New Educator Certification System:

The SD Educator Portal is an enhanced educator certification and information system released on March 3, 2023. All certification records from the prior system remain accessible through SD Educator Portal. With increased functionality, the new system allows educators to apply for certification, make requests for certificate changes and updates, upload documentation to "Document Storage" for future use, request a copy of a current certificate, submit fee payments after submission of application, update contact information within your Educator Profile, monitor the status of their requests and applications, and communicate with certification officers.

This system is part of the mySD State of South Dakota's single sign-on initiative that allows a user to access services across state government using a single username and password. If you don't already have a mySD account, you are encouraged to provide a **_personal email address_** during the registration process, rather than an email account associated with an employer, college, or university.

The Educator 411 is replacing the Teacher 411 and is a public access point for South Dakota's Educator Search and Endorsement Search. It is an online search tool which provides real-time information about SD's certified educators. This includes teachers, administrators, education specialists, and those with an educator permit. Information on Educator 411 is considered an official record in South Dakota. The Endorsement Search is an online search tool which provides information on the current requirement for adding endorsements to existing certificates. This tool also provides information based on the assignment/course code and the requirements to be considered authorized to act as a teacher, administrator, education specialist or with an educator permit.

Message from the Office of Educator Certification:

We apologize for the delayed response to your question(s). With the launch of the new certification system, in early March, we have experienced an overwhelming number of emails, phone calls and applications. Our current response and processing time is taking longer than expected but we can ensure you that we are working as quickly as possible to answer all questions, review and accept documentation, and process applications. Comments added within the system will be reviewed when your application is reviewed.

If sending a question about the functionality of the new system please submit the URL from your web browser, screenshot, and description of the issue you are experiencing. This will help us identify how to solve your issue and if it is impacting other educators. As we identify questions that apply to all, we will continue to update this document to help keep you informed.

 We appreciate your continued patience and kindness!

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Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: WHERE DO I ACCESS THE NEW APPLICATION SYSTEM?

A1: https://www.sd.gov/educator.

Q2: WHAT EMAIL ADDRESS SHOULD I USE WHEN CREATING MY ACCOUNT IN THE NEW SYSTEM?

A2: All users must have a mySD account for certification. Users are encouraged to use a personal email address rather than an email account associated with an employer (e.g., k12 email), college, or university. This will allow you to maintain access if your employment changes. If you have applied for a hunting or fishing license, renewed your driver's license online, or other state services, you may already have a mySD account.

Q3: WHAT IF I USED AN EMAIL ACCOUNT ASSOCIATED WITH AN EMPLOYER (K12 SCHOOL), COLLEGE, OR UNIVERSITY PREVIOUSLY?

A3: The new certification system is connected with the State of South Dakota's Citizen Portal. It is highly recommended you use a personal email so that you'll be able to access state services regardless of your work status. For instance, the South Dakota Retirement System uses mySD. Regardless of whether you used an email associated with an employer, college, or university in the old system OR whether you use a new personal email for your profile in the new system, it will be necessary for us to do some behind-the-scenes cleanup when you have two profiles that don't match. As you can imagine, the department is receiving a high volume of inquiries with the opening of the new system, and we ask for your patience as we work diligently to address this cleanup.

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Q4: THE SYSTEM IS TELLING ME I HAVE A DUPLICATE SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER. WHAT'S GOING ON, AND WHAT SHOULD I DO?

A4: The most common reason is because your last certificate was issued using a different email address. To fix this issue follow these steps:

Step 1: Login using the same email that was used with your prior certificate, UNLESS you used an email associated with an employer, college, or university. If your profile was previously connected with an employer/college/university email, create your new profile with a personal email. This likely will generate the duplicate SSN message and DOE staff will need to link the two profiles together.

Step 2: If you receive a message about the duplicate SSN, submit a "Contact Us" indicating the following:

- Personal email address used when creating your new mySD account;
- First and Last Name as it appears on your certificate; and
- The last four of your SSN.

Q5: WHY IS THERE SO MUCH ATTENTION TO WHAT EMAIL ADDRESS I USE?

A5: The new certification system is part of the mySD State of South Dakota's single sign-on initiative that allows a user to access services across state government using a single username and password. If you don't already have a mySD account, you are encouraged to provide a personal email address during the registration process, rather than an email account associated with an employer, college, or university.

Q6: WHAT IF I AM NOT SURE I ALREADY HAVE A MYSD ACCOUNT?

A6: Please refer to the following link.

https://www.sd.gov/cs?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0010258&sys_kb_id=4497f7e71bed99108709ec21f54bcb66&spa=1

Q7: HOW DO I CREATE A MYSD ACCOUNT?

