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Private Placement Certification

A User Guide for School Districts

STAC ONLINE SYSTEM (EFRT) SCHOOL AGE PRE-APPROVAL

DECEMBER 2021

This guidance supersedes all previously published DCERT guidance

I. Overview

The DCERT screen is used by school district personnel to submit information to SED for providing “Assurance of Required Certifications for 10-Month Private School Reimbursement.” This process must be completed annually for each in-state and out-of-state school age student in an approved 10-month private day or private residential school, including Special Act School Districts. All information submitted is subject to verification by the New York State Education Department. Documentation supporting certifications made on this screen must be maintained at the school district and available upon request.

DCERT records are only required for 10-month school age private placements. All 10-month private placement certification records (DCERT) should be submitted in accordance with the timeframes outlined in section 200.6(j)(3) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. Private Excess Cost Aid will not be paid for a 10-month school age private placement until a DCERT record is submitted through the STAC online system. Full reimbursement for private placements will be paid as long as DCERT and STAC verification records are on file within the statute of limitations pursuant to NYSEL § 3604:

- **June 30th of the school year following the service year, for aid to be paid on a current basis;**
- **June 30th of the school year two years after the service year for aid to be paid from the prior year queue as funds become available.**

Please note that school districts must continue to submit out-of-state packets along with paper STAC-1 forms for approval of State reimbursement for the placement of students in approved out-of-state residential schools.

Private placement certification is required for the following four types of private 10-month placements:

- Day In-State
- Day Out-of-State
- Residential In-State
- Residential Out-of-State

In addition to the annual certification, private placement certification is required for 10-month placements in the following instances:

- Change from day to residential or residential to day placement
- Change from in-state to out-of-state or out-of-state to in-state placement
- Change in Committee on Special Education (CSE) school district
- Change from preschool to school age

II. Submitting a 10-Month Private Placement Certification

1. Log in to the STAC Online (EFRT) System: <https://efrt.nysed.gov/efrt/>
2. From the **DMNUM** “Special Education Main Menu”, select the **DCERT** option.

A screenshot of a web interface showing a menu with a search icon 'S', the text 'DCERT', and a button labeled 'ADD A PRIVATE PLACEMENT CERTIFICATION'.

3. You will be advanced to the **DCERT** “Private Placement Certification” online screen. Enter the student’s STAC ID, the first three letters of the student’s last name, and select the appropriate school year. The CSE District will default to your school district’s 12-digit SED (BEDS) Code.

A screenshot of the DCERT Private Placement Certification form. Fields include: STAC ID (B19029), Name (KEA), Date of Birth, Mode (Inquiry), School Year (2122), CSE District (281230040000), EXAMPLETOWN UFSD, Certification Date, User, Placement Type (dropdown), and CSE Meeting Date (MM/DD/YY). There is an 'Inquire' button and a 'Required for Inquiry' label.

4. Click Inquire.

A screenshot of the DCERT Private Placement Certification form after clicking 'Inquire'. The 'Name' field now shows 'KEATING JOHN' and the 'Date of Birth' field shows '09/16/05'. The 'Mode' has changed to 'ADD'. Other fields remain the same as in the previous screenshot.

The student’s full name and date of birth will be displayed for you to verify that you have selected the correct student. If there is no certification already on file for the student for the selected school year, the Mode will change from Inquiry to ADD.

5. Select the appropriate Placement Type from the **Placement Type** dropdown: Day/In-State, Day/Out-of-State, Res/In-State, or Res/Out-of-State. Then click Inquire again.
6. Enter the CSE Meeting Date in MM/DD/YY format.

A screenshot of the DCERT Private Placement Certification form. The 'Placement Type' dropdown is set to 'Res/In-State' and the 'CSE Meeting Date (MM/DD/YY)' field contains '02/04/21'. The 'Inquire' button is visible.

7. Based on the selected placement type, read and certify the appropriate certification statements.
8. Once you have read and certified all required certifications, click ADD to create a new certification.

A screenshot of the DCERT Private Placement Certification form. It includes a 'NOTE: In order to obtain a timely determination of approval of State reimbursement, the certification must be received by the Department prior to requesting reimbursement. If the district fails to submit a certification, requests for State reimbursement for ten-month private placements will not be processed.' There is a 'Date Transferred Into District' field and 'Inquire' and 'Add' buttons at the bottom.

III. Example of a Completed Certification (DCERT) for a Residential/In-State Placement

Date 04/29/22		New York State Education Department		Go to <input type="text"/>
Time 03:58		PRIVATE PLACEMENT CERTIFICATION		<input type="button" value="Menu"/>
STAC ID	Name	Date of Birth	Mode	
B19029	KEATING JOHN	09/16/05	Inquiry	
School Year	CSE District	EXAMPLETOWN UFSD		
2122	280210030000	Certification Date	User	CSE Meeting Date (MM/DD/YY)
Placement Type		04/23/21	ALENHARD	
Res/In-State	<input type="button" value="Inquire"/>	<input type="text" value="02/04/21"/>		
Required for Inquiry				

(Please Check ALL that apply)

Certification (For all Private Placements):
 Upon submission of this form, the school district representative of the Committee on Special Education (CSE) or his/her designee hereby certifies that all of the information on this form is true and accurate. All information is subject to verification by the New York State Education Department.

