

OFFICE OF CHIEF ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER
Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items
February 25, 2021

OFFICE OF TEACHING AND LEADING
DIVISION OF EDUCATOR LICENSURE

02. Action: Approval by the SBE to suspend strict compliance with specific state statutes, State Board of Education policies and manuals for the 2020 – 2021 and 2021 – 2022 school years, as appropriate, following Governor Tate Reeves’ Proclamation of a State of Emergency as a result of the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) on school districts in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. §§ 33-15-31, 33-15-11(b)(9) and 33-15-11(c)(1) [Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 – MBE Strategic Plan]

President Donald Trump declared a national emergency on March 13, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak. On March 14, 2020, Governor Tate Reeves issued a Declaration of a State of Emergency for the state of Mississippi. Included in his Proclamation, Governor Reeves directed that pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 33-15-11(c), the provisions of state statutes, rules, regulations or orders may be temporarily suspended or modified if compliance with such provisions would prevent, hinder, or delay action to cope with the outbreak. On March 19, 2020, Governor Reeves issued Executive Order 1460, and on April 22, 2020, Governor Reeves issued Executive Order 1476, which in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. §§ 33-15-31, 33-15-11(b)(9) and 33-15-11(c)(1), authorizes and empowers the State Board of Education to suspend the provisions of any regulatory statutes, and to make, amend, rescind such orders, rules and regulations that it deems necessary to assist Mississippi public schools to cope with the COVID-19 emergency.

Due to the unprecedented and unique circumstances arising because of COVID-19, such as statewide school closures that occurred during the latter portion of the 2019 – 2020 school year and throughout the 2020 – 2021 school year, it is not economically feasible or practical to expect districts and schools to meet specific state statutes, State Board of Education policies and manuals such as the *Guidelines for Mississippi Educator Licensure K-12*.

Throughout the Spring and Fall of 2020 the SBE approved multiple waivers, rule suspensions, and deadline extensions as a result of the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) on school districts and educators serving therein during the 2019 – 2020 and 2020 – 2021 school years. Among those included waivers to grant a one-year extension of all valid educator and administrator licenses scheduled to expire June 30, 2020; to suspend educator preparation program entry and licensure test requirements through December 31, 2021, and allow for a modified student teaching experience for prospective educators, among other related waivers. The SBE also granted additional waivers, rule suspensions, and deadline extensions of multiple state laws, SBE policies, and process standards for the 2019

– 2020 and 2020 – 2021 school years as a result of the impact of COVID-19 to allow an additional one-year suspension of the requirement for districts to submit annual employee performance data for the 2020 – 2021 school year via SharePoint. The suspension removed sanctions for districts failing to adhere to the reporting guidelines of the Educator and Administrator Professional Appraisal System for the 2020 – 2021 school year.

To ensure districts and prospective and practicing educators are aware of their continued responsibilities, the MDE will provide additional guidance to districts and educators regarding the approval and parameters of any waivers and suspensions approved by the SBE for the 2020 – 2021 school year and 2021 – 2022 school year, as appropriate.

This item references Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 of the *Mississippi Board of Education 2018 – 2022 Strategic Plan*.

Recommendation: Approval

Back-up material attached

- 02.A. Action: Approval by the SBE to suspend strict compliance with specific state statutes, State Board of Education policies, and manuals for the 2021 – 2022 school year as it relates to Educator and Administrator Licensure Renewal, following Governor Tate Reeves’ Proclamation of a State of Emergency as a result of the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) on school districts in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. §§ 33-15-31, 33-15-11(b)(9) and 33-15-11(c)(1) [Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 – MBE Strategic Plan]

The MDE Division of Educator Licensure is requesting approval to suspend the renewal requirements for those licenses that are set to expire on June 30, 2021 and grant a one-year extension for all license types with a current valid expiration date of June 30, 2021. If approved, qualifying licenses will be dated to expire June 30, 2022. Beginning July 1, 2022 and thereafter, applicants for licensure renewal shall meet all requirements in effect on the date the complete application is received in the MDE Division of Educator Licensure.

