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TO: Schools Offering Yoga Instruction

FROM: Carole W. Yates, Director

SUBJECT: Requirement for Licensure

DATE: May 1, 2009

Section 5001 of the New York State Education Law requires a license for any entity that offers instruction for tuition or fee unless exempt. Exemptions are found in Section 5001.2 of the Education Law.

In Section 5001.2(f), there is no exemption for yoga teacher training. The Bureau of Proprietary School Supervision views the training of a student to become a yoga teacher as vocational. Yoga teaching is an occupation, whether employed or self employed.

If the student would expect to learn skills which may be used in an occupation at a later point, whether employed or self employed, then the training needs to be regulated by our bureau. Factors that are relevant in such a determination are advertising and course content.

Many inquiries have indicated that schools which teach only language, religion, and athletics in the context of yoga are exempt. As indicated above, if the training involves teacher training, which may include these components, we do not view this as exempt.

We view yoga training as more than recreation and athletics. Yoga is a specific system of exercise for physical and mental well being. It goes beyond recreation and athletics.

Further, we are not aware of any statute, judicial decision/legislative finding, or regulation which exempts yoga teacher training schools from the requirements under the New York State Education Law.