



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 23, 2021

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: William A. Pearson, Ed.D., Interim Deputy Superintendent
Division of Educator, Student, and School Supports *WAP*

SUBJECT: Welcome Back Proud Michigan Educators Campaign

In support of Michigan's Top 10 Strategic Education Plan to increase the number of certified teachers in critical shortage areas, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is excited to announce the *Welcome Back Proud Michigan Educators* (PMEs) campaign.

The *Welcome Back PME* campaign reduces or eliminates the barrier that professional learning hours pose to recertification of individuals who left the profession or who never entered the profession but who obtained their certification at some point, and who have not had the opportunity to receive district-provided professional development.

With the authority vested in him by [MCL 380.1231\(3\)](#) and [Executive Order 1996-12](#), the Superintendent of Public Instruction is making available for local education agencies (LEAs), both traditional public school districts and public school academies (PSAs), a waiver process to allow for the re-entry into the profession of formerly certificated individuals.

To access this waiver process, a school superintendent or PSA director must request a waiver for each educator that he/she is interested in hiring. The [waiver request application tool](#) will adjust the request to meet the unique needs of each educator, based on years of service and years since certification expiration, to allow for employment in academic year 2021-22.

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MDE will begin communicating today with formerly certified educators regarding this opportunity through email and social media. Districts interested in receiving contact information for educators that express interest in employment through the *Welcome Back PME* campaign should complete this [contact information request form](#). Districts are also encouraged to post the [campaign logo](#) on their employment webpage as a participation indicator to applicants.

Attachments A and B below explain *Welcome Back PME* educator eligibility requirements in greater detail.

Alternative Professional Learning Opportunity

Educators without employment may participate in the campaign by accessing member benefits offered through the Michigan Education Association (MEA) Teacher Re-Entry Program, including quality [professional learning opportunities](#) designed for teachers wishing to transition back into the workforce. An educator enrolling in the program can receive up to 150 hours for recertification for \$100 per year until an individual has been hired into full-time employment and is eligible for a full regular union membership.

“The professional learning program has been carefully developed to meet the needs of educators returning to the workforce, including social emotional learning, instruction with using technology, and classroom management. We are excited to be partnering with MDE to support certified educators with expired credentials across the state,” said Paula Herbart, MEA president.

For more information, visit the [Welcome Back Proud Michigan Educators campaign website](#). Questions about the waiver process should be directed to MDE-EducatorHelp@Michigan.gov or 517-241-5000.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Directors

Welcome Back Proud Michigan Educator Eligibility

All educators will be required to fulfill the legal professional practices requirements, including fingerprinting and background checks as a precursor to recertification and employment. School counselor professional learning hours, required under Michigan Compiled Law (MCL) [380.1233\(6\)](#), cannot be waived.

Educator Eligibility

Local education agencies (LEAs), both traditional public school districts and public school academies (PSAs) may apply to waive all professional learning required for recertification for all educators with a certificate expiration date of June 30, 2019 or June 30, 2020. The LEA may also apply to waive all professional learning required for recertification for educators with an expiration date between June 30, 2012 and June 30, 2018 if the individual has more than five years of teaching experience.

For educators with a certificate expiration date of June 2011 or earlier or an educator with a certificate expiration date between June 30, 2012 and June 30, 2018 who also has ***fewer than three years of teaching experience***, LEAs may employ the educator with the following conditions:

- The LEA employs the educator under a full year permit. The permit may be renewed for up to three years without enrollment in a preparation program until hours are earned for certificate renewal.
- The LEA provides full pay and benefits through the collective bargaining agreement or otherwise relevant contract and considers payment of the educator's renewal fees.
- The LEA provides mentoring and induction required by state law under MCL [380.1526](#).

For educators with a certificate expiration date between June 30, 2012 and June 30, 2018 ***with three to five years of teaching experience***, LEAs may employ the educator with the following conditions:

- The LEA employs the educator under a full year permit. After one year, the LEA can choose to apply for a waiver for all additional professional learning if the educator receives an educator evaluation rating of at least "effective."
- The LEA provides full pay and benefits through the collective bargaining agreement or otherwise relevant contract and considers payment of the educator's renewal fees.
- Mentoring is strongly recommended for all individuals employed under a full year permit.

All options require a waiver. The [waiver request application tool](#) has been developed to support LEAs participating in the campaign. The LEA will provide information about the educator's certificate and experience through the application and the tool will determine the educator's eligibility for waiver options, submit the request to the Michigan Department of Education, and provide instructions for the next steps.

See Attachment B below for eligibility information in chart form.

WAIVER OPTIONS FOR RECERTIFICATION		Years of Teaching Experience		
		Fewer than 3 Years	3-5 Years	More than 5 Years
Date of Certificate Expiration	June 2019 or June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District may apply to waive all* professional learning required for renewal. <p>Note: Mentoring and induction are required by state law.</p>	District may apply to waive all* professional learning required for renewal.	District may apply to waive all* professional learning required for renewal.
	June 2012 – June 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts may employ educators under a full-year permit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts may renew the full-year permit for up-to three years until hours are earned for certificate renewal. District provides full pay and benefits through the collective bargaining agreement or otherwise relevant contract; consideration given to payment of renewal fee. <p>Note: Mentoring and induction are required by state law.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts may employ educators under a full-year permit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> After one year, districts can choose to apply for a waiver for all* additional professional learning, assuming at least an effective educator evaluation. District provides full pay and benefits through the collective bargaining agreement or otherwise relevant contract; consideration given to payment of renewal fee. <p>Note: Mentoring strongly recommended.</p>	District may apply to waive all* professional learning required for renewal.
	June 2011 or earlier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts may employ educators under a full-year permit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts may renew the full-year permit for up-to three years until hours are earned for certificate renewal. District provides full pay and benefits through the collective bargaining agreement or otherwise relevant contract; consideration given to payment of renewal fee. <p>Note: Mentoring and induction are required by state law.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts may employ educators under a full-year permit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts may renew the full-year permit for up-to three years until hours are earned for certificate renewal. District provides full pay and benefits through the collective bargaining agreement or otherwise relevant contract; consideration given to payment of renewal fee. <p>Note: Mentoring strongly recommended.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts may employ educators under a full-year permit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts may renew the full-year permit for up-to three years until hours are earned for certificate renewal. District provides full pay and benefits through the collective bargaining agreement or otherwise relevant contract; consideration given to payment of renewal fee. <p>Note: Mentoring strongly recommended.</p>

**Professional learning required by Michigan Compiled Laws MCL 380.1233(6) for School Counselors cannot be waived. Educators with a school counselor credential (including teaching certificates with a school counselor (NT) endorsement) must fulfill the professional development requirements under MCL 380.1233(6) before any additional hours may be waived.*

All options require a waiver. Waiver tool and application: https://mde.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cu4MZpPmNm1KAT4