The request is due in part to the MDE’s and local school districts’, as appropriate, continued inability to ensure equitable access to high-quality professional learning opportunities for all educators and administrators for the purpose of meeting State Board of Education licensure renewal requirements.

It is the recommendation of the MDE that the SBE suspend strict compliance with specific requirements within the following state statutes, State Board of Education policies, and manuals for the 2021 – 2022 school year as it relates to Educator and Administrator Licensure Renewal:

- Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-2(9)
- Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-2(6)(c)
- Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-2(6)(d)
- Miss. Admin. Code 7 – 4: Part 4: *Licensure Guidelines K-12*

- 02.B. Action: Approval by the SBE to suspend strict compliance with specific state statutes, State Board of Education policies, and manuals for the 2021 – 2022 school year as it relates to Qualifications for Prospective District Superintendent of Education and a one-time one-year extension to a three (3) year initial alternative District Superintendent License, following Governor Tate Reeves’ Proclamation of a State of Emergency as a result of the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) on school districts in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. §§ 33-15-31, 33-15-11(b)(9) and 33-15-11(c)(1) [Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 – MBE Strategic Plan]

Mississippi Code Ann. § 37-9-13(1), selection of school district superintendent, requires that in addition to all other criteria outlined therein, criterion (1) (a), (b), or (c) shall be met prior to appointment. The law reads as follows:

“(1) Each school district shall have a superintendent of schools, selected in the manner provided by law. No person shall be eligible to the office of superintendent of schools unless such person shall hold a valid administrator’s license issued by the State Department of Education and shall have classroom or administrative experience of not less than six (6) years which shall include at least three (3) years of administrative experience as a school building principal (a) in a school with an “A” or “B” accountability rating, or (b) in a school that increased its accountability rating by a letter grade during the period in which the principal was employed as principal at the school, or (c) in a school with comparable accountability rating or improvement in another state which shall be verified by the Mississippi Department of Education.”

Due to the unique circumstances arising as a result of COVID-19, such as statewide school closures that had occurred during multiple testing windows, it was not feasible for the MDE to administer any of the required state or federal assessments for the 2019 – 2020 school year. Therefore, the MDE did not have sufficient data to produce accountability determinations as required by state and federal law for the 2019 – 2020 school year.

On March 19, 2020, during its regularly scheduled meeting, the State Board of Education granted approval for districts and schools to maintain the same accountability designation in the 2020 – 2021 school year as assigned in the 2019 – 2020 school year with no cumulative impact for cases where multiple years with the same designation may lead to a more severe consequences. As a result of the MDE not possessing sufficient data to produce accountability determinations, prospective Mississippi superintendents of education are unable to provide evidence of having met the accountability criteria required by state law. Moreover, on January 21, 2021, during its regularly scheduled meeting, the SBE voted to suspend strict compliance with specific requirements within the state statutes, policies, manuals, and process standards for the 2020 – 2021 school year regarding the Mississippi Statewide Accountability System, *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2020*, and Accreditation Policy 3.0: Annual Performance Classifications.

Therefore, absent accountability results, the MDE is requesting approval to temporarily allow prospective Mississippi superintendents of education meeting all other qualifications except the accountability rating documentation requirement, to be deemed eligible to receive an initial District Superintendent License by way of the State Board of Education approved Alternative Qualifications for Prospective District Superintendent of Education to begin practicing in that role should a Mississippi local School Board approves the appointment of the candidate.

Furthermore, the MDE is requesting approval to grant a one-time, one-year extension to a three (3) year initial alternative District Superintendent License, at the point of license expiration, for holders of this license currently serving in a Mississippi local school district as Superintendent of Education. The one-time, one-year extension is subject to the request being made by the local School Board by which the initial license request was made and granted.

