



Pennsylvania Department of Education

FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY
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Media Contact: Erin James, erinjames@pa.gov

ADVISORY – MONDAY – EAST STROUDSBURG – Secretary of Education to Announce \$1 Million in Grants to Help More Aspiring Educators Earn Special Education Certification to Teach Students with Disabilities

East Stroudsburg, PA – On Monday at East Stroudsburg University, Pennsylvania Secretary of Education Dr. Carrie Rowe will announce nearly \$1 million in grants to 11 institutions of higher education to provide an accelerated pathway to certification for aspiring Special Education teachers. Created under the Shapiro Administration and [first announced in 2023](#), the Accelerated Program for PK-12 Special Education Teacher Certification expedites the certification process for prospective special educators who are currently working on emergency permits, experience-based certificates, or serving as paraeducators in Pennsylvania schools.

The [first cohort of 142 educators completed the program in 2025](#). Two educators who completed the program through East Stroudsburg University will join Secretary Rowe on Monday to share their stories. A second group of students began coursework last year to become certified Special Education teachers in Pennsylvania. Enrolled at 14 colleges and universities throughout the Commonwealth, those 150 students are on track to obtain their teaching certification later this year.

The Accelerated Program for PK-12 Special Education Teacher Certification is just one way the Shapiro Administration has strategically targeted investments and partnered with education organizations to tackle Pennsylvania's teacher shortage problem. After many years of decline in the number of new highly qualified teachers ready to enter Pennsylvania classrooms, since the 2021-22 school year, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) [has seen a steady increase in the number of Instructional 1 certificates issued every year](#). Under Governor Shapiro's leadership, PDE has issued more than 25,000 teacher certifications.

WHAT: Pennsylvania Secretary of Education to Announce \$1 Million in Grants for Accelerated Special Education Teacher Certification Program
WHEN: Monday, March 16, 2026, at 12 PM
WHERE: Room 212 in Stroud Hall, East Stroudsburg University, 200 Prospect St., East Stroudsburg, PA 18301

LIVE STREAM: This event will be livestreamed at pacast.com/live/pde. Photos and video from the event will also be available at PACast.com.

RSVP/PARKING: Press who are interested in attending should RSVP to erinjames@pa.gov.

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