



Certification and Higher Education Committee

Maine State Board of Education
Minutes of the February 26, 2020 Meeting

The Certification and Higher Education Committee held a meeting on Wednesday, February 26, 2020, at the Department of Education in Augusta. The following were present: Committee Chair, Jane Sexton; Jana Lapoint; Wendy Ault; and Wilson Hess (Board Members). Deputy Commissioner Daniel Chuhta; Angel Loreda, Director of Higher Education and Educator Support Services; Stephanie Fyfe, Certification Coordinator; and Jason Libby, Higher Education Specialist (Department of Education) and Mary Becker, State Board Secretary Specialist.

Guest: Cynthia Alexander, Assistant Superintendent, RSU #5 and Holly Couturier, Executive Director – Professional Division, Maine Principals’ Association

Chair, Jane Sexton called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM.

Public Comment:

No Public Comment

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION by Jana Lapoint, seconded by Jane Sexton, and unanimously voted by those present to accept the January 22, 2020 minutes as written.

Certification Office Update: *(Stephanie Fyfe)*

MEIS Info – Online System:

- 0-15 minutes phone wait time – zero most of the time
- Applications – clean as of February 25th
- Meets with developer on a regular basis – once a week

Stephanie updated the Committee on the following projects:

- Teacher Shortage Report
- Chapter 13
- ABSP Board
- System Enhancements
- Website Improvements
- Support Chair Training

Refocus:

- Internal Training of staff – there is a big push on training due to miscommunication
- Proactive Approach – never had capacity in the past to make proactive steps
- Training/Support of New Superintendents – working with new superintendents to be sure they have information and understand
- Identifying top end data issues and revolving with individual districts – extra time to find issues – ripple effect

Jane Sexton suggested that there be a workshop session on Certification at the Commissioner's Conference for Superintendents in June. Stephanie has held a workshop in the past but did not have one at last year's conference. If she is invited to present at the conference in June, Stephanie would be happy to participate.

Higher Education Update: (*Jason Libby*)

Update on Team Reports:

- *Northeastern University* – Received Degree Granting Authority request from Northeastern University (announced five days following the last Certification and Higher Education Committee meeting).
 - Roux Institute is partnering with Northeastern University and is providing \$100 million to establish several programs in Portland.
 - Jason has met with Northeastern three times and is expecting to receive a self-study next week.
 - Jason has a proposed review team and is looking for approval by the State Board along with appointment of a State Board Observer for the upcoming team review which he does not have a date for, currently.
 - Jason will prepare an exhibit for the March 11, 2020 State Board of Education meeting with a list of the proposed five individuals that have agreed to participate on the review team.
 - The team is hoping to meet by the end of March 2020. It will be a two-day review – Monday and Tuesday if possible. Jana Lapoint volunteered to be the Board Observer provided she is still on the State Board and Wendy Ault will check her calendar for availability once she has the dates.
 - Jana Lapoint expressed concern with how they will choose their students. With discussion amongst the Committee, it was discovered that newspaper information was in-correct.
- *Thomas College Team Report (Peter Geiger was the board observer)* – The full Board received the team report at the February 12, 2020 Board meeting. The Committee reviewed the report (page by page) and voted to recommend that the full Board approve the report of findings at the March 11, 2020 meeting. Peter Geiger called in to the meeting for review of the Thomas College report. Jason did a re-cap of the team review and Peter commented on his participation as a Board observer and agreed that the Committee recommend approval by the full Board.
- *Colby College (Wendy Ault was the board observer)* – The Committee received the report of findings at the January 22, 2020 meeting to review and discuss at the February 26, 2020 Committee meeting. The Board voted to receive the report at the February 12, 2020 full Board meeting. The Committee's February 26, 2020 agenda included review and discussion of the Colby report, however, time did not permit for review. The Board will review the team report of findings at the March 25, 2020 meeting.
- *University of Maine at Augusta (Fern Desjardins was the board observer)* – The report of findings was distributed to Committee members to review over the next month. The Committee will review together and discuss the report at the March 25, 2020 Committee meeting.