It is the recommendation of the MDE that the SBE to suspend strict compliance with specific state statutes, State Board of Education policies, and manuals for the 2021 – 2022 school year as it relates to Qualifications for Prospective District Superintendent of Education and a one-time, one-year extension to a three (3) year initial alternative District Superintendent License:

- Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-13(1)
- Miss. Admin. Code 7 – 4: Part 4: *Licensure Guidelines K-12*

02.C. Action: Approval by the SBE to suspend strict compliance with specific state statutes for the 2020 – 2021 school year as it relates to the submission of required National Board Certification documentation, following Governor Tate Reeves' Proclamation of a State of Emergency as a result of the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) on school districts in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. §§ 33-15-31, 33-15-11(b)(9) and 33-15-11(c)(1) [Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 – MBE Strategic Plan]

The MDE is requesting a one-month extension (March 15, 2021) to allow a licensed teacher who has met the requirements and acquired a Master Teacher certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and who is employed by a local school board or the State Board of Education as a teacher and not as an administrator, to submit documentation to the State Department of Education. The law requires that documentation be submitted confirming that the certificate was received prior to October 15 in order to be eligible for the full salary supplement in the current school year, or the teacher shall submit such documentation to the State Department of Education prior to February 15 in order to be eligible for a prorated salary supplement beginning with the second term of the school year.

The request for a one-month extension is due to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) organization being required to delay certain submission and evaluation deadlines for National Board Certification components because of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Under normal circumstances, candidates would have been notified during the month of December as to whether all program components had been successfully completed. However, this year there were two notification dates set – one during the month of December 2020 and the second during the month of February 2021 (2/27/2021).

It is the recommendation of the MDE that the SBE suspend strict compliance with specific requirements within the following state statutes for the 2020 – 2021 school year:

- Salary Supplement for certain school employees: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-19-7 (2) (a) (i-iv)

Mississippi Administrative Code 7 – 4: Part 4: *Licensure Guidelines K-12*
Rule Suspension Pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. §§ 33-15-31, 33-15-11(b)(9) and 33-15-11(c)(1)
Executive Order 1460
2020 – 2021 School Closures Related to COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Statutes and/or Regulation(s)	Rule	Proposed Suspension and/or Revision of Rules
<p>Mississippi Traditional and Nontraditional Educator Preparation Program Entry Test Requirement</p> <p>Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-2(6)(a)(v) Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-2(6)(b)</p> <p>Miss. Admin. Code 7 – 4: Part 4: <i>Licensure Guidelines K-12</i></p>	<p>From and after September 30, 2015, no teacher candidate shall be licensed to teach in Mississippi who did not meet the following criteria for entrance into an approved teacher education program:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Twenty-one (21) ACT equivalent or achieve the nationally recommended passing score on the Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators examination; and 2. No less than 2.75 GPA on pre-major coursework of the institution's approved teacher education program provided that the accepted cohort of candidates meets or exceeds a 3.0 GPA on pre-major coursework. 	<p>The MDE Division of Educator Licensure will suspend the <u>educator preparation program entry testing criterion only</u>, for all candidates seeking admission to a Mississippi State Board of Education approved traditional or nontraditional educator preparation program on or before December 31, 2021.</p> <p>Individuals seeking admission to a nontraditional educator preparation program only, shall be required to meet one (1) of the following measures of subject matter competency at the time of admittance:</p> <p>Holds at least a bachelor's degree in the endorsement area in which the license is being sought from an institution of higher education that was regionally/nationally accredited at the time the degree was conferred; OR Holds at least a bachelor's degree in any area and eighteen (18) hours of undergraduate and/or graduate level coursework with a grade of "C" or higher in the endorsement area in which the license is</p>

