency COVID-19 certificate.

10. I am about to graduate and have completed all my certification requirements (including the examinations.) Can I apply for my NYSED certification?

Yes, candidates who have completed all their certification requirements are encouraged to apply for certification. Please refer Queens College’s Teacher Certification Office website for more information https://www.qc.cuny.edu/Academics/Degrees/Education/Certification/Pages/TCERTHome.aspx

11. I conducted my student teaching in Spring 2020, but will not graduate until January, 2021 (or later). What should I do?

All candidates who conducted their student teaching in Spring 2020 and/or Summer 2020 are eligible to take the ATS-W in place of the edTPA. However, students who graduate after Summer 2020 will not be eligible for the Emergency COVID-19 certificate.

We want to sincerely thank each of you for your continued dedication, perseverance, and patience during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please know that we will continue to be here to help you navigate through these challenging times on your road towards becoming certified by NYSED, and we will continue to provide you with timely NYSED updates.

Please do take care and stay well.