

OFFICE OF CHIEF OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items
Consent Agenda
June 16, 2017

OFFICE OF EDUCATOR LICENSURE

- N. Revise Part 4: *Licensure Guidelines K-12* to amend the criteria for a special, non-renewable educator license
(Has cleared the Administrative Procedures Act process with public comments)

Background Information: In its regularly scheduled meeting held on March 3, 2017, the Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification, and Licensure and Development granted approval to amend the criteria for a special, non-renewable educator license not to exceed a period of three (3) years.

The special, non-renewable educator license is a one-year license that can only be requested by an employing local school district or an eligible nonpublic school in the state of Mississippi. The special, non-renewable educator license provides local school officials with the ability to employ a candidate who possess the potential to earn full educator certification while temporarily addressing the ongoing teacher shortage in Mississippi. The special, non-renewable educator license will allow the candidate up to three (3) years to meet all licensure requirements for earning a standard, five (5) year renewable license.

The proposed revision will amend the current criteria to allow an employing local school district or an eligible nonpublic school in the state of Mississippi to request a special, non-renewable license for a candidate who holds at least a bachelor's degree in any area and twenty-one (21) hours of undergraduate and/or graduate level coursework with a grade of "C" or higher in the content area in which the license is requested. Both the degree(s) and the twenty-one (21) hours of undergraduate and/or graduate level coursework must have been earned from an institution of higher learning 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.

In addition to the proposed revision cited above, documentation criteria for showing sufficient evidence of a candidate's progress towards meeting full state certification requirements has been defined. The evidence submitted is considered as part of the decision for granting the Year Two and Year Three special, non-renewable license.

The temporary and final action is necessary to implement the policy revisions for the 2017-2018 school year immediately upon its filing with the Secretary of State in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 25-43-3.113(2)(b)(ii). For a rule to become effective immediately upon its filing, the Board is required to make a finding that the rule only confers a benefit or removes a restriction on the public or some segment thereof.

Recommendation: Approval

Back-up material attached

Special, Non-renewable License

Local District Request Application Packet

General Information and Guidelines

The special, non-renewable educator license is a one-year license that can only be requested by an employing local school district or an eligible nonpublic school in the state of Mississippi for a candidate who has not yet met all certification requirements under the Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-2(6)(a), (b), and (c), at the time the application is submitted to the Office of Educator Licensure. The special, non-renewable educator license provides local school officials with the ability to employ a candidate currently enrolled in an alternate route teacher education preparation program or a Traditional teacher education preparation program completer: The program completer must have completed all requirements of a Mississippi State Board of Education approved traditional teacher education preparation program except achieving a passing score on all Mississippi required licensure tests on or after January 1, 2014.

Essentially, this provisional licensure option provides local school district officials with the ability to employ candidates who possess the potential to earn full educator certification while temporarily addressing the ongoing teacher shortage.

The Special, Non-renewable License can be requested for a candidate who meets the following criteria:

A. holds at least a bachelor's degree in the area in which the license is requested from an institution of higher learning that was regionally/nationally accredited at the time the degree was conferred;
or

B. holds at least a bachelor's degree in any area and twenty-one (21) hours of undergraduate and/or graduate level coursework with a grade of "C" or higher in the content area in which the license is requested. Both the degree(s) and the twenty-one (21) hours of undergraduate and/or graduate level coursework must have been earned from an institution of higher learning 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; **and**

C. candidate is currently enrolled in an alternate route teacher education preparation program or has completed all requirements of a Traditional teacher education preparation program except achieving a passing score on all Mississippi required licensure tests on or after January 1, 2014.

The candidate must meet all licensure requirements for a standard, five (5) year renewable license by the end of the third year.

Specific restrictions apply to this license type:

- The license is not transferable between Districts or eligible nonpublic schools. For example, if a candidate is employed one (1) year and wishes to transfer to another school district, the license is not valid, unless a new Local District Request Application is received by the Office of Educator Licensure from the local district to which the candidate is transferring. If the educator is not

renewed by the local school district after the first year, the educator will not be issued a license for another district for the remaining two (2) years.

- The license can only be requested in one (1) endorsement area.
- Additional endorsements will not be added to the special, non-renewable license.

