NJDOE News

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Department of Education to Hold Conference to Explain Automated Teacher Certification System

The New Jersey Department of Education is scheduled to hold a teleconference on November 21st to explain to school officials throughout New Jersey the new automated teacher certification system that is being developed to speed the certification process.

The teleconference presentation on how the new process will operate will include county superintendents, school district superintendents, central office personnel and principals as part of NJ ELITE, a technology leadership initiative sponsored by the NJDOE in conjunction with NJPSA and NJASA through private and corporate funding.

The department, which recently released the Request for Proposal (RFP) to vendors to develop the software to create the automated teacher certification system, will also hold on November 21st a pre-bid bidders conference. The department will select the vendor in December.

The automated teacher certification system, which will be operated by the DOE, will be implemented in two phases.

Phase I will include automating the processes for certification, the approval of college programs, intake/scanning processes, and intake of test scores. Phase I should be fully implemented by the end of March 2003. However, there should be visible signs of improvement in the system as early as the end of January 2003.

Phase II should be technically implemented by the end of next summer, with data in the system by winter of 2004. Full implementation should be in place by June 2004. Certificates should be able to be issued by regional offices by January 2004, followed by Colleges/Universities at 2004 graduation.

Phase II will include a comprehensive tracking system for provisional applications on-line. The same will be true for alternate route applications and the tracking of training for alternate route teachers.

Phase II will also provide on-line access for certification candidates (and prospective employers) to track the progress of their application and/or list those who are certified in every area state-wide. Additionally, a confidential system of tracking those who have had licenses revoked, and cases pending before the Board of examiners relative to blocking issuance, revocation or suspension.

Finally, Phase II will revamp the TLAP system (the system by which college/universities submit recommendations for certification). Colleges/Universities will be able to submit data on-line. This piece of the system will facilitate the speed with which a license is issued (eventually as part of the graduation packet).

The DOE is running, on average, a three- to four-month backlog on standard certification (2400 applications; down from over 5000 in January 2002), a two-month backlog on alternate route certification (420 applications), a four- to six-month backlog for specialized student services (340 applications).

The department continues to use in-house "swat teams" of personnel to handle certification applications in order to keep the backlog at a lower level. Additionally, on Tuesdays and Thursdays of each week, there is direct delivery by courier service of new certification applications from the 21 county offices to the DOE in Trenton to assist in managing the backlog. This service will be maintained through the implementation of the new automated system.

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