

Dear Superintendent/Executive Director:

The summer was a busy time for the South Cook certification staff. There were 3,528 certificates that needed to be registered/renewed. As of today, all but 172 of those are up to date! Of the 172, there are some that have retired and just may not realize their certificate is up for renewal and some that have moved out of state. There are still approximately 150 that are current teachers that have not yet registered their certificate. In the spring, we sent each district a list of their specific teachers. In mid June, we sent an updated list and in July, we sent one final list. If you did not receive a list in June or July, then all of your teachers should be up to date!

In this update, we'd like to send some very critical information for what is coming in the near future. One of the major changes is regarding fees. Below is a list of those changes that will go into effect on January 1, 2012. The fee increases are from the state and will be effective in every office in Illinois.

- Endorsement fee increase from \$30 to \$50
- Certificate application fee increase from \$30 to \$75
- 5 year registration fee increase from \$25 to \$50 (from \$5 per year to \$10 per year)

The fee increases are effective January 1, 2012. Anyone applying, registering or submitting endorsements after January 1, will be under the new fee structure. One very important note—this school year is one of the largest for educators needing to register their certificates, as there are 4,792 people. Per the law, you are eligible to register a certificate any time after September 1. That means that any certificate holder, except initial teachers, can complete the process any time, as September 1 has now passed.

- If teachers have completed their professional development requirements, they would be wise to enter their CPDU's, submit their statement of assurance and register their certificates before January 1 to save the additional registration fees
- If administrators, school service personnel, business managers, etc., have completed their professional development requirements and all of their AA courses, they would be wise to enter their CPDUs, submit their statement of assurance and register their certificates before January 1 to save the additional registration fees.

Unfortunately, the only ones who will not be able to take advantage of this are those with initial certificates, as they are not allowed to enter or apply for their certificate until after April 1, 2012.

There are also some logistical changes that will have an impact upon past registration practices. Previously, an educator could leave their certificate unregistered for up to 5 years without it lapsing/expiring. Effective 2012, if a certificate is unregistered for one full year, the certificate will lapse/expire. Currently, in order to reinstate the certificate, the educator needs to complete 5 credit hours within one year. With the new change, the educator will need to complete 9 hours within 6 months! Of special note, this requirement is still not clearly defined, but this is what is tentatively proposed.

The requirements for earning an endorsement in a content area are also changing, effective February 2012. If you have any educator that has put off applying for an endorsement, you may want to

encourage them to apply. Anyone applying for an endorsement after February will be held to the new requirements. This may have an impact on those that are currently completing coursework and may not be able to finish until after February. Right now they are shooting at a target based upon current rules, and in February the rules will be changing. Of particular difficulty, the state will not be issuing written documentation of the changes on their web-site until October 15, 2011.

Effective July 2013, the state will be moving to a licensure system, as opposed to a certificate system. As you can imagine, this will be a major overhaul to our current system. We do know the high points and the general picture of what the system will look like; we anticipate that we will undergo massive training for the new changes in the near future. We will keep you updated as we know more and as things become more concrete. We anticipate that the changes will generate many questions and concerns. Rest assured that our staff will work diligently to stay on top of the changes, and we will share information via email, through trainings, presentations or any other means to ensure that everyone has the correct information.

There are also changes for substitute teachers, but I will send those changes in a separate email.

My apologies for the lengthy email, but we want to keep you as up to date as possible. As always, if you have any questions, just let me know.

Vanessa

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