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2020 – 2021 School Closures Related to COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Statutes and/or Regulation(s)	Rule	Proposed Suspension and/or Revision of Rules
		<p>sought. Both the degree(s) and the eighteen (18) hours of undergraduate and/or graduate level coursework must have been earned from an institution of higher education that was regionally/nationally accredited at the time the degree was conferred. Remedial courses (also referred to as compensatory, developmental, or basic skills) will not be recognized for certification purposes and are usually numbered below 100 on the transcript (Elementary Education is not included under this option);</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Holds at least a bachelor’s degree in any area from an institution of higher education that was regionally/nationally accredited at the time the degree was conferred and a passing score on the appropriate Mississippi State Board of Education approved licensure Subject Area Assessment in the endorsement area in which the license is requested.</p> <p>Beginning January 1, 2022 and thereafter, applicants seeking program admission shall meet all requirements in effect on the date the complete application is received by the Mississippi State Board of Education</p>

Mississippi Administrative Code 7 – 4: Part 4: *Licensure Guidelines K-12*
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2020 – 2021 School Closures Related to COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Statutes and/or Regulation(s)	Rule	Proposed Suspension and/or Revision of Rules
<p>Mississippi Traditional and Nontraditional Educator and Administrator <u>Licensure</u> Test Requirement</p> <p>Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-2(6)(a)(iii) Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-2(6)(b) Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-2(7)(a-d)</p> <p>Miss. Admin. Code 7 – 4: Part 4: <i>Licensure Guidelines K-12</i></p>	<p>Traditional and Nontraditional Educator Preparation Program Completers: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-2(6)(a)(iii) Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-2(6)(b)</p> <p>Applicants for a standard license shall submit to the department:</p> <p>-- A copy of test scores evidencing satisfactory completion of nationally administered examinations of achievement, such as the Educational Testing Service's teacher testing examinations;</p> <p>Traditional and Nontraditional Administrator Preparation Program Completers: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-2(7)(a-d)</p> <p>-- Individuals seeking school administrator licensure under paragraph (b), (c) or (d) shall successfully complete a training program and an assessment process prescribed by the State Board of</p>	<p>approved educator preparation program provider.</p> <p>The MDE Division of Educator Licensure will suspend the <u>licensure testing criterion only</u>, for all complete applications received in the MDE Division of Educator Licensure on or before December 31, 2021 for Five-Year Standard Licenses sought by way of the completion of an approved traditional or nontraditional educator or administrator preparation program as defined by the Mississippi State Board of Education.</p> <p>Please note that applicants seeking the three-year internship license or five-year standard license by way of the completion of the respective appropriate components of a nontraditional educator preparation program only, shall have met one (1) of the following measures of subject matter competency at the time of program admittance:</p> <p>Holds at least a bachelor's degree in the endorsement area in which the license is being sought from an institution of higher education that was regionally/nationally accredited at the time the degree was conferred;</p>

Mississippi Administrative Code 7 – 4: Part 4: *Licensure Guidelines K-12*
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Statutes and/or Regulation(s)	Rule	Proposed Suspension and/or Revision of Rules
	<p>Education. All applicants for school administrator licensure shall meet all requirements prescribed by the department under paragraph (b), (c) or (d), and the cost of the assessment process required shall be paid by the applicant.</p>	<p>OR Holds at least a bachelor’s degree in any area and eighteen (18) hours of undergraduate and/or graduate level coursework with a grade of “C” or higher in the endorsement area in which the license is sought. Both the degree(s) and the eighteen (18) hours of undergraduate and/or graduate level coursework must have been earned from an institution of higher education that was regionally/nationally accredited at the time the degree was conferred. Remedial courses (also referred to as compensatory, developmental, or basic skills) will not be recognized for certification purposes and are usually numbered below 100 on the transcript (Elementary Education is not included under this option);</p> <p>OR Holds at least a bachelor’s degree in any area from an institution of higher education that was regionally/nationally accredited at the time the degree was conferred and a passing score on the appropriate Mississippi State Board of Education approved licensure Subject Area Assessment in the endorsement area in which the license is requested.</p>