Obtaining the initial Special, Non-renewable License requires completion of the application process as outlined below in the Year One category. Subsequent year requirements addressing verification of progress toward the standard, five (5) year renewable license are specified under the Year Two and Year Three categories.

Year One Documentation Requirements

The employing local school district or eligible nonpublic school must submit the following documentation for each candidate who meets the following criteria to be granted the year one special, non-renewable educator license:

- a) Standard Mississippi Licensure Application; **and**
- b) Local District Request Packet; **and**
- c) Letter of Request and Justification; **and**
- d) Official, sealed transcript(s) for each degree conferred and any additional coursework completed by the candidate; **and**
- e) Vita or résumé; **and**
- f) Official test score results documenting all testing requirements have been met as a precondition for admittance to a Mississippi State Board of Education approved non- traditional teacher education preparation program; **and**
- g) Official letter of unconditional acceptance into a Mississippi State Board of Education approved non- traditional educator preparation program from the appropriate State Board approved program provider. The Mississippi educator preparation program provider must ensure that candidate has met all minimum admission requirements prior to enrolling the candidate in the non-traditional educator preparation program--- Official letter must be completed by the Dean of Education or Certification Officer; **and, if applicable,**
- h) Official, sealed transcript showing required course(s) status as “in progress” or “completed” with an earned grade of “C” or higher. Evidence of program progress and/or completion must reflect acceptable forms of documentation based on the specific non-traditional educator preparation program being completed. **Note: Traditional teacher education preparation program completer: Official, sealed transcript must document completion of student teaching.**

Year Two Documentation Requirements

The employing local school district or eligible nonpublic school must submit documentation indicating that the special, non-renewable license holder is making sufficient progress toward the completion of requirements for obtaining full state certification by way of one of the Mississippi State Board of Education approved non-traditional educator preparation program routes. Sufficient evidence may include, but is not limited to, one or more of the following:

- a) Official test score results from attempt(s) to meet all testing requirements during the time the year one Special, Non-renewable License was valid (if year one license was held during 2016-2017 school year); **and/or**
- b) Official letter of unconditional acceptance into a Mississippi State Board of Education approved non- traditional educator preparation program from the appropriate State Board approved program provider. The Mississippi educator preparation program provider must ensure that candidate has met all minimum admission requirements prior to enrolling the candidate in the non-traditional educator preparation program--- Official letter must be completed by the Dean of Education or Certification Officer (if year one license was held during 2016-2017 school year); **and/or**
- c) If unconditionally enrolled in a Mississippi State Board of Education approved non-traditional educator preparation program route, an official sealed transcript must be submitted showing required course(s) status as “in progress” and/or “completed” with an earned grade of “C” or higher. Evidence of program progress and/or completion must reflect acceptable forms of documentation based on the specific non- traditional educator preparation program being completed; **or**
- d) Traditional teacher education preparation program completer: The candidate who has completed all requirements of a Mississippi State Board of Education approved traditional teacher education preparation program except achieving a passing score on all Mississippi required licensure tests on or after January 1, 2014, must submit official documentation of progress towards meeting all testing requirements.

In addition to the submission of documentation for showing sufficient evidence of progress, the following documents must be included as part of the request packet:

- a) Standard Licensure Application; **and**
- b) Local District Request Packet; **and**
- c) Letter of Request and Justification.

Year Three Documentation Requirements

The employing local school district or eligible nonpublic school must submit documentation indicating that the special, non-renewable license holder is making sufficient progress toward the completion of requirements for obtaining full state certification by way of one of the Mississippi State Board of Education approved non-traditional educator preparation program routes. Sufficient evidence may include, but is not limited to, one or more of the following:

- a) Official test score results from attempt(s) to meet all testing requirements during the time the year two Special, Non-renewable License was valid (if year two license was held during 2017-2018 school year); **and/or**
- b) Official letter of unconditional acceptance into a Mississippi State Board of Education approved non- traditional educator preparation program from the appropriate State Board approved program provider. The Mississippi educator preparation program provider must ensure that candidate has met all minimum admission requirements prior to enrolling the candidate in the non-traditional educator preparation program--- Official letter must be completed by the Dean of Education or Certification Officer (if year two license was held during 2017-2018 school year); **and/or**
- c) Official, sealed transcript showing required course(s) status as “in progress” or “completed” with an earned grade of “C” or higher. Evidence of program progress and/or completion must reflect

acceptable forms of documentation based on the specific non-traditional educator preparation program being completed; **or**

