



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0023

PAUL R. LEPAGE
GOVERNOR

RACHELLE TOME
ACTING COMMISSIONER

EXHIBIT #VII.F.

TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Rachelle Tome, Acting Commissioner*

DATE: December 10, 2014

SUBJECT: Receipt Approval of the recommendation of the Certification and Higher Education Committee to accept the proposed changes to Chapter 13 as suggested by commenters, and to approve an extension of the comment period for an additional 30 days for proposed revisions to Section 3.10. The proposed changes to Section 3.10 will relieve an applicant from the burden of having to take the PLT and the Praxis I tests when applying for a new credential when the applicant has a lapsed credential in another subject area.

Attachments:

1. The proposed final rule without the changes to Section 3.10;
2. The proposed changes to Section 3.10 with all changes and comments

BACKGROUND: The revision to Section 13.3.10, at 10, was not in mind when the proposed rule was made because the focus of the proposed rule was to implement the changes to the Praxis tests that the Educational Testing Service (ETS) makes every 5 years. During the running of the Notice period, the inequity in Section 13.3.10 that has existed for some time came to mind and was recognized as of sufficient importance to address during this rule-making process. A new comment period is required for this change because it is substantively different from the notice of proposed rule published on October 29, 2014.

Section 3.10 waives the PLT and Praxis I tests for “applicants who hold a current teaching certificate from another state who are seeking a teaching certificate in the same endorsement area.” The practice has been to tell an applicant with a lapsed credential who is applying in a different endorsement area that if they renew their lapsed credential from out of state and apply for the same endorsement area in Maine in addition to the different endorsement area they seek, they can avoid taking the tests.

As can be seen, it is the fact of having held a full teaching credential, not whether the applicant has ever taken the PLT or the Praxis I that determines whether the applicant has the basic knowledge that is required to obtain a teaching credential. Accordingly, it is

excessive to require PLT and Praxis I when the teaching credential is lapsed because passing the PLT and Praxis I test will not enable a teacher to renew the lapsed credential. The Praxis I test is to assess whether a person has sufficient high school level knowledge to be able to become a teacher, and PLT is a basic methods and pedagogy test to assess that knowledge of a beginning teacher. All teachers must pass a specific content methods course to have a full credential in a particular endorsement area.

By the same logic, an applicant who has held a full teaching credential in any endorsement area should not be required to take these basic tests since the tests do not show or advance the knowledge needed for any specific subject area teaching credential.

In-state applicants and out-of-state applicants have been treated equally regarding the need to take PLT and Praxis I. No rule made that explicit until this proposed revision.

Not all Educational Specialists credential areas are required to take the PLT, such as School Nurse, Athletic Director, School Psychologists and Vocational Education Evaluator. The PLT will be required for these specialists when applying a specialty area that requires the PLT.

PROPOSED TIMELINE:

File with the Secretary of State's Office – December 10, 2014

Posting – December 17, 2014

Public Hearing – (N/A)

Deadline for Comments – January 16, 2015

Deadline for Response to Comments – January 23, 2015

Final Adoption – February 11, 2015

RECOMMENDATION: The State Board of Education's Certification and Higher Education Committee recommends that the State Board of Education accept the revisions that were based upon the comments received, and further recommends that an additional comment period of 30 days be allowed for the suggested revisions to Section 3.10.

Prepared by: Arthur J. Keenan, Certification Legal Consultant