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Statutes and/or Regulation(s)	Rule	Proposed Suspension and/or Revision of Rules
		Beginning January 1, 2022 and thereafter, applicants for licensure shall meet all requirements in effect on the date the complete application is received in the MDE Division of Educator Licensure.
<p>Educator and Administrator Licensure Renewal:</p> <p>Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-2(9)</p> <p>Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-2(6)(c)</p> <p>Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-2(6)(d)</p> <p>Miss. Admin. Code 7 – 4: Part 4: <i>Licensure Guidelines K-12</i></p>	<p>Renewal and Reinstatement of License:</p> <p>The State Board of Education is authorized to establish rules and regulations for the renewal and reinstatement of educator and administrator licenses.</p> <p><u>Renewal of License</u></p> <p>Only a five-year, standard license is eligible for renewal. Current requirements for renewal of a five-year standard license for each class are as follows:</p>	<p>The MDE Division of Educator Licensure is <u>suspending the renewal requirements for those who licenses are set to expire on June 30, 2020</u> and will grant a one-year extension for all license types with a current valid expiration date of June 30, 2020. If approved, qualifying licenses will be dated to expire June 30, 2021. Beginning July 1, 2021 and thereafter, applicants for licensure renewal shall meet all requirements in effect on the date the complete application is received in the MDE Division of Educator Licensure.</p> <p>The request is due in part to the MDE’s and local school districts’, as appropriate, inability to ensure equitable access to high-quality professional learning opportunities for all educators and administrators for the purpose of meeting State Board of Education licensure renewal requirements.</p>

Mississippi Administrative Code 7 – 4: Part 4: Licensure Guidelines K-12
Rule Suspension Pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. §§ 33-15-31, 33-15-11(b)(9) and 33-15-11(c)(1)
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Statutes and/or Regulation(s)	Rule	Proposed Suspension and/or Revision of Rules
	<p><u>Standard Educator Licensure Renewal:</u> <u>Class A:</u> Ten (10) continuing education units (CEU's) in content or job/skill related area OR Three (3) semester hours in content or job/skill related area AND Five (5) continuing education units (CEU's) in content or job/skill related area OR Six (6) semester hours in content or job/skill related area OR Completion of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards process</p> <p><u>Class AA, AAA or AAAA:</u> Three (3) semester hours in content or job/skill related area OR Five (5) continuing education units (CEU's) in content or job/skill related area OR Completion of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards process</p>	<p><u>The MDE Division of Educator Licensure is requesting approval to suspend the renewal requirements for those licenses that are set to expire on June 30, 2021 and grant a one-year extension for all license types with a current valid expiration date of June 30, 2021. If approved, qualifying licenses will be dated to expire June 30, 2022. Beginning July 1, 2022 and thereafter, applicants for licensure renewal shall meet all requirements in effect on the date the complete application is received in the MDE Division of Educator Licensure.</u></p> <p><u>The request is due in part to the MDE's and local school districts', as appropriate, continued inability to ensure equitable access to high-quality professional learning opportunities for all educators and administrators for the purpose of meeting State Board of Education licensure renewal requirements.</u></p>

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Statutes and/or Regulation(s)	Rule	Proposed Suspension and/or Revision of Rules
	<p><u>Standard Career Level Administrator:</u> Seventy (70) School Executive Management Institute (SEMI) credits OR Six (6) hours of coursework OR 35 SEMI credits AND 3 hours coursework OR Completion of a specialist or doctoral degree in educational administration/leadership.</p>	
<p>Educator Licensure Reciprocity: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-2(8)(a)</p>	<p><u>Five-Year Standard License Reciprocity:</u> The department shall grant a standard license to any individual who possesses a valid standard license from another state and meets minimum Mississippi license requirements or equivalent requirements as determined by the State Board of Education. The issuance of a license by reciprocity to a military-trained applicant or military spouse shall be subject to the provisions of Section 73-50-1.</p>	<p>The MDE Division of Educator Licensure will suspend <u>the licensure testing criterion only for all complete applications for Five-Year Standard Reciprocity</u> received in the MDE Division of Educator Licensure on or before December 31, 2021. Beginning January 1, 2022 and thereafter, applicants for reciprocity shall meet all requirements in effect on the date the complete application is received in the MDE Division of Educator Licensure.</p>

