



Certification and Higher Education Committee
Maine State Board of Education
Minutes of the October 25, 2023 Meeting

The Certification and Higher Education Committee held a virtual monthly meeting on Wednesday, October 25, 2023, via Zoom. The following were present: Chair Thomas Keller, Victoria Kornfield, and Denham Ward (Board Members). Deputy Commissioner Chuhta; Michael Perry, Director of the Office of Higher Education and Educator Support Services; Erin Reinhard, Certification Coordinator; and Sandra Bourget, State Board of Education Office Specialist.

Guests: Rose Marie Angell; Penny Bishop; Mallory Cook; Cynthia Dean; Amy Johnson; and Gay Anne McDonald.

Chair Keller called the meeting to order at 10:30 AM.

Special Meetings Announcement:

Chair Keller announced that there would be two Certification & Higher Education Committee Special Meetings. They will be held:

- **November 13, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.**
In-person in Room 500 of the Burton Cross Office Building and virtually via Zoom
- **November 27, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.**
In-person in Room 500 of the Burton Cross Office Building and virtually via Zoom

At these meetings, members of the public are invited to provide comments regarding potential revisions to the State Board Rule Chapter 115 as well as recommendations on L.D. 485.

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION by Victoria Kornfield, seconded by Denham Ward, and unanimously voted by those present to accept the September 27, 2023, minutes as presented. The motion passes.

Public Comment:

Rose Marie Angell addressed the Certification & Higher Education Committee. She started by thanking the committee for examining teacher education credentialing. She stated that the decisions that are made by this committee, has an effect on the higher education decisions that are made for course selection in order to meet the certification requirement. Course content should be critical in these decisions; otherwise, it will pose a problem in the field.

Higher Education Update:

- Michael Perry is in contact with people who have signed up via the online form for EPP reviews. He hopes to have one or two complete committees by next month. Penny Bishop has drafted a formal thank you letter for individuals who serve on these committees. Denham Ward is taking the lead on this effort.
- Pieces of Higher Education legislation that passed went into effect today.
- Next institutions up for review are Husson University and Maine College of Art and Design. The month of January would work well for Husson, and MECA&D would be later in the semester.
- Michael and Erin are meeting with EPPs individually to determine an agreed list of approved programs and the potential date for their next review.
- Maine's Title II report is due to the US Department of Education on October 31.

Review of Annual Reports for Chapter 114 Approved Programs:

15 colleges submit this report to the Committee. The reports are due each year by April 7. With Title II being added to the annual reports, it has made them longer. The Committee is excited to work with the EPPs to make the Annual Report useful to all. One thought is to share the reports with all EPPs and it was suggested that a 'check off' be added to the report providing permission to share the individual report broadly.

The Committee reviewed and discussed the following reports:

- University of Maine at Machias
- University of Maine at Presque Isle
- University of New England
- University of Southern Maine

This concludes the review of annual reports.

Certification Update:

- Michael introduced Erin Reinhard, who is the new Certification Coordinator.
- 2,912 endorsements were processed in September, which is equal year to year. Between June through August (summer), there was a 140% increase of applications processed year to year. The work has shifted to educators who have more complex certification cases.
- 1,584 violations exist currently. School districts have until the end of October to report out for NEO. We should have more accurate violation numbers next month.
- L.D. 753 has been implemented as of today.
- People can contact Sandra Bourget for a copy of the draft L.D. 485 report.
- Michael attended the Annual CTE Educator Conference in Lewiston and presented in three workshops. Two evaluators were present to review individual applications and suggest options.

Update from the Maine Educator Preparation Programs:

On behalf of the EPPs, Cynthia Dean from the University of Maine at Augusta attended today's meeting. Cynthia welcomed and congratulated Erin Reinhard on her new position as Certification Coordinator. University of Southern Maine is working to gather a course list from all EPPs. Then work will begin with the Certification Office to solidify an agreed list of approved programs for Pathway 2.

The University of Maine system want to be partners in the potential revision of Chapter 115 and Chapter 114, if that opens. Cynthia appreciated the discussion about a seven-year approval for a program review instead of five years, even though we've since learned it needs to be handled legislatively.

A short discussion was had about TEAME having a focus on practices as a regular agenda item. For example, there could be a discussion on best practices in using zoom for student teacher support, compensation for student teachers and cooperating teachers, or training manuals for cooperating teachers.

Other Business:

- Denham reported that the Professional Standards Board is going to focus on implementation of the prior year's recommendations (presented to the MSBE at the July meeting) that can be accomplished without the need for additional financial resources.
- Barrier – Teachers are still struggling with certification requirements.
 - Not just teachers, administrators also.
 - MDOE is working with the UMaine EPPs to develop lists of courses that meet the requirements for certification.
 - There may be opportunities to disseminate “best practices” for recertification, including how multiple recertifications can be readily accomplished, even those not currently being used. This may require looking at Chapter 115 regarding recertification. The differences between districts were discussed.
- Barrier – Early Intervention programs are not effective as currently designed.
 - Discussion on class size in kindergarten to help work on behavior issues early. Unfortunately to make changes in the maximum class size for kindergarten (rather than PreK) would require a law change (MRS 4502 (5) (b)).
- Barrier – New teacher mentoring programs and mentors.
 - Mentors and mentoring are considered essential to recruitment and retention.
 - Best practices from districts that have been notably successful in recruitment and retention could be shared.
 - MEA, MPA, and MSA should be involved in helping to develop mentoring workshops in addition to the MDOE and MSBE.
- There was not enough time to discuss the other barriers and recommendations.
- Victoria Kornfield disagrees with PSB reviewing requirements for specific endorsements in collaboration with MDOE.
- Dolly Sullivan held some focus groups in the Fort Kent area on teacher recruitment and retention and the Teach Maine Center.

The next regular Certification Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 29, 2023, at 10:30 AM. The two special committee meetings are November 13 at 1:00 PM and November 27 at 3:00 PM.

Adjournment:

The October 25, 2023, Certification and Higher Education Committee meeting adjourned at 11:31 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Sandra Bourget, Office Specialist
Maine State Board of Education