- d) Traditional teacher education preparation program completer: The candidate who has completed all requirements of a Mississippi State Board of Education approved traditional teacher education preparation program except achieving a passing score on all Mississippi required licensure tests on or after January 1, 2014, must submit official documentation of progress towards meeting all testing requirements.

In addition to the submission of documentation for showing sufficient evidence of progress, the following documents must be included as part of the request packet:

- a) Standard Licensure Application; **and**
- b) Local District Request Packet; **and**
- c) Letter of Request and Justification.

The subsequent requirements are effective 2017-2018 school year and thereafter:

Educator preparation program providers must ensure that candidates have met all requirements in effect at the time the application for admission to a Mississippi State Board of Education approved non-traditional educator preparation program is received. Requirements include, but are not limited to, the following: **(To obtain the most accurate and up-to-date requirements, please visit the Educator Licensure Section at www.mde.k12.ms.us/k12.org/OEL)**

- a) The candidate must hold at least a bachelor's degree ~~in the area in which the license is requested~~ from an institution of higher learning that was regionally/nationally accredited at the time the degree was conferred; ~~or~~
~~The candidate must hold at least a bachelor's degree in any area and twenty one (21) hours of undergraduate and/or graduate level coursework with a grade of "C" or higher in the content area in which the license is requested. Both the degree(s) and the twenty one (21) hours of undergraduate and/or graduate level coursework must have been earned from an institution of higher learning 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. and~~
- b) The candidate must present official score report(s) from the appropriate testing vendor documenting earned passing scores on all required non-traditional educator preparation program admission and licensure tests such as, Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators* or minimum of a score of 21 on the ACT and the Praxis Subject Assessment(s)** in the area in which the educator license is sought.

*Candidate must have achieved the Mississippi State Board of Education's approved Minimum Passing Score requirement for Reading, Writing, and Mathematics prior to non-traditional program admission

**Candidate must have achieved the Mississippi State Board of Education's approved Minimum Passing Score requirement for test(s) in the area in which the educator license is sought prior to non-traditional program admission

NOTE: Meeting all testing requirements is but one criterion for completing the multi-step educator licensure process for obtaining full state certification in the state of Mississippi. Please visit the Educator Licensure Section of the MDE website to obtain the most accurate and up to date information.

**REVISION OF LICENSURE
GUIDELINES K-12**

APA COMMENTS

May 19 – June 12, 2017

Rule	Narrative of Rule	Topic	Comments		
			Supporting	Concerns	Total
Licensure Guidelines K-12	The proposed revision will amend current criteria to allow an employing local school district or an eligible nonpublic school in the state of MS to request a Special, Non-renewable License for a candidate who holds at least a bachelor's degree in any area and 21 hours of undergraduate and/or graduate level coursework with a grade "C" or higher in the content area in which the license is requested.	Amend criteria for Special, Non-renewable License	0	9	9
TOTAL COMMENTS			0	9	9

REVISION OF LICENSURE GUIDELINES K-12

APA Comments Summary Chart

Role	Number of Commenters
Superintendents/Conservators	5
Assistant Superintendents	1
District School Board Members	
Teachers	
Librarians/Media Specialists	
Federal Programs Directors	
Curriculum Directors	2
Special Education Directors	
Principals	
Assistant Principals	
Vocational School Directors	
Other District Personnel	
Instructional Specialists/Academic Coaches	
Advocacy Groups	
MDE Offices	
Citizens (Parents)	
Unknown	
State Organizations	1
TOTAL	9

Four (6) school districts were represented through the APA comments received.



