

**Comments and Responses to Proposed Amendments Chapter 118
Public Hearing
April 19, 2007**

A public hearing on the proposed amendments to the State Board of Education Regulation 118 entitled Support Systems: Standards and Procedures for Operation, was held on April 19, 2007, from 3:00 - 4:00 PM, in the Burton M. Cross Office Building ATM Studio, and at two remote locations: Presque Isle High School, Presque Isle; and Bangor Public Library, Bangor.

The deadline for submission of written comments was April 29, 2007. Comments made at the public hearing, as well as written submissions were received from the following:

Commenters:

1. **Lynne Adams, Teacher, Lewiston, ME**
2. **Debra Beauchesne, Teacher, Lewiston, ME**
3. **Phil Downs, Teacher, Lewiston, ME**
4. **Chris Galgay, Maine Education Association, ME**
5. **Michael Hoglen, Teacher, Lewiston, ME**
6. **Judy Howard, Teacher, Lewiston, ME**
7. **Cathy Liguori, Teacher, Lewiston, ME**
8. **Michael Martel, Teacher, Lewiston, ME**
9. **Kim Robash, Teacher, Lewiston, ME**
10. **Jean A. Roy, Teacher, Lewiston, ME**
11. **Crystal Ward, Teacher, Lewiston, ME**
12. **Daniel Joseph, Principal, Gray, ME**

Commenters (1) (2) (3) (5) (6) (7) (9) (10) (11) (12)

Comment:

1. Commenters expressed concern that requiring the completion of five standards is already a rigorous demand upon a beginning teacher. Doubling the number of standards for which they need to demonstrate and document mastery in their TAP, would drive many new teachers out of the profession, and that there are 71 indicators listed in the Chapter.

Response:

Maine's Initial Teacher Certification Standards were written based on national teaching standards such as the INTASC Core Standards, using input from stakeholders, and passed into law in 1997, by Maine's legislature. Their inclusion into the certification process has been planned since then. The standards were formally piloted for two years during a research pilot and proven effective, as have been the INTASC Standards, and other similar teaching standards, such as those used by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. These standards have since been incorporated into all other relevant State Board of Education Rules: Chapter 13, 114, and 115, through the APA Process.

During the initial revision period, while a stakeholder's group was convened in 2004 and 2005, the statement "The indicators accompanying each standard are meant to be used holistically to inform the assessment of the standard." was added to the proposed rule in order to clarify that all indicators do not need to be demonstrated to meet the standard.

COMMENT DID NOT RESULT IN A CHANGE

2. One commenter suggested maintaining the existing Chapter 118 and simply enforcing the existing rule, and another commenter expressed concerns over the proposed required Mentor Training.

Response:

The current Chapter 118 is more than 15 years old and does not include Maine's Initial Teacher Certification Standards, as do the other two rules related to preparation and certification of teachers: Chapter 114 and Chapter 115 (see answer to (a) above). This revision merely aligns Chapter 118 with other current regulations pertaining to the preparation and certification of teachers in Maine.

The existing rule calls for "orientation and training of support team members and mentors in peer observation and assessment techniques". The proposed rule adds: "Mentors must complete training approved by the Department of Education prior to providing service to candidates". This change requires LEAs provide modern mentor training, based on research based best practice. It also provides an "approval" process that will add an "enforcement" component to the rule that previously did not exist. The only change is making the training State approved instead of locally approved. Over two hundred (200) mentor trainers, representing every region of the State have been trained in recent years to ensure local capacity for training mentors.

COMMENTS DID NOT RESULT IN A CHANGE

3. Commenters expressed concern that with National Board Certification being the only route to attain the master teacher certificate. ...we feel that there should be more than one route to attain the master teacher certificate.

Response:

In researching this change the Stakeholders discovered that there were very few Master Teacher certificates in use at the time. The Stakeholder's Group felt that this change would add incentive for teachers to seek National Board Certification, and encourage the State to increase support for this process. As of last year, 2006, the State of Maine now offers a \$3000 per year stipend to all National Board Certified teachers teaching under that certificate.

COMMENTS DID NOT RESULT IN A CHANGE

Commenters (4)

4. Commenters expressed concern that the mentor described in the revision of Chapter 118 is just another person who will evaluate the beginning teacher.

Response:

The current Chapter 118 calls for the "support team, as determined by the support system, to provide guidance, advice and *assessment* to each conditional teacher, provisional teacher, holder of a transitional endorsement (optional), professional teacher seeding the master level and master teacher seeking renewal;". This word occurs in multiple locations in the current Chapter. *Thus the proposed chapter has been revised by adding the word "needs" before all of the occurrences of the word assessment throughout the document in order to further clarify the nature of this assessment as formative and not evaluative.*

No change has been made to the evaluative duties of the "support team", or "mentor", as the current and proposed Chapter 118 requires three (3) formal observations of the candidate be completed and submitted by the "support team" or "mentor" per year until professional certification is attained. This is the only evaluative task required of the "support team", or "mentor", and remains the same in the proposed rule as the current rule, except for the addition of the clarifying word, "needs" assessment.

COMMENT RESULTED IN A CHANGE

5. Commenters expressed concern that the addition of language allowing recently active practitioners to be mentors is not sufficient to alleviate the burden on our schools to find mentors.

Response:

Comments from the previous rule making procedure, indicated concerns that the existing rule did not allow the use of retired teachers as mentors, thus the proposed rule added this provision.

COMMENTS DID NOT RESULT IN A CHANGE

6. Commenters expressed concerns that if these changes were to be adopted, the State Board of Education would not need to worry anymore about the five year period, because these changes would ensure that most would leave the first two years.

Response:

The current research on mentoring and induction of beginning teachers indicates a clear and direct link between mentor support and teacher retention (i.e. Richard Ingersoll Report, NCTAF, 2004). The model being used by the State of Maine has been thoroughly researched, piloted and professionally evaluated during the AARBEC Research Grant of 2001 – 2004 and proven effective in this manner, and is similar to many other State Induction Programs being effectively implemented in other States.

COMMENTS DID NOT RESULT IN A CHANGE

7. Comments expressed concerns about lack of funding and amount of extra workload for teachers being unmanageable.

Response:

Concerns over lack of funding and time in the proposed rule have been addressed by extending the timeline another year (implementation date is now August 2010), and adding: "At that time, dependent upon the inclusion of appropriate funding through additional EPS allocations, all provisions of the new Chapter 118 shall take effect."

COMMENTS RESULTED IN A CHANGE

Commenter (12)

8. "What started out of necessity, the need to help support and foster the youth and energy of our profession, has turned into a vehicle to improve and enhance systemic change from the organizational view of leadership. Mentoring new teachers provides an intentional vehicle to renew and solidify a professional community. This became very obvious to me as I made the change from a teacher in the classroom to an educational leader in the main office. ... It is vital in the current reality of public education to have a systemic and supportive structure in place for our new teachers. Along that line it also makes sense to support those veteran teachers as they coach and mentor these new teachers. ... The reality is that we cannot afford not to offer this support for new and veteran teachers. With all of these efforts it is plain to see that this is a vital part of educational growth and prosperity in the State of Maine. It would be a shame to not continue this capacity and support to improve instruction."

Response:

This supportive comment was logged.

COMMENTS DID NOT RESULT IN A CHANGE