



Certification and Higher Education Committee Meeting

23 State House Station
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333

STATE OF MAINE

The Certification and Higher Education Committee held a meeting on May 28, 2025, via Zoom. The following members were present: Chair Thomas Keller, and members Victoria Kornfield and Denham Ward with 13 others present

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

Victoria Kornfield moved that the minutes from the April 30, 2025 meeting be accepted as written, Denham seconded and all approved.

Public Comment: Dr. Rose Angell discussed several documents she had sent in advance regarding the 515 Adapted Physical Education endorsement.

No other Public Comments were offered.

Michael Perry, Director of the Office of Higher Education and Educator Support Services reported on upcoming EPP and other IHE reviews. Michael provided updates on ongoing higher education reviews, including the assignment of State Board observers and progress on the Northeastern University Programmatic Review and the review of Beal University. He also mentioned a new application from Antioch University seeking main approval for their programs in Maine. Michael requested additional review team volunteers and confirmed that Colby College's approval was voted through by the State Board. Tom inquired about the level of programming Antioch University was seeking, and Michael clarified it was primarily masters-level programs. The group discussed the annual EPP reports, with Michael suggesting Tom check his spam folder for the shared documents. The annual EPP reports were not found there.

The group discussed concerns about international student recruitment and retention in higher education, as well as the future of Title 2 higher education data collection, which may be at risk due to federal office closures. They examined the need to update several chapters of legislation, including chapters 114, 149, and 170, with Michael noting that Chapter 114's review process could serve as a model for other states. Daniel raised the issue of statutory authority for Chapter 114, which Sarah had previously questioned, suggesting that legislative action may be needed before rulemaking can proceed.

Michael Perry, Director of the Office of Higher Education and Educator Support Services reported on certification issues. The committee discussed the upcoming RFP process for a new MEIS system, with Michael noting that while he couldn't provide a specific timeline, implementation would likely take around a year if there were no technical issues. Tom suggested submitting requests for data points to ensure functionality for slicing and dicing conditional and regional data, which Michael confirmed was included in the RFP. Michael presented the monthly report, highlighting that 2,445 applications were processed in April including 385 initial teacher certifications and 595 teacher certification renewals., bringing the year-to-date total to approximately 14,000, with communication efforts showing increased activity despite a slight decrease in application processing compared to the previous month.

The committee reviewed the final list of teaching shortage areas for the upcoming year, with Michael noting that while there were no major surprises, computer technology and theater were newly added to the list. Michael explained that computer technology positions often require teaching at least one tech course, which helps districts meet certification requirements. The committee also discussed that there were 861 CHRC violations,

unchanged from the previous month, with Erin Reinhard now personally contacting superintendents with 10 or more violations.

The meeting focused on discussing violations, particularly certification and fingerprinting issues. Michael explained that while fingerprinting violations had not significantly decreased, certification violations were more common, citing an example of an ASL teacher who was out of compliance due to changing certification requirements. The team discussed a pending letter from the DOE requesting more detailed violation information, which Michael and the data team would analyze further.

Denham provided an update on the regional longitudinal data study, noting that while the contract with the region one center had ended, the work continued with good support from the region.

TEAMe and EPP report - Dr. Doris Santoro, Bowdoin College

Doris Santoro provided updates on two ongoing pilot programs in art and music certification, which are progressing well and may be included in the college's overall program approval in the coming years.

She raised concerns about the potential misalignment between EPP course expectations and certification interpretations, emphasizing the need for clear communication and distinction between students who have worked closely with EPPs and those who have not during transcript analysis. Michael clarified that three certification staff members are dedicated to transcript analysis, and the team is working to address any misalignment issues that may arise due to changing course requirements.

Doris announced her resignation from Bowdoin College effective June 30th, 2023, after 20 years in education, to pursue farming in Rangeley. She highlighted the success of the postgraduate pathway for student teachers and mentioned plans for hiring two new faculty positions, including a potential AI-related role. Doris also discussed the challenges faced by international students, noting their declining numbers and concerns about their safety in the current political climate. Denham suggested surveying EPP programs to determine the percentage of international students in education, as international enrollment may be decreasing across disciplines.

Chapter 115 proposed amendments:

The State Board will be discussing proposed amendments to Chapter 115, focusing on four key issues: middle-level certification, special education, adapted PE certification, and coherence between Part 1 and Part 2 of the document. Tom outlined the timeline for the review process, aiming to submit the amendments to the AG's office by mid-June for a one-month legal review, followed by a 30-day public review and hearing in mid-July to early September. The goal is to have the State Board submit the final version to the Legislature by January 2026.

Other business:

Tom encouraged committee members to think about the future direction of education in Maine, this committee, and their role in certification and higher education, with the next committee meeting scheduled for June 25.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 11:45 am.