Delta Area Association for Improvement of Schools
P. O. Box 3333 ~ Delta State University
Cleveland, MS 38733
Phone: 662-846-4354 - Fax: 662-846-4402

May 22, 2017

Cory Murphy
Executive Director
Office of Educator Licensure
359 N. West Street
Jackson, Mississippi 39205

This correspondence is in reply to the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) process to revise the Licensure Guidelines K-12 to include revisions to the criteria for a special, non-renewable license. More specifically, my comments relate to the ONE-YEAR CERTIFICATION SPECIAL, NON-RENEWABLE LICENSE (Year One Documentation Requirements).

As an entity that works with districts in the delta, Delta Area Association for Improvement of Schools (DAAIS), I take this opportunity to thank MDE and the State Board of Education for supporting the three year non-renewable license, as it has helped tremendously during this time of extreme teacher shortage. I have heard the voices of many superintendents this (2016-2017) year as being the toughest year they have experienced in trying to find highly qualified teachers. The three year non-renewable license was not the answer to all their problems but it did alleviate some of the pressure they felt in trying to provide a quality education to all children. It is with this in mind that I request the following wording be removed from the Year One Documentation Requirements of the APA process:

6. Official test score results documenting all testing requirements have been met as a precondition for admittance to a Mississippi State Board of Education approved non-traditional teacher education preparation program.

My concern is that the applicant must meet all testing requirements to obtain the one year license based on the statement "all testing requirements have been met". The applicant must have passed Core Academic Skills Battery and Praxis II in order to be admitted into a college or university preparation program. Without this statement, the colleges and universities are allowed to admit applicants, applicants can get the one year license, and the colleges and universities can work with the applicant to prepare for Core Academic Skills Battery and Praxis II. If the applicant is given the license, Districts can use means to help the applicant prepare for Praxis_{1,1} exams and at the same time, have much needed positions filled to help student

achievement. DAAIS is willing to find ways to support these teachers by offering classes to teachers who obtain these non-renewable licenses, in an effort to help them become highly qualified teachers.

MDE and the State Board of Education have taken great strides to help school districts, and more importantly, students, by providing the non-renewable three year license. This one change could have a significant impact on how this license will help children.

Thank you for caring about our children.

Eddie Anderson, Executive Director
Delta Area Association for Improvement of Schools
662-846-4354

Sunflower County Consolidated School District

Miskia Davis, Interim Superintendent

"United For Excellence"



May 22, 2017

To: Cory Murphy, Executive Director of the Office of Educator Licensure

This letter is written in response to the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) process to revise the K-12 Licensure Guidelines regarding the special, non-renewable license. The Sunflower County Consolidated School District appreciates the Mississippi State Board of Education for having the foresight and awareness of the educational landscape in our great state to recognize a need for implementing the non-renewable license. Recruiting, hiring, and retaining highly qualified teachers has become a national crisis, as many college graduates are not entering teacher education programs. This greatly affects rural districts like ours that sits in the heart of the Mississippi Delta. Our location, alone, often hinders us from attaining some of the recent college graduates because they desire to work in cities that provide more options for entertainment outside of work. We have attended college recruitment fairs and have observed dwindling numbers, while many applicants are seeking to move away from the Delta. We have used several outlets to advertise our vacancies including the following: the school district's website, the MDE website, local newspaper, social media, and television. The Sunflower County Consolidated School District even held a recruitment fair to attract teachers to the district. Using all of these recruitment methods, we have found it difficult and practically impossible to hire 100% highly qualified teachers, particularly when we consider that the needs outweigh the available resources.

One of the documentation requirements for receiving the non-renewable license is that "the official test score results, documenting all testing requirements have been met as a precondition for admittance to a Mississippi State Board of Education approved non-traditional teacher education preparation program". The Sunflower County Consolidated School District asks that you reconsider this criteria, and allow applicants that have not met testing requirements to enroll in non-traditional teacher education preparation programs, provided that the ultimate expectation is for the applicant to meet all testing requirements. Having access to high quality teaching in a higher education setting combined with our own in-district training and support, provides applicants with the necessary skills to meet the testing requirements. Our district has offered several trainings to assist prospective teachers with the skills needed to pass the mandated tests for certification. We have even worked out a plan to reimburse individuals who pass the test as an incentive.