Certification (For all placements of students in an in-state or out-of-state approved private school):

- The CSE has provided a current individual evaluation or reevaluation of the student.
- The student has a current individualized education program (IEP).
- The student is of school-age and has a disability or combination of disabilities such that appropriate public facilities for instruction are not available.
- The CSE has documentation of its efforts to place the student in a public facility and the outcomes of those efforts, and/or of CSE findings regarding the lack of suitability of each currently available and geographically accessible public placement.
- The CSE has documentation of all efforts to enable the student to benefit from instruction in less restrictive settings using support services and supplementary aids and special education services, and/or for those services not used, a statement of reasons why such services were not recommended.
- The CSE has detailed evidence of the student's lack of progress in previous less restrictive programs and placements or a statement of reasons that such evidence is not available.
- In the case of a reapplication for reimbursement, the CSE has documentation of the continuing need for placement of the student in a private school.
- For NYC only: Initial Year Nickerson Day Placements** - The CSE is not able to make one or more of the above assurances because the student has an IEP recommendation for a public day program and the student was placed in a private school by the parent pursuant to a Nickerson Letter for the first time this school year.

Additional Certification required for all Residential Placements - (in-state or out-of-state):
 The CSE recommends placement of a student in residential program.

- Documentation is on record that residential services are necessary to meet the student's educational needs as identified in the student's IEP.
- Documentation is on record that includes a proposed plan and timetable for enabling the student to return to a less restrictive environment or a statement of reasons why such a plan is not currently appropriate.
- For out-of-state placement recommendations, documentation is on record that demonstrates that there are no appropriate public or private facilities for instruction available within this State.

Additional Certification (For all initial placements in residential care):
 Documentation is on record that, upon determination that the student was first at risk of residential placement, the district:

- Provided information to the parent on community support services that may be available to the family, including the name and address of agencies which can perform an assessment of a family's community support needs, where such a list had been made available to the CSE.
- Sought parental consent (or consent of the student if 18 or older) to invite county or State agency representatives to the CSE meeting to make recommendations concerning the appropriateness of residential placement and other program and placement alternatives. For students in a foster care placement, the local social services district was notified when the student was determined to be at risk of residential placement.
- Obtained parental (or student) consent and other agency representative(s) were invited to the CSE meeting.

Invited county or State agency representative attended the CSE meeting.

Choose One Yes No

NOTE: In order to obtain a timely determination of approval of State reimbursement, the certification must be received by the Department prior to requesting reimbursement. If the district fails to submit a certification, requests for State reimbursement for ten-month private placements will not be processed.

Date Transferred Into District

IV. When a Student's Placement Type Changes

The STAC online system only recognizes the most recent certification on file for a specific student. If the student changes to a different placement type, simply add an additional DCERT.

To add an additional DCERT for a different placement type:

1. Go to the online screen named **DCERT** (Private Placement Certification). Enter the STAC ID, the first 3 letters of the student's last name and select the appropriate school year. The CSE district will default to your district's 12-digit BEDS code.
2. Click Inquire.
3. The most recent certification for the selected year will be displayed, showing all of the certifications associated with that placement type.
4. Select the new placement type from the dropdown.
5. Click Inquire.
6. The screen will be cleared of all previous certifications and will now be in the ADD mode.
7. Enter the new CSE Meeting Date.
8. Based on the selected placement type, read and certify the appropriate certification statements.
9. Once you have read and certified all required certifications, click ADD to create a new certification approval.

V. Retrieving a full listing of your school district's Private Placement Certifications for a school year

1. Go to DQCER screen (Private Placement Certification List).
2. Select School Year.
3. Click on Inquire.
4. All certifications will be displayed first in alphabetical order, by student's last name; followed by chronological order if a student has more than one certification on file for your district. When adding a STAC approval record, please note that the STAC Online system only recognizes the most recent certification on file for a specific student.

Date 12/08/20		New York State Education Department		Go to <input type="text"/>		
Time 05:04		Private Placement Certification List		<input type="button" value="Menu"/>		
School Year		District				
2021 <input type="button" value="Inquire"/>		281230040000		EXAMPLETOWN UFSD		
Record Count 3		<input type="button" value="Send to SED FTM"/>				
Last Name/First Name	STAC ID	Day/Res	In/Out of State	Certification Date/Time	CSE Meeting Date	User
DAYINSTATE MAE	B18010	DAY	IN-STATE	12/08/20 05:04 PM	03/31/20	ALENHARD
KEATING JOHN	B19029	RES	IN-STATE	12/08/20 04:36 PM	04/18/20	ALENHARD
NEWPRIVATE KID	B17841	RES	IN-STATE	12/08/20 05:02 PM	03/29/20	ALENHARD

VI. Reminders for Successful Processing of STAC DCERTs and Ten-Month Private Approvals

1. *Timeliness:* Remember to submit DCERTs in a timely manner. The certification must be processed on EFRT prior to adding a ten-month private approval record.
2. *Processing Order for DCERTs and STAC Ten-Month Private Approvals:*
EFRT only recognizes the most recent certification on file for a specific student. Prior to entering a second DCERT for a student, due to a change in placement type, it is necessary to have added the STAC service approval which corresponds to the first DCERT on file. For example, when a student changes from a day placement to a residential placement, the day service approval record must be added or amended prior to adding the residential certification and residential STAC service approval.
3. *Confirmation of Successful Certification:* Please use the DQCER screen to verify that a certification has been successfully submitted on EFRT. The new DCERT should be listed on the DQCER screen. If you have any questions, please contact the STAC and Medicaid Unit at OMSSTAC@nysed.gov.