Dear All -

We know that you are very concerned about your teacher certification and applying for jobs. We have created the guidance document below in an attempt to answer your immediate questions. Note that the Texas Education Agency (TEA) may make changes to the certification process in response to the current pandemic, but we do not yet have that information. We will notify you as soon as we receive new information, but you can also visit the TEA website for updates. We suggest you check this frequently!

- If you have NOT taken and passed all of your certification exams, start with Section A TESTING.
- If you HAVE passed all of your certification exams, you may skip to Section B CERTIFICATION.
- Then please continue to Section C APPLYING FOR JOBS.

A. TESTING--For those who have NOT taken and passed all required certification exams:

1. Apply for approval to take your certification exams through OEP if you have not already done so.
   o Follow these steps on the OEP website.

2. Once you receive the approval email, register for your certification exams.
   o Links will be included in the approval email from OEP to guide your registration. Part of registration includes choosing your testing center and date.
     1. NOTE: Some testing centers are closed at this time due to the current health crisis. Currently, Pearson owned testing centers are closed through April 30, but there may be other centers that are open.
        ▪ You will still be able to register for future testing dates regardless. We suggest you register for all needed certification exams if possible.
        ▪ When scheduling a testing date, only test centers that are open will appear in the seat availability tool and during the scheduling process.
           ▪ This may mean that you have to choose a testing date that is further in the future at the center where you would like to test.
           ▪ We suggest you choose the first date available when scheduling.
        ▪ Please Note: If changes are made to your testing date due to closures of centers, you will be notified through email by Pearson.
        ▪ Check your email FREQUENTLY, and especially the day before and on your test date to be sure no changes have been made.
        ▪ Pearson is regularly updating Covid-19 information on their dedicated webpage.
3. Once you have taken and passed all of your required certification exams, you may then proceed to the steps in B--CERTIFICATION.
   o Please Note: Your certification coursework and exam scores can expire, generally 2 years after you finish the program or when state certification requirements change, whichever comes first. In as much as it is under your control, do not delay taking your exams and applying for certification.

   **B. CERTIFICATION**--For those who have taken and passed ALL required certification exams:

1. **Apply for your standard certification through TEA Login (TEAL).**
   a. Read the **Teacher Certification Handbook** on the [OEP website](#) for step-by-step instructions before beginning your application in TEAL.
   b. Please note - fingerprinting is required as a step in the application process. TEA directs this process, and an email with information will be sent to you from TEA regarding fingerprinting once you have completed your application in TEAL.
      1. Right now, closures have resulted in a decrease in fingerprinting appointment availability within certain regions. This may cause a delay in completing this process. You can find more information about fingerprinting from TEA [HERE](#).

2. **TEA notifies OEP once your application and fingerprinting are complete. OEP will then start processing the applications received from TEA after the following occur:**
   a. The semester ends and you earn credit (CR) for EDST (student teaching) and the CR grade is posted on your record.
   b. For undergraduates, your Bachelor’s degree is officially posted on your transcript. This happens at the end of May.

3. **Our Certification Officer will review your records. Once you meet all criteria for certification, the Certification Officer will recommend you to TEA for certification.**
   a. You will receive an email from TEA once you have been recommended for certification.
   b. A few days later TEA will issue your certificate *(if your fingerprinting requirement is completed).*
   c. To view and print your certificate, follow the directions given [HERE](#).

### Timeline for steps 1 and 2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 1</td>
<td><strong>Graduate and Post-baccalaureate students</strong> (those who already have a Bachelor’s degree): Apply for certification if you are seeking <strong>Stand-Alone</strong> teacher certification only OR if you are seeking a <strong>Master's</strong> degree with teacher certification.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 19</td>
<td><strong>Grades post</strong> and OEP begins processing applications for certification for the above candidates.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 23</td>
<td><strong>Undergraduate students</strong> apply for certification if you are an <strong>Undergraduate</strong> student seeking your first bachelor's degree.</td>
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C. APPLYING FOR JOBS (YES, YOU SHOULD!)

This is the time of year when students start to consider applying for jobs. Regardless of the current pandemic, schools still need teachers! **You definitely should apply to your districts of choice.** Here is some information to guide your efforts:

1. **Letter of Intent** - Until you are certified, you may provide the **Letter of Intent** (recently sent to you by email) to your potential employer. **We added information about testing centers being closed. Please know that school districts are aware of this issue.**
   - If you would like a custom letter prepared for a specific district, email **oep@txstate.edu** and include your TEA ID# and your request for an updated Letter of Intent.

2. **Resume - Upload your resume** to the Career Services “**Jobs4Cats**” site to join the Spring 2020 Job Fair Resume Directory by Sunday, April 19th. Directions for uploading can be found **HERE**.
   - Be sure to highlight any roles and responsibilities you have had within the unique remote teaching context you have experienced this semester in your resume. Consider any skill or trait that has made you an asset during this time as something to really highlight!

3. **Virtual Job Fairs - Watch for emails** about virtual job fairs that are being held by area districts. As noted above, districts are still hiring teachers!

Again, as soon as we have more information about any changes to the certification process from TEA, we will share it with you. We know this is an uncertain and anxious time for many of you and hope this email provides guidance and reassurance. We have heard AMAZING stories about your professionalism and commitment to doing all you can to support your Cooperating Teachers and your students during this time, and we KNOW you’ll do great things in the future. We’re proud of our Bobcats!

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