Why direct teacher certification? And why now?

After decades of dedicated dance educators advocating and working towards dance teacher certification, there seems to be a window under the current administration to realize the possibility of direct dance teacher certification. PaDEO (PA Dance Education Organization) is advocating for direct dance teacher certification in PA. We have created a draft of dance teacher competencies ([Draft Dance Teacher Competencies](#)) with input from dance educators across the state of PA. These are the basic requirements for dance teacher candidates pursuing licensure. If approved, licensing institutions would need to demonstrate to the state department of education that their credentialing programs ensure that students have the basic competencies to teach dance. By streamlining the process towards certification for dance educators, direct dance teacher certification will promote the highest quality dance education for PA students by ensuring candidates have the appropriate content and pedagogical knowledge, experience, and opportunities for professional development.

At present, PaDEO has submitted a needs assessment for direct dance teacher certification to the State Department of Education. We await an official response.

What is the current state of dance teacher certification in PA?

Dance teachers can currently be certified through one of three routes: communication, physical education, or vocational tech.

What if I am already a certified dance educator? Will I need a new certification?

No. Dance educators who are already certified will be grandfathered in and retain their current certifications when direct dance teacher certification is approved.

What will the requirements be for direct dance teacher certification?

Candidates will need to have completed an undergraduate degree along with coursework equivalent to that of a dance major or minor; demonstrated knowledge of and competence in applying the fundamental concepts of dance necessary for teaching in the K-12 environment; passing score on the Delta Examination (see below for more details); and completed requirements for supervised student teaching.
What is the Delta and what is a passing score?

Delta (Dance Entry Level Teacher Assessment) is a national entry level pedagogical examination for dance educators. It is the product of a collaborative endeavor by the National Dance Education Organization (NDEO) and the State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education. A passing score will be determined by the State Department of Education.

I have an undergraduate degree (or master’s degree or certification) in another subject. What will I need to do to obtain a dance certification?

Degree granting institutions and programs will determine specific requirements. Some may offer undergraduate degrees with a certification option, others may offer graduate degrees along with certifications, while still others may potentially offer a certification alone. This is entirely dependent on the institution.

Who would offer certification programs?

There are 31 institutions in the state of Pennsylvania that offer programs in dance. These programs have been surveyed and a number of schools have expressed interest in offering certification options.

Where will pre-service teachers be able to complete their supervised student teaching?

This will be determined by the credentialing program in alignment with the state department of education.

How can I support these efforts?

Join PaDEO [www.padeo.org]. Speak up about these initiatives to your colleagues, school administration, college students, etc. Sign the petition supporting direct dance teacher certification.