We fully recognize that there must not be an "open gate" into the educational profession that minimizes and reduces the significance of the staff that serve students in said profession. However, the reality is that we must have a method of recruiting and hiring the next tier of individuals that want to impact the lives of children for the better, but lack the necessary credentials. We firmly believe that allowing applicants to enroll in non-traditional teacher programs without meeting the testing requirement will not lessen the impact that these individuals have with our students, but may even enhance their knowledge and skills in such a way that helps them become highly qualified and major contributors to the students of the Sunflower County Consolidated School District. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sunflower County Consolidated School District
Miskia Davis, Interim Superintendent
"United For Excellence"



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Miskia", is written over the printed name.

Miskia Davis,
Superintendent of Sunflower County Consolidated School District

CLARKSDALE MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

May 22, 2017

Dennis Dupree, Sr. Superintendent
135 Washington Avenue
P.O. Box 1088
Clarksdale, MS 38614

Mr. Cory Murphy
Executive Director
Office of Educator Licensure
359 N. West Street. PO Box 771
Jackson, MS 39205-0771

Dear Mr. Murphy:

This correspondence comes in reply to the opportunity to submit comments as part the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) process as consideration is being given to revising the Licensure Guidelines K-12 for a special, non-renewable license. More specifically, my comments relate to the ONE-YEAR CERTIFICATION SPECIAL, NON-RENEWABLE LICENSE (Year One Documentation Requirements).

I represent the Clarksdale Municipal School District in my official capacity of Superintendent of Education. I wish to take this opportunity to thank the State Board of Education and the Mississippi Department of Education for making the non-renewable three year license available as an avenue to help us address the critical shortage of teachers my district and others in my region face. Every year we attend career-fairs, advertise through multiple avenues, and we are even working to financially incentivize licensed candidates to consider working for us.

Despite these wide-ranging efforts, we are still not able to find the number of highly qualified teachers we need to serve our children. The three year non-renewable license has been a great help. Although we would prefer to have all highly qualified teachers in every classroom, we know that the teacher pool of available candidates is very small and when we have to compete with other districts with higher salaries and communities with far greater quality of life offerings we face an uphill climb that often leaves us with people who fail to meet certification criteria. That leads us to accreditation problems and it leave our students in an even greater quandary because they are having to be taught by people who do not hold the required credential. Our children do not have the luxury of just leaving and going to another district where there are highly qualified teachers in every classroom.

CMSD

"Education of Our Children: TOP PRIORITY "

Mr. Murphy
Page 2

I join my colleagues who are leading districts similar to mine in asking that you consider allowing applicants who have not completed every testing requirement but who are very close to enroll in the various schools of education's alternate route program with some flexibility in the ways that they are allowed to enter and exit such programs. We view this as one of the few ways we will be able to get teachers with licenses in front of our students. My counterparts in other school districts and I believe that if we are allowed to hire teachers with a bachelor's degrees or higher who have not completed all testing requirements, then this will allow college and university personnel to admit them into their alternate-route program.

We believe the IHL community can help them to be skillful in instructional delivery while they also equip them to be better prepares to perform well on the licensure tests. We intend to continue working to offer the best mentoring and professional development programs and even virtual learning opportunities to assist those who can teach but have difficulty passing standardized tests. My district seeks your assistance in helping us to meet the licensure challenge in a way that does not ostracize and punish us when we cannot hire teachers who are already highly qualified.

Thank you for your review and consideration. Thank you also for what you do on behalf of school districts and children each day.

Respectfully,



Dennis J. Dupree, Sr.
Superintendent



1555 Lee Drive
PO Box 820
Clarksdale, MS 38614

Xandra Brooks-Keys, Superintendent
Email: xkeys@coahoma.k12.ms.us
Office: (662) 624-5448

May 22, 2017

Cory Murphy, Executive Director
Office of Educator Licensure
359 N. West Street, P. O. Box 771
Jackson, Mississippi 39205-0771

Dear Sir:

Thanks so much for the opportunity to provide comments in response to the APA process to revise the K-12 Licensure Guidelines (Special, Non-renewable License). My concern is specifically in relation to the one-year certification requirements.

