



Certification and Higher Education Committee

MAINE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Minutes of the April 22, 2026 Meeting

Minutes of April 22, 2026, Certification and Higher Education Committee meeting.

Members present: Victoria Cohen, Denham Ward, Tom Keller, and Craig Flowers, Staff for the State Board of Education.

Others present: Jane Loxterkamp, Facilitator of Learning, Eastern Maine Community College, Flynn Ross, Chair and Professor, University Of Southern Maine, Katy Rybakova, Associate Professor of Education, Thomas College, Jon Doty, Superintendent, RSU 34 Old Town, and Michael Perry, MDOE.

I. The meeting was called to order at 10:30 am by Chair Keller. Committee members, staff and meeting attendees introduced themselves.

II. It was moved by Denham to accept the minutes, seconded by Vicky and voted unanimous to accept.

III. No public comments were offered.

IV. Higher Education update

A. Classic Planning Academy - Tom moved to recommend temporary approval through the end of the 2025-26 academic year to the full State Board, based on the Commissioner's report dated March 9, 2026, Vicky seconded the motion and it was accepted unanimously.

B. Beal University - Denham was the SBE Observer and will be back for the full SBE meeting at which this will be discussed.

C. Northeastern University's Roux Institute - The committee also discussed the Northeastern University's Roux Institute report, which is nearing completion with Michael working on final iterations. We expect to have that for the next C&HE Committee meeting.

D. UM and UMM mid-cycle review - Review went well including a zoom with 4 student teachers who were glowing about the support the UMM faculty provide.

Michael reported on the successful completion of the UM Farmington CAEP accreditation process, which took place on April 18th, and noted that the outcome was positive with a final decision expected in May.

V. Certification update.

A. MEIS summary - Michael presented March certification data showing 2,503 applications processed, though this was slightly down compared to the previous year. 498 initial teacher certification applications were processed and 2 retired teachers were re-certified.

Turnaround time has slipped to 4-5 weeks as the office is shorthanded after one member recently gave birth. In addition the fingerprinting vendor is moving to sell the company and where fingerprinting reports used to take days, they now take 3-4 weeks.

Wendy Kostenbauder from the Maine Department of Labor joined the meeting to share updates on their education apprenticeships program and EdTech process, with Vicky requesting a future presentation about these initiatives.

B. CHRC violations report. The meeting focused on updates regarding CHRC violation reports and a new law, LD 2192, affecting covered investigations by local school districts. Michael explained that the backlog of 935 cases was due to system transitions, but measures were being taken to address it, including reallocating staff resources.

C. Certifications violations report. Michael said he would have a report for next month.

VI. TEAMe and EPP report

Dr. Flynn Ross from the University of Southern Maine discussed the Teacher Educator Alliance of Maine's recent meeting at Bates College and shared information about collecting data on job placements of alumni, noting challenges in gathering accurate data without a centralized database. This data point was requested on the Annual EPP report but probably will not be universally completed.

Katie Rybakova shared details about a recent Girls in Science Day event at Thomas College, which involved 102 students and pre-service teachers collaborating on science experiments. Flynn reported that USM was hosting a Lego robotics camp during vacation week.

VII. Other business

A. Chapter 115 - Chapter 115 - The status of Chapter 115 was discussed.

One of the new pieces is the local portfolio option. It was reemphasized that this option is for career changers and those certified educators who are seeking additional endorsements; it is not the intent that this pathway be traveled by people with only a high school diploma. There seems to be three pieces to this new practice; how the SBE approves the local portfolio, the components and process of the local portfolio, and how the MDOE will review and accept the final portfolio.

Some discussion ensued regarding outreach to local credentialing committees and SAUs. Michael said he would look at what was done last time.

B. Chapter 114 - Tom encouraged the members of TEAMe to gather information on EPP standards across the nation and internationally. Michael's colleagues across the nation, NASBE and the TEAMe members can all be sources.

A question was raised about statutory authority, and the AG's office has said it is defensible but weak.

VIII. Tom reminded the group that the next meeting is May 27.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:17 am.