



## **Certification and Higher Education Committee Meeting**

23 State House Station  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333

### **STATE OF MAINE**

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The Certification and Higher Education Committee held a meeting on July 23, 2025, via Zoom. The following members were present: Chair Thomas Keller, and members Victoria Kornfield, Denham Ward and new member Victoria Cohen being noted as unable to attend. Others Present included representatives from various educational organizations, including the Maine Education Association, University of Maine, and Maine Curriculum Leaders Association, with several superintendents and educators present. The meeting was recorded, and participants were asked to provide their names and affiliations in the chat.

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

Victoria Kornfield moved that the minutes from the June 25, 2025, meeting be accepted as written, Denham seconded and all approved.

Public Comment: Mallory Cook regarding the Chapter 115, Part I educator certification renewal procedures, suggesting a limit of 45 contact hours for delivering training and 45 hours for professional learning to maintain certification value.

#### **Higher Education Update:**

In absence of Michael Perry, Tom discussed updates from the NC-SARA Northeastern Regional Steering Committee, including policy modifications for NC-SARA, and provided an overview of upcoming institutional reviews, including Beal University's initial meeting which Denham attended and Northeastern University's Roux Center which is next week and Tom and Phat will be attending.

The committee discussed the annual EPP reports from Husson University, St. Joseph's College of Maine, Thomas College, and the University of Maine. The group reviewed teacher education programs at several universities, noting that Husson had 47 enrolled in elementary education with a 15:1 student-to-supervisor ratio for student teaching, while St. Joe's had 6 secondary math pre-service teachers but failed to provide requested graduate data. Thomas College was praised for its improved numbers and connections with Colby through the central Maine learning consortium, while the University of Maine had 23 people in their doctorate program with a 6.5% enrollment decrease. The discussion emphasized the importance of tracking graduate outcomes and suggested that more dual certification programs in special education might be needed. It was noted that Thomas College is developing an education-specific alumni listserv and survey and it may be useful to share that with other schools once developed.

The committee voted to receive and place these reports on file.

#### **Certification Update:**

Erin Rinehard provided the monthly report and noted that 3,387 applications were processed, including 3 retired teachers re-applying and 516 initial certificate applications. Erin explained that while there are 516 initial teacher certifications in the pipeline, the majority of these candidates are not recent college graduates but rather

older individuals who have changed careers, with many coming from education technician backgrounds. She also pointed out that fewer than 10% of applications are for individuals coming through Pathway 1.

She also reported that the commissioner has determined that reciprocal teacher certification can be applied to all educational jobs in Maine and not just on the shortage list. She said she would forward more information and a departmental press release on this when available but superintendents were informed of it already.

TEAMe and EPPs Update:

Dr. Wendi Malenfant of the University of Maine at Presque Isle provided an impressive report on the work of TEAMe as well as activities at UMPI.

Members of TEAMe met with Jon Doty and Heather Perry in a very productive meeting about 'Pathway 3'. It is important that all parties are informed about this evolving pathway.

At UMPI, they recently hosted the Maine Mobile Biolab with evening activities for families, they hired a new faculty member who has a strong background in TESOL (Teaching English as a Second Language), participated in UMaine's Rural Thrive grant, and engaged in other endeavors.

The group discussed the status and activities of regional education service centers in Maine, including CASE, Greater Sebago Education Alliance, Western Maine Alliance, and Washington County Consortium. Wendi, Peter Lancia and Deb McIntyre described their local collaborative efforts, focusing on professional development, leader development, and specialized training. Jonathan Moody highlighted the significant impact of Federal funding, including Title II, on professional development across the state. The State Board was advised to stay involved by advocating for and supporting these initiatives, particularly at the Federal level.

Other business:

Discussion turned to next steps for the committee with reviews of Chapters 114 (last amended in 2012), 149 (last amended in 2008) and 170 (last amended in 2008) being necessary. Denham pointed out that Chapter 13, as well, needs updating.

Laura Cyr pointed out that all four of these are routine and technical rules meaning that they do not have to go through the extensive APA process as opposed to Chapter 115 which is major and substantive. That said, any discussions about Chapters 13 and 114 should be open and transparent and must involve the EPPs and others. Chapters 149 and 170 are about degree-granting and the discussions should also be open and transparent but the participating constituencies are less well defined.

Tom provided an update on Chapter 115, being that it has been passed to the AG's office for a pre-review. The hope is that the 30 day public comment with hearing period would take place in August/September. Laura Cyr agreed that she could shepherd Chapter 115 through the Administrative Procedures Act processes when ready and thought the timeline was doable.

There being no other business other than noting that the next meeting is August 27, 2025 at 10:30 am EDT, the meeting adjourned at 11:40 am.