



PAULA GRAY

*Director of School and Board Relations*

1201 Main Street, Suite 300, Columbia, SC 29201

To: School Leaders  
From: Paula Gray  
Date: March 30, 2020  
Re: Certification Updates from the Office of Educator Services

Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, the Office of Educator Services is doing their part to help by adding some leniency to certain requirements for our teachers. Please see below for specific items:

#### Certification Updates Webpage

The Office of Educator Services has created a webpage to provide [certification updates](https://ed.sc.gov/certificationupdates) for applicants and educators. We encourage them to bookmark the page and visit it routinely. The quick URL for the page is <https://ed.sc.gov/certificationupdates>.

#### Certificates Expiring June 30, 2020

A one-year grace period will be added to all Initial, Professional, and Limited Professional certificates set to expire on June 30, 2020—including certificates that were extended for the 2019-20 school year. The new end-validity date will be June 30, 2021. Any extension already issued for the 2020-21 school year will be treated as a grace year and not counted as an extension.

Please note that the grace year will be added through an automated process. Districts and educators do not need to submit a request for the additional year. Currently, we are working on the technical changes to the certification system to add the grace year and will let you know when the automated update will occur.

#### Renewals for Certification Permits Issued for 2019-20

Due to closures of Praxis testing centers and changes in college and university schedules, renewal requirements will be waived for your educators issued a certification permit for 2019-20. Districts will need to request the permit for 2020-21, but your educators do not need to submit coursework or Praxis scores for the renewal.

### Emergency Exemptions for Spring 2020 Student Teachers

In a special called meeting held March 24, 2020, the State Board of Education (SBE) approved [Emergency Exemptions for Spring 2020 Clinical and Field Experiences due to COVID-19](#). The purpose of this policy is to hold harmless Spring 2020 student teachers and move them forward to completing coursework, graduating, and being recommended for certification. Under the provisions of this emergency policy, the following SBE requirements are waived for the Spring 2020 student teaching semester: the minimum length of the clinical experience, the number of days of independent teaching, and the number of formative and summative observations as part of the state's ADEPT system. Depending on the academic calendar of the college or university, Spring 2020 student teachers completed approximately eight to ten weeks in PK–12 classrooms before public schools closed per the Governor's executive order. Preparation program faculty in each college or university, in consultation with clinical supervisors and school-based cooperating teachers, have been granted flexibility to make decisions regarding a candidate's overall performance and eligibility for certification based the available observations, evidence, and documentation collected during the clinical experience.

Please contact me at 803-849-2460 or by email at [hrbenefits@erskinecharters.org](mailto:hrbenefits@erskinecharters.org) if you have questions.