

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Ad Hoc Committee on Certification

Minutes of Meeting

June 25, 2009

1:00 p.m.

State Office Building, Hartford

Members Present: Jill Ferraiolo (for Louise Feroe), Janet M. Finneran, Patricia B. Luke, Michael Meotti, Mark McQuillan, Yuhang Rong.

Guest: Christine Thatcher.

Members Absent: Louise Feroe, Maureen McSparren-Ruby and John Voss.

Staff Present: George Coleman, Marion Martinez, Georgette Nemr, Jennifer Widness, Pamela Bergin and Marybeth Aleskwiz.

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m.

Commissioner of Education Mark McQuillan thanked everyone for agreeing to be a part of this important committee, which will focus on revising and refining the educator certification regulations. He asked the committee if the current timeline to bring forward the draft regulations to the State Board for review in September 2009 seems like a realistic goal. There seemed to be consensus that the goal was doable. Mr. McQuillan then asked members to introduce themselves.

Mr. McQuillan handed out a set of working notes for the committee's information. Discussion followed.

Mr. McQuillan asked if anyone had any immediate concerns or comments about the certification regulations. Janet Finneran shared her concerns about the overlapping of K-6 and middle/secondary education and the issue of professional course work versus content work. Michael Meotti commented on the statements made by Sandi Jacobs, Vice President for Policy, National Council on Teacher Quality, at last month's State Board of Education meeting, to wit: "...teacher quality drives student achievement." The committee discussed these and other issues at length. Patricia Luke stressed the need for the regulations to always keep in mind the student/person who is becoming certified. There should be less complexity in the regulations and more focus on knowledge, skills and performance.

Mr. McQuillan noted the work last fall of the Certification Advisory Committee and the contributions they made in getting feedback from constituency groups (i.e. teachers unions, deans of education, educational organizations, etc.).

Mr. McQuillan then asked Georgette Nemr to give a historical background of the certification regulations. Ms. Nemr outlined each area of the current regulations and where changes will be made in the proposed regulations (i.e., new flexible features for out-of-state applicants, etc.) due to the recent passage by the General Assembly of HB 6901 (JSS P.A. 09-1), An Act Concerning Educator Certification and Professional Development and Other Education Issues. Jennifer Widnesss briefly highlighted what these changes will be. Discussion followed.

Christine Thatcher asked about assessing competence. Yuhang Rong mentioned the issue of an exit exam for graduates. He also reminded the committee that there is a separate set of teacher preparation program standards already in place. Discussion followed on each of these topics.

Jill Ferriolo stated she would need to brief Louise Feroe about the discussions that took place today to see if she has any comments or concerns to share.

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, July 29th at 1:00 p.m. in Room 307A.

The meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marybeth Aleskwiz