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Statutes and/or Regulation(s)	Rule	Proposed Suspension and/or Revision of Rules
Miss. Admin. Code 7 – 4: Part 4: <i>Licensure Guidelines K-12</i>	Valid out-of-state license (Upload PDF copy of valid out-of-state educator license via Educator Licensure Management System (ELMS) account or submit photocopy of original educator license via postal mail) AND Official Sealed copy of all college transcripts AND Documentation must be provided to show a passing score on a subject assessment required for each endorsement area of certification by the issuing state, or documentation that verifies the out-of-state license was obtained in a manner equivalent with current Mississippi license guidelines for that license.	
Prospective District Superintendent of Education Qualifications Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-13(1) Miss. Admin. Code 7 – 4: Part 4: <i>Licensure Guidelines K-12</i>	Mississippi Code Ann. § 37-9-13(1), selection of school district superintendent, requires that in addition to all other criteria outlined therein, criterion (1) (a), (b), or (c) shall be met prior to appointment. The law reads as follows:	<u>Absent accountability results, the MDE is requesting approval to temporarily allow prospective Mississippi superintendents of education meeting all other qualifications except the accountability rating documentation requirement, to be deemed eligible to receive an initial District</u>

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Statutes and/or Regulation(s)	Rule	Proposed Suspension and/or Revision of Rules
	<p>“(1) Each school district shall have a superintendent of schools, selected in the manner provided by law. No person shall be eligible to the office of superintendent of schools unless such person shall hold a valid administrator's license issued by the State Department of Education and shall have classroom or administrative experience of not less than six (6) years which shall include at least three (3) years of administrative experience as a school building principal (a) in a school with an “A” or “B” accountability rating, or (b) in a school that increased its accountability rating by a letter grade during the period in which the principal was employed as principal at the school, or (c) in a school with comparable accountability rating or improvement in another state which shall be verified by the Mississippi Department of Education.”</p>	<p><u>Superintendent License by way of the State Board of Education approved Alternative Qualifications for Prospective District Superintendent of Education to begin practicing in that role should a Mississippi local School Board approves the appointment of the candidate.</u></p> <p><u>Furthermore, the MDE is requesting approval to grant a one-time one-year extension to a three (3) year initial alternative District Superintendent License, at the point of license expiration, for holders of this license currently serving in a Mississippi local school district as Superintendent of Education. The one-time one-year extension is subject to the request being made by the local School Board by which the initial license request was made and granted.</u></p>
<p>National Board Certification Salary Supplement Documentation Submission</p> <p>Salary Supplement for certain school employees: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-19-7 (2) (a) (i-iv)</p>	<p>Any licensed teacher who has met the requirements and acquired a Master Teacher certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and who is employed by a local school board or the State Board of Education as a teacher and not as an</p>	<p><u>The MDE is requesting a one-month extension (March 15, 2021) to allow a licensed teacher who has met the requirements and acquired a Master Teacher certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and who is employed by a local school board or the</u></p>

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Statutes and/or Regulation(s)	Rule	Proposed Suspension and/or Revision of Rules
	<p>administrator. Such teacher shall submit documentation to the State Department of Education that the certificate was received prior to October 15 in order to be eligible for the full salary supplement in the current school year, or the teacher shall submit such documentation to the State Department of Education prior to February 15 in order to be eligible for a prorated salary supplement beginning with the second term of the school year...</p>	<p><u>State Board of Education as a teacher and not as an administrator, to submit documentation to the State Department of Education. The law requires that documentation be submitted confirming that the certificate was received prior to October 15 in order to be eligible for the full salary supplement in the current school year, or the teacher shall submit such documentation to the State Department of Education prior to February 15 in order to be eligible for a prorated salary supplement beginning with the second term of the school year.</u></p>