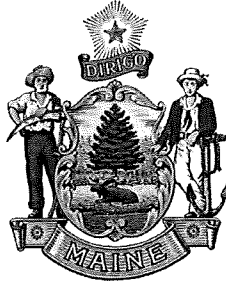


# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Maine Department of Education  
Maine State Board of Education  
23 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333

September 1, 2014

Senator Rebecca Millett, Senate Chair  
Representative Bruce MacDonald, House Chair  
Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs  
126<sup>th</sup> Maine Legislature

Senator Millett and Representative MacDonald,

Attached please find the progress report that you requested in your letter to us of April 29, 2014. This report outlines the status of efforts by the State Board of Education and the Department of Education on issues relating to teacher preparation, certification and teacher performance.

Please feel free to contact either of us if you have questions about the report. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Peter Geiger in cursive.

Peter Geiger, Chair  
State Board of Education

Handwritten signature of James E. Rier, Jr. in cursive.

James E. Rier, Jr., Commissioner  
Department of Education

The Education and Cultural Affairs Committee has requested a progress report on issues that were raised by LD 1361.

The following report identifies key areas that would highlight the status of efforts to incorporate proficiency-based education into all aspects of public education in the state.

### **Teacher Preparation**

State Board of Education Rule Chapter 114 governs the approval of teacher preparation programs in the State. That rule was recently amended to require those programs to use updated InTASC standards and standards for the use of technology in education (NETS.T) in preparing teachers for the field.

Teacher preparation programs are adjusting their coursework to reflect the new state standards for English Language Arts and mathematics. These programs recognize the importance of the new standards as their students prepare to become certified.

Because of the state and national accreditation requirements such as CAEP, our programs are aware of the multiple changes affecting their programs, such as the need for their students to be prepared to function in a proficiency-based classroom.

### **Qualifying examinations for initial (provisional) teacher licensure**

ETS is the provider for the Praxis I, Praxis II, and the PLT. These are the tests that our teaching candidates must take to receive a provisional certificate to teach in Maine, and they are updated frequently to reflect the changing demands on teachers in the field. The tests are generally on a five-year review cycle.

ETS has recently updated the Praxis I exam to reflect the Common Core State Standards for math and ELA, ensuring that candidates for provisional certification will know the new Maine state standards.

ETS has also made a major revision to the Praxis General Elementary Test, aligning the tests with new ELA and math standards and breaking the test into 4 sections to better analyze candidate strengths in the content areas of ELA, math, science and social studies.

The Certification and Higher Education Committee of the State Board of Education has been reviewing processes used by other states, such as the edTPA and the ETS PPAT which are based on a portfolio model for certification. These pilot projects are being watched for effectiveness and cost.

## **Mentoring of Provisionally Certified Teachers**

Rule Chapter 118 governs the support given to provisionally-certified teachers in their first 2 years of the profession. Each provisionally-certified teacher is assigned a local mentor, who must be trained in accordance with materials developed by the Department.

The State Board and DOE has convened a small stakeholders' group to look at the current mentoring processes and materials. The group sent a survey to all districts, asking for insight into how they are currently implementing the Chapter 118 mentoring and support requirements. The committee received over 50% return rate and is currently analyzing those results to determine how best to improve the process and materials.

## **State Board Rules Relating to Certification and Recertification**

Rule Chapter 115 fleshes out the statutory standards for initial certification of teachers and renewal of certification. This rule chapter was amended as recently as last year to address some specific concerns relating to certification of CTE instructors.

Various stakeholders have made suggestions to the Board regarding potential changes to Chapter 115, but the Board has not taken action on any specific suggestions. Ideas that have been brought forward include changes to certification of special education teachers, Educational Technicians, changes to certification standards relating to literacy, and a suggestion for changes to the grade spans for certification endorsement.

The State Board will be requesting a re-opening of Chapter 115, and will form a stakeholders group to make recommendations about reviewing and updating the rule. The rule should be reviewed and updated to address any conflicts among all of the changes that have occurred since its last revision in 2004. LD 1361 suggests that revisions need to be addressed in teacher re-certification. The opening up of Chapter 115 would certainly address these concerns. A thorough review of the rule is likely to take at least a year.

## **Teacher Performance**

More information about the performance of certified teachers will be available once school administrative units begin implementing their Performance Evaluation and Professional Growth systems under the new statute and Rule Chapter 180.