



NEBRASKA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

To: Superintendents and Special Education Directors

From: Office of Special Education

Date: 4/19/2019

Re: Guidance on Special Education Certification – Reimbursable under IDEA

For a special education teacher's salary to be reimbursable under the IDEA, that teacher must be fully certified and endorsed as a special education teacher under federal law.

School Districts who are hiring for the 2019/20 school year have inquired about whether teacher salaries would be reimbursable under their IDEA grant in cases where that teacher holds something other than a standard or initial teaching certificate.

In 2018, The Office of Special Education made districts aware that there are upcoming changes to Rule 51 that are intended to align with federal law and prohibit further reimbursement for salaries of certified teachers with a provisional special education endorsement. Until the Rule changes are in effect, the salaries of teachers holding this endorsement are currently still reimbursable under the IDEA grant.

Our caution is that it is the intent of the Office of Special Education to move forward with these changes, thus, school districts should work with provisionally endorsed individuals to help ensure they have a full special education endorsement to be able to continue to be reimbursed for those salaries under the district's IDEA grant in the future.

Likewise, there have also been questions surrounding educators who hold either an "Alternative Program Teaching Permit" or a "Transitional Teaching Permit." These are permits to teach and are only issued to individuals who do not meet the qualifications for a standard or an initial certificate. Therefore, individuals holding these permits have not obtained full certification and therefore those salaries are not reimbursable from an IDEA grant.

This does not mean such educators would not be able to provide special education services, provided he or she is working towards one of the special education related endorsements in Rule 24. Such educators may provide such services, however, these educators' salaries are just not reimbursable under IDEA.

Districts are encouraged to reach out to Amy Rhone in the Office of Special Education at amy.rhone@nebraska.gov or 402-477-0209 who will work with the Office of Teacher Certification to seek answers to certification and endorsement questions.