




THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

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To: NYS School District Superintendents, Directors of Personnel

From: Allison Armour-Garb 

Subject: The General Science Extension as represented in NYS Basic Educational Data System (BEDS)

The New York State Education Department Office of Teaching Initiatives and Office of P-12 Education periodically review the crosswalk between BEDS classroom teaching assignments and teaching certificate titles to ensure that classroom teaching assignments are correctly linked to teacher certificate titles.

During one such review we determined that the appropriate certificate for teaching physical science and life science in grades 7 and 8 is the general science extension. However, there is one exception to this linkage: biology certified teachers may also appropriately teach life science in grades 7 and 8. Please see attached table for further details.

Some of you may recall that for the 2010-2011 BEDS reporting period we removed titles deemed to be inappropriate for teaching physical science and life science in grades 7 and 8 (earth science, chemistry, physics and biology) so that the crosswalk did in fact reflect the appropriate general science extension as described above. After receiving feedback from the field and much consideration, we decided that although the updated linkage did not reflect a change in policy since the general science extension has always been the appropriate certification to teach these subjects, we acknowledged that we did not give school districts enough time to adequately prepare for the consequences of this determination. Therefore, last year for the 2010-2011 reporting period we decided to revert back to the original crosswalk linkage, thereby holding school districts harmless for any negative results.

For the 2011-2012 school year, we will continue to use the original crosswalk linkage so that teachers who hold a base certificate in earth science, chemistry, physics or biology and do not hold the general science extension, will not be flagged as “teaching out of title” for this school year.

However, for the 2012-2013 school year, the crosswalk will be updated to reflect the appropriate general science extension for teaching life science and physical science in grades 7 and 8 and will flag as “teaching out of title” those who are only certified in one of the sciences without a general science extension. Please keep this in mind as you make hiring and placement decisions for the next year.