



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Sean M. Ryan

Senator Sean Ryan And Assemblymember Kimberly Jean-Pierre Successfully Push New York State To Extend Emergency Certification Program For Educators

SEAN M. RYAN September 22, 2021

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SENATOR SEAN RYAN AND ASSEMBLYMEMBER KIMBERLY JEAN-PIERRE SUCCESSFULLY PUSH NEW YORK STATE TO EXTEND EMERGENCY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM FOR EDUCATORS

Legislators' July Letter To Education Department Outlined Need For Extension Of Program Created To Account For Pandemic-Related Obstacles To Educator Certification

ALBANY – Today, September 22, 2021, New York State Senator Sean Ryan and New York State Assemblymember Kimberly Jean-Pierre announced that the New York State Education Department (NYSED) has agreed to take action as a result of the legislators’ letter requesting the extension of the [Emergency COVID-19 Certificate](#) program past its initial deadline of September 1, 2021. The deadline has been extended one year, to September 1, 2022.

The COVID-19 pandemic created obstacles for educators seeking certification and recertification in New York State. Chief among those obstacles was a limited test center availability for certification exams. NYSED recognized these challenges and made temporary emergency changes to certification requirements in May 2020 to account for the difficult circumstances surrounding certification during the pandemic.

In July, with the application deadline for the Emergency COVID-19 Certificate approaching, lingering pandemic-related impediments continued to make it difficult for educators to complete the certification process. As a result, Senator Ryan and Assemblymember Jean-Pierre, who are respectively Chairs of the Senate and Assembly Libraries committees, [called on NYSED to extend the application deadline](#) to provide ample time for educators in New York State to get back on track.

In early September, a NYSED representative responded to the legislators’ letter, explaining that NYSED recognized the concerns raised in the letter and planned to take action to amend the deadline. A regulatory amendment was then passed at the September Board of Regents meeting on September 14, extending the emergency certificate application deadline from September 1, 2021 to September 1, 2022. Individuals who applied for the Emergency COVID-19 certificate prior to the extension will automatically have their certificate requirement deadlines extended.

The Emergency COVID-19 Certificate is available to a wide variety of educators including classroom teachers, librarians, school administrators, teaching assistants, school athletics coaches, GED instructors, and jobs skills training instructors.

Senator Sean Ryan said, “NYSED created the Emergency COVID-19 Certificate in response to the obstacles the pandemic created for teachers seeking certification, and many of those obstacles are still affecting the certification process today. I applaud the Board of Regents for their swift response to extend the Emergency Certificate deadline to September 2022. Their action has prevented an issue that would have unfairly hindered qualified educators and exacerbated staffing shortages in our schools.”

Assemblymember Kimberly Jean-Pierre said, "I sincerely thank the Department of Education and the Board of Regents for extending the emergency certification deadline an additional year to September 2022. With the COVID-19 pandemic severely disrupting the teacher certification process here in New York State, this accommodation will be vital to ensure that schools across our state have the flexibility to hire qualified professionals and ensure the needs of our schoolchildren can continue to be met."

Briana McNamee, Director of Government Relations & Advocacy of the New York Library Association, said, “We are grateful to the Board of Regents for their ongoing support and the recent decision to extend the Emergency Certificate deadline to September 2022. Seemingly minor, this extension provides immense relief for the library community.”

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