



**Certification and Higher Education Committee**  
Maine State Board of Education  
Minutes of the February 24, 2021 Meeting

The Certification and Higher Education Committee held a virtual meeting on Wednesday, February 24, 2021, via Zoom. The following were present: Committee Chair, Wendy Ault; Fern Desjardins; Jana Lapoint; Wilson Hess; Peter Geiger; and John Bird (Board Members). Deputy Commissioner Chuhta; Angel Loreda, Director of Higher Education and Educator Support Services; Jason Libby, Higher Education Specialist; Stephanie Fyfe, Certification Coordinator; (Department of Education) and Mary Becker, State Board Secretary Specialist.

Guests: Jill Adams, Executive Director, MADSEC and Vicki Wallack, Communications Director, MSMA.

Fern Desjardins called the meeting to order at 10:33 AM.

**Introductions:** Fern Desjardins welcomed all members and guests to the meeting and reviewed the agenda.

The focus of the February 24, 2021 meeting was stated:

- Approval of Minutes
- Public Comment
- Certification update from Stephanie Fyfe, Certification Coordinator
- Higher Education update from Jason Libby, Higher Education Specialist
- University of New England (UNE) Review
- Review draft revisions to Chapter 115, Part II

Committee Chair Wendy Ault joined the meeting.

Wilson Hess, Board Chair, announced that he is appointing himself as a member of the Certification and Higher Education Committee effective today.

**Approval of Minutes:**

MOTION by Fern Desjardins, seconded by Jana Lapoint, and unanimously voted by those present to accept the January 27, 2021 minutes as presented.

MOTION by Fern Desjardins, seconded by Jana Lapoint, and unanimously voted by those present to accept the February 3, 2021 minutes as presented.

MOTION by Fern Desjardins, seconded by Jana Lapoint, and unanimously voted by those present to accept the February 8, 2021 minutes as presented.

**Public Comment:**

No Public Comment

**Certification Office Update:** *(Stephanie Fyfe)*

**MEIS Info – Online System:**

*Status Update:*

- Applications – Three week turn around for complete and re-opened applications / renewals largely instantaneous
- Phones – An average of 60 to 80 calls a day – wait time between 0 and 20 minutes
- Priorities of certification office staff is phones, emails and processing

*Quarter 3 Processing Update:*

Stephanie shared processing data from January 1 to January 31, 2021 (third quarter) and data from January 1 to December 31, 2020.

*Considerations:*

- Initial applications only – not issued certificates and not including re-opened applications
- Actual issuances total 20,621 (different types of certificates) for the entirety of 2020, of which they may or may not be connected to the 28K listed.
- Total active credentials in the state (excluding CHRC only) 64,121 (currently active in system)
- \$1.2 M is relatively consistent annual revenue from source. With COVID extension from last Spring, this revenue number is as expected

*Other Data Points:*

- 109 individuals issued Reciprocity Professional Certificates for a total of 175 endorsements
- 209 individuals issued Emergency Certificates for a total of 247 endorsements
- 62 Waiver of Certificates issued, compared to 98 issued last school year

There were questions that require research. Answers will be included in next month's report.

**Higher Education Update:** *(Jason Libby)*

*Annual Reports*

- Jason reported that several Annual Reports have been received ahead of the April 7, 2021 deadline.

### *Review Team schedules*

- Delayed Program Reviews:
  - University of Maine at Machias
  - The College of the Atlantic (COA) (Wendy Ault will serve as the Board Observer)
  - Bates College (Peter Geiger will serve as the Board Observer)
  - The University of New England (UNE)
  - The University of Maine at Presque Isle (UMPI)
- The Committee was reminded that Roux Institute is interested in scheduling a site visit (at their request). It is hoped that an in-person visit can be scheduled in the Fall of 2021.
- The University of Southern Maine (USM) will be conducted virtually with CAEP.
- The College of the Atlantic review

### **UNE Inclusion Graduate Degree Review:** *(Jason Libby)*

A full review of The University of New England's education programs had been scheduled for October 2020 but was delayed until 2021 due to the pandemic. On September 23, 2020, the Certification and Higher Education Committee agreed to allow an abbreviated review for this program to proceed so that UNE could potentially enroll students for the academic year 2021-22 with state approval.

During the second week of January, a virtual review took place. The Board observer was Jana Lapoint. The team recommends an initial temporary approval until a full review can be conducted later in 2021.

A new category was created to include in future review reports. Considerations is intended to include items to contemplate or consider that do not rise to the level of recommendations. All Participants in the UNE review attending this meeting expressed their support for this category.

MOTION by Fern Desjardins, seconded by Jana Lapoint, and unanimously voted by those present to recommend to the State Board of Education the University of New England Master of Education Inclusion program receive an initial temporary approval that will enable program completers to be eligible for Maine Department of Education 282 teaching endorsement, with the understanding that the program will be part of a comprehensive review during the unit's (UNE College of Graduate and Professional Studies) review later in 2021, and that the noted recommendations in the UNE review letter be addressed during the full review when it occurs.

### **Rule Chapter 115 Review:**

The Committee reviewed draft revisions to Part II, *Requirements for Specific Certificates and Endorsements*, with Deputy Commissioner Chuhta.

Following much discussion, it was decided that the Committee will need additional meetings to continue Part II revisions and a meeting to approve the final draft of

the Chapter 115 document.

**Meeting Handouts:**

- 1) Agenda
- 2) Draft Minutes – January 27, February 3, and February 8, 2021
- 3) Chapter 115, Part II
- 4) Certification News from Stephanie Fyfe
- 5) UNE Inclusion Graduate Degree Review

The next regular Certification Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 24, 2021 at 10:30 AM. The meeting will be held virtually via Zoom. Special Committee meetings to continue the review of Chapter 115 are scheduled for Monday, March 1, Wednesday, March 3, and Thursday, March 4.

**Adjournment:**

The February 24, 2021 Certification and Higher Education Committee meeting adjourned at 12:37 PM.