MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Preparing World-Class Students

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State Superintendent of Schools

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TO: Members of the Maryland State Board of Education

FROM: Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D. LMLowery

DATE: August 28, 2012

SUBJECT: Proposed changes to COMAR 13A.12.01.02, Definitions; 13A.12.01.06E, Advanced Professional Certificate, and 13A.12.01.11, Renewal
AMEND

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is to inform you of the vote by the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board [PSTEB] to oppose proposed changes to the aforementioned regulations associated with the issuance of the Advanced Professional Certificate (APC).

BACKGROUND:

For the past year, the PSTEB has been reviewing COMAR regulation related to educator certification. As part of this process a workgroup of representative stakeholders met and developed recommendations submitted to PSTEB. The recommendations and the action taken by PSTEB are as follows:

Recommendation 1. Revise the current certification system to include a license for those individuals who are not required by regulation to hold certification.
PSTEB Response: ACCEPT

Recommendation 2. Eliminate the requirement for obtaining a master's degree for teachers.
PSTEB Response: REJECT

Recommendation 3. Differentiate the credential for those required to hold certification and those who are not required to hold certification.
PSTEB Response: ACCEPT WITH MODIFICATION that the APC remains a requirement.

Recommendation 4. Recommit to the importance of rigorous and relevant professional development as a continued requirement for certification and certificate renewal. Expand opportunities for continuing professional development which will contribute to student growth and achievement. Moreover, limit the use of Continuing Education Units (CEUs) to specific certificate holders, such as School Psychologists, Guidance Counselors, School Social Workers, whose respective professional organizations provide relevant professional development activities and experiences.
PSTEB Response: ACCEPT

Recommendation 5. Facilitate the novice teacher's entry into the profession and world of practice; eliminate the requirement for additional renewal credits while on the Initial Professional Certificate.
PSTEB Response: ACCEPT

Recommendation 6: Require 135 units for renewal.
PSTEB Response: NO POSITION

On April 6, 2012 a Joint Conference Committee was convened to discuss perceived differences between PSTEB and the State Board regarding Recommendation 3. As a result of the Joint Conference Committee, there was consensus to recommend for PSTEB to develop a fourth option for the APC. The fourth option would not require coursework, but would be based on an educator's "highly effective" evaluation rating . At its May and June meetings, PSTEB discussed adding a fourth option for the APC for an educator who presented highly effective evaluations for at least three of the last five years. This option was to be further discussed at the August PSTEB meeting.

However, at its June 26, 2012 meeting, the State Board initiated and voted to publish proposed regulatory changes that would add a fourth option for individuals to obtain an APC by submitting evidence of "highly effective" teaching in three of the last five years.

At its August 2, 2012 meeting, the PSTEB received public comment from individuals representing the following organizations: The Maryland Independent College and University Association (MICUA); the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA); Goucher College; and Dr. Margaret Trader, McDaniel College, Education Department Chair. The public commenters opposed publishing the proposed regulatory changes at this time. (A copy of the public comments is attached.)

During its deliberation, PSTEB members shared stakeholder input from their constituencies regarding the proposed regulatory changes. The groups represented by the PSTEB membership include: The Association of Independent Maryland Schools [AIMS]; The Baltimore Teachers Union [BTU]; The Maryland Association of Boards of Education [MABE];The Maryland Association of Colleges for Teacher Education [MACTE]; The Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals [MAESP]; The Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals [MASSP]; The Maryland State Education Association [MSEA]; and The Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland [PSSAM].

The PSTEB did not agree with the proposed changes and voted unanimously to oppose Permission to Publish. The reasons discussed for this action are as follows:

- The teacher evaluation systems in the State are currently under construction and beginning a second pilot year. There is no information on how the evaluation system will be successfully implemented across the different local school systems. Any regulatory change at this juncture is premature.

- The State will be transitioning from Maryland School Assessments (MSA) and High School Assessments (HSA) to the PARCC assessments which are currently in development. It is undetermined as to how this new assessment will impact teacher evaluations.

- No data systems exist to track teacher performance across school systems to determine how many teachers are or will be considered highly effective.

- An "output" focused route to certification potentially dilutes professional standards. The PSTEB values the APC routes as they currently exist as these routes honor the commitment that teachers have to being lifelong learners.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

As a result of the Joint Conference committee, you and the PSTEB agreed to explore a fourth option independent of coursework for issuance of the Advanced Professional Certificate. This topic was discussed extensively at the May and June meetings of the PSTEB and was scheduled for further deliberation at its August meeting. Following the June meeting of the PSTEB, staff was directed to move forward with drafting proposed regulatory language to provide another option for obtaining the initial Advanced Professional Certificate; this option was independent of course work and linked to highly effective teaching. The PSTEB opposes the proposed changes to COMAR 13A.12.01.02, Definitions; 13A.12.01.06E, Advanced Professional Certificate, and 13A.12.01.11, Renewal.

ACTION:

I am presenting this PSTEB action to you for your information.

LML: jes