A7: Please refer to the following link.

https://www.sd.gov/cs?sys_kb_id=0657b3e71bed99108709ec21f54bcb18&id=kb_article_view&sysparm_rank=3&sysparm_tsqueryId=836e50751b29655031b1ebdbac4bcb19

Q8: MY ENDORSEMENTS AREN'T SHOWING UP IN THE NEW SYSTEM. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

A8: You may notice that your endorsements are not visible in the new system through your view. Please don't panic: You have not lost your endorsements. It is a process that we are working on through programming to allow public viewing of endorsements. **This issue has been fixed.**

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Q9: THE NEW CERTIFICATION SYSTEM IS NOT SHOWING MY DEGREE OR PRAXIS TEST RESULTS. DO I NEED TO RESUBMIT PRIOR TRANSCRIPTS AND/OR TEST SCORES?

A9: Previously verified degrees and test scores do not need to be resubmitted. However, if you are adding new endorsements or your transcript reflects courses associated with this current renewal cycle and are from the past five years, then yes, they will need to be submitted. **Test Score issue has been fixed and Degree fix is in progress.**

Q10: I AM GETTING THE MESSAGE THAT THERE ARE SEVERAL DOCUMENTS THAT I NEED TO UPLOAD BUT I DO NOT KNOW IF I NEED THEM.

A10: If you are in doubt about what documents need to be included in your application, click on the "Upload Later" option as it gives the opportunity to complete the application and allows the Certification Office to review the application and decide what is or is not needed. If it is determined that document(s) are needed, a message will be sent to you in the comments on the application identifying what is needed.

Q11: HOW DO I KNOW WHAT I NEED FOR RENEWAL?

A11: Renewal requirements have not changed. Please refer to the following link and select the certificate type that you currently hold. https://doe.sd.gov/certification/renewal.aspx

Q12: I AM WORKING ON MY APPLICATION, AND IT SAYS I NEED TO COMPLETE THE OSF1 FORM. WHAT IS THIS AND DO I NEED IT?

A12: If you attended an out-of-state college or university at any time, the system may request the OSF1 form. This is the university sign-off form for verification. If you are unsure if you need this form, select "Upload Later" and the Certification Office will verify if this form is needed. If it is, you will be contacted. **This issue has been fixed for new applications. However, if when you submitted the system asked for this document, we are in the process of manually removing this request.**

Q13: CAN MY APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION BE EXPEDITED?

A13: The Certification Office will process applications in the order received and cannot be processed until all requirements have been met.

Q14: DO I NEED TO RESUBMIT DOCUMENTS THAT WERE PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED?

A14: No, please only submit new documents. If your application is stating that you need something that was previously submitted, we will remove the request when we review your application.

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Q15: WHY IS IT TAKING SO LONG FOR A RESPONSE AND FOR MY CERTIFICATE TO BE ISSUED?

A15: The Office of Educator Certification has three full time staff; they review approximately 4000 applications yearly. We receive hundreds of phone calls, emails, and documents weekly. All documents must be evaluated prior to being added to your record. With the system being shut down for two months for transitioning, many individuals still submitted documents which created a backlog. Once the system was live, we received hundreds of applications a day, we are working through all the applications and emails/phone calls as quickly as possible. Thank you for your patience.

Q16: TEACHER 411 ISN'T WORKING; I AM SEEING A 404 ERROR. WHEN WILL IT BE WORKING AGAIN?

A16: The Teacher 411 was replaced with the Educator 411: https://www.sd.gov/411 with the launch of the new system in early March. For more information on Educator 411 reference Q22 in this document.

Q17: I SUBMITTED MY DOCUMENTS, BUT IT SAYS THEY ARE FALSE. WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

A17: The reference to true or false in associated with whether a certification officer has reviewed the document. A document that has been reviewed is true. A document that has not been reviewed is false. Please be patient as our certification officers work through the volume of applications and documents.

Q18: I CORRESPONDED WITHIN THE CERTIFICATION SYSTEM, BUT NO ONE IS RESPONDING. WHY?

A18: This correspondence feature within the system is an email system that allows messages to be sent within the system while keeping such messages linked with your profile and application. However, until a certification officer is actively in your application, we are not monitoring these messages. We are using this feature to reach out and identify what may still be needed in an application. If there are questions that need to be answered in a timelier response, please email certification@state.sd.us

Q19: WHEN SHOULD I USE THE WITHDRAW OPTION?

A19: The system has a lot more functionality to allow us to make changes within applications that would previously have required an application to be withdrawn. Prior to selecting withdraw, please contact us to help determine if such a withdrawal is necessary. **Do not use this button, if your issue is related to a document not being validated.**

Q20: MY CERTIFICATE EXPIRES JULY 1 OF THIS YEAR. WHAT CAN BE DONE TO MAKE SURE I GET MY RENEWAL CERTIFICATE ON TIME?