MOTION by Wendy Ault, seconded by Jana Lapoint, and unanimously voted by those present to recommend that the State Board of Education approve the proposed review team at the March 11, 2020 State Board meeting.

Upcoming Reviews:

- *Reviews coming up in 2020 but have not all been scheduled to date.*
 - University of Maine at Machias will be held in April. Martha Harris will be the Board Observer.
 - College of the Atlantic Review is scheduled for May 3 to 5, 2020. Wendy will be the Board Observer.
 - Bates College will be in September – need a Board Observer.
 - University of New England (UNE) will be in October – need a Board Observer.

Annual Report – Due date is April 7:

- The cover letter has been sent out and each report will be delivered to Jason Libby.
 - Reporting period is from September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2019
 - Minor changes to the form

Chapter 115 Update: (Deputy Commissioner Dan Chuhta)

Chapter 115 – Certification, Authorization and Approval of Education Personnel:

Dan met with Commissioner Makin to discuss the Chapter 115 Rule-making Framework. At the Committee meeting, Dan distributed a memorandum to the group and reviewed the framework with the Committee.

- A strategic priority of the Maine Department of Education (MDOE) is to “develop, support, and sustain a robust educator workforce.” In the writing of a new version of Chapter 115, the MDOE endeavors to partner with the State Board of Education (SBE) to create a rule that balances the expectation for well qualified individuals with the desire for a robust (i.e., skilled, diverse, compassionate, engaged, inspiring, motivating, caring) educator workforce.
- To establish a framework for the development of a new Chapter 115, the MDOE proposes the following priorities, considerations, and essential questions, used collectively, as a starting point.
- We believe in the following priorities:
 - The rule should be *clear* and easy to follow from the perspective of all users.
 - The rule should be *simple*.
 - How can we dramatically reduce the number of endorsements (perhaps by a third)?
 - The rule should be *flexible*.
 - How can we recognize work/life experience? How can we recognize pathways that are often included in the interesting and compelling cases we are frequently presented with (but are currently turned away with the existing rule)?
- We believe in the following considerations:
 - The rule should focus on outcomes, rather than inputs
 - The rule should enable, not inhibit, educators who wish to continuously develop into increasing levels of leadership
 - The rule should utilize reciprocity from other states, while also adding Maine-specific requirements when appropriate
 - The rule should promote the authorization of educational technicians through an outcomes-based determination

- What are the minimum skills, affects, and abilities that one needs in order to be an educational technician?
 - How can professional learning included in adult education and community college courses be used?
- We believe in the following essential questions, used as “litmus tests,” for requirements:
- What is the purpose of a specific requirement?
 - Is this requirement aligned with the goals of increasing the educator workforce and increasing the diversity of the educator workforce?
 - Can the requirement be met in an alternative manner?
 - Is this requirement potentially screening out a wonderful educator?

The Committee continued the meeting with a dialogue of Chapter 115 Rule-making Framework.

- Present to full SBE Dan’s memorandum
- Committee agreed to send Dan’s memorandum to the full Board in advance of the March 11, 2020 Board meeting for review
- Workshop agenda item on March 11 for Dan to present the memorandum to the Board

Meeting Handouts:

- 1) Agenda
- 2) Draft Minutes of the January 22, 2020 meeting
- 3) Certification News from Stephanie Fyfe
- 4) Thomas College Team Review of Findings
- 5) Colby College Team Review of Findings
- 6) Chapter 114 Rule: Purpose, Standards and Procedures for the Review and Approval of Preparation Programs for Education Personnel

Homework:

- 1) Each committee member will continue working on the standards related to Higher Education Reviews – Chapter 114. They will look at each standard in relation to team reports to see that they are consistent within each standard.
 - Jane Sexton – Standard 2: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation
 - Jana Lapoint – Standard 3: Field Experiences and Clinical Practice
 - Wendy Ault – Standard 4: Diversity

The next Certification Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 25, 2020 at 9:30 AM. The meeting will be held in room 538 of the Burton Cross State Office Building.

Adjournment: The Certification Committee meeting adjourned at 12:14 PM.

Note: Considering the change in society since the February 26, 2020 meeting, the proposed dates for Committee meetings will be changed.