A20: All certificates expire on July 1 of a given year. For those certificates expiring in 2023, we are strongly encouraging educators to submit an application with supporting documents and payment prior to July 1. Certificates do not become invalid until October 1 of a given year, according to ARSD 24:28:03.

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Q21: I HAVE CALLED AND/OR EMAILED AND HAVE NOT RECEIVED A MESSAGE OR RETURN CALL. I NEED TO TALK TO SOMEONE BECAUSE IT IS IMPORTANT. WHAT DO I DO?

A21: As of May 12, 2023, we are currently responding to emails and phone calls from April 11. Since March 1, we have responded to approximately 3,000 emails and 600 phone calls. Your communication with us is important. For us to be efficient and effective in our responses, if there have been multiple correspondences, we are trying to capture them at one time and respond to your questions. While we recognize your frustration and sense of urgency, please refrain from submitting multiple requests for the same question, it is further creating a backlog issue which increases the wait time for responses from the Certification Office.

Q22: WHY IS THE INFORMATION IN EDUCATOR 411 NOT SHOWING EVERYTHING FOR ME?

A22: Currently, we are experiencing a display issue with degrees and certificate statuses. Also, individuals who have active certificates but are not connected to a South Dakota district may not be searchable at this time. We are working with the vendor to resolve these issues.

Q23: I HAVE SENT MY TRANSCRIPTS, BUT MY APPLICATION IS INDICATING I STILL HAVE MISSING DOCUMENTS. WHY?

A23: The process used to send and receive transcripts has not changed. When we receive transcripts sent electronically from universities, we download them in batches and then manually connect them to the existing Educator Profile/application. The transcripts sent through snail mail are scanned and added to Educator Profile/application. Due to the volume of transcripts received, you may notice a delay in adding it to your record. Please utilize the view status (https://www.sd.gov/educator) for your application for progress.

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Q24: HOW DO I NAVIGATE THE "VIEW STATUS" WITHIN THE EDUCATOR PORTAL?

A24: The view status is your way to check on the progress of your application, make credit card payments, request additional endorsements, and submit documents until your application has been processed. Additional features explained below:

- **New Application =** Needs to be reviewed by the Certification Office
- **Incomplete Application/Missing Documents =** Document may be missing, or review is in progress by the Certification Office
- **UCO Review =** Currently with the University in which you completed an Educator Preparation Program
- **Legal =** Application is under review by the Character and Fitness team
- **Processing =** Application was transferred from the prior certification system, not all features in the new system may work until after your application has been processed.
- **Application status bar:** This will fill in as we are able to review your application. Clicking the "Show Details" will expand the view to see all the items we check during the application review.
- **Left Menu (below the application status bar):**
  - **Actions Required:** shows if our office needs a document or payment.
  - **Documents:** identifies documents uploaded to your application.
    - **False, False:** hasn't been reviewed
    - **True, False:** reviewed but doesn't meet requirements
    - **True, True:** reviewed and is meeting requirements
  - **Payments:** shows when your payment made or if one is needed.
  - **Application:** shows the information you submitted on your application.
    - You <u>can</u> make changes to Educator Preparation, Educator Endorsements, Test Scores and File Uploads until your application is being processed.
    - File Uploads:
      - Security Constraints is placed on files that uploads are not allowed, such as an official university transcript.
      - The "File" column if a document has been received the file name will show here.
      - Validated: if the document has been reviewed and meets requirements will show "true" in this field.
    - Grayed out sections <u>cannot</u> be altered once the application is submitted.
  - **Comments:** This feature allows certification officers to correspond with you about your application. This is not a live chat and will only be reviewed when certification officers are actively in your application.
    - If you are in need of corresponding with the certification officers, please email certification@state.sd.us and wait for a response.

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Q25: WHAT IS CREATING THE 1ST OF THE MONTH EMAILS TO BE GENERATED?

A25: These emails are generated automatically from the system. They were intended to be helpful for individuals that are unable to frequently check the status of their application. We apologize for the blank and unhelpful emails addressing missing documents but not indicating what was missing. We are actively working on a fix with our vendor. If you had previously sent the document that was indicated as missing, it is possible that there is delay with the receipt of the document and the connection to your application.

Q26: WHY AM I UNABLE TO TRANSFER A DOCUMENT THAT I SAVED IN DOCUMENT STORAGE INTO MY APPLICATION?

A26: The Document Storage feature is not consistently working as it was intended for all users. If you are unable to upload a document from Document Storage into your application, please use another means to upload it.

Q27: HOW DO I CHANGE MY NAME IN THE NEW SYSTEM?

A27: Do not create a new profile if your name has changed. Name changes must be completed with an update to your educator profile. It is very important to identify your previous last name(s) to ensure proper connection of your account.

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