I am extremely grateful to the Mississippi Department of Education and State Board of Education for assistance with additional licensure options that will assist districts with recruiting highly qualified teachers. The special non-renewable license provided Coahoma County School District with an alternative for ensuring that our students were being served by highly-qualified/certified teachers.

This option provided us with flexibility to create programming (Grow Our Own Teachers) that would grant us the ability to train, provide professional development, and even instruction to personnel that would help them to develop into high quality, certified instructors. We were able to assist 11 individuals with financial assistance with enrollment into an alternate route teaching program through a partnership with a nearby university, provide PRAXIS workshops and instruction, and receive licensure. We have also provided assistance to assistant teachers who will qualify to teach in the very near future. All members of the program recently completed their second class.

In other attempts to recruit personnel, we advertise on the district webpage, LinkedIn, and university job sites, and attend various recruitment/career fairs around the state. Each year, we still manage to come up short and have concerns with accreditation due to a lack of certified teachers.

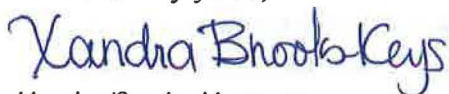
As I peruse the new non-renewable licensure qualifications, I notice a clause that would possibly halt the recruitment process and future options for "growing our own teachers". The specific concern is "Official test score results documenting all testing requirements have been met as a precondition for admittance to a Mississippi State Board of Education approved non-traditional teacher education preparation program".

The main concern with recruitment and the need for the special non-renewable license in my district is the inability for persons to meet the testing requirements. We were able to assist personnel who were unable to pass the PRAXIS with enrolling in an alternate route program, while teaching with a license. This clause will disallow entrance to a program and we would be back where we have been previously, with the inability to recruit teachers.

My genuine request would be for the aforementioned clause to be reconsidered. We truly need persons who have earned a bachelor's degree to be granted the option of entering a program that would allow more time to meet the testing requirements. The reason that they are unable to receive licensure is the inability to pass the test. We are dedicated to providing the assistance for them to do so. Our students are in need of high quality and certified teachers. This is our only option.

Thanks again for the opportunity for me to provide comment on behalf of the students, community and future teachers of Coahoma County School District. I truly appreciate the consideration of my concern.

Educationally yours,



Xandra Brooks-Keys



**COAHOMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
AND AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL
3240 FRIARS POINT ROAD
CLARKSDALE, MISSISSIPPI 38614
662-627-2571**

May 22, 2017

To Whom it May Concern:

This correspondence is in reply to the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) process to revise the Licensure Guidelines K-12 to include revisions to the criteria for a special, non-renewable license. More specifically, my comments relate to the ONE-YEAR CERTIFICATION SPECIAL, NON-RENEWABLE LICENSE (Year One Documentation Requirements).

The Coahoma Agricultural High School District takes this opportunity to thank the State Board of Education and the Mississippi Department of Education for the non-renewable three year license. Every year we attend as many college career-fairs as possible in search of teachers. We advertise via our website, the MDE teacher website, newspapers and other media outlets. We have communicated with Teach for America (TFA) but to no avail. They too have a shortage of teachers in the selection pool. The three year non-renewable license was a great help. It kept the district from having a large number of long-term subs in the classroom who may or may not work out the entire year.

Mentors were hired to provide assistance to teachers with three (3) or less years of teaching experience. Documentation of the mentoring hours/logs is on file in the office of the assistant superintendent. Administrators paid for select teachers to take the Praxis exam. Praxis workbooks were given to teachers to be of assistance in passing the exam. Considering all that has been done, Coahoma Agricultural High School District ask that applicants who have not completed all testing requirements be allowed to enroll in schools of education's alternate route program without having met all testing requirements as noted in the administrative procedures for the One-Year Certification Special, Non-Renewable License- Year One Documentation Requirements.

If we are allowed to hire persons with a bachelor's degree or higher who have not completed all testing requirements, then this will allow colleges and university personnel to admit them into their alternate-route program where proper training can be received. Provisions will be provided for them to take the Praxis exam a minimum of twice per school term.

We do want our students to get the best education possible. Therefore, we are desperately searching for highly qualified teachers. We know that the colleges and universities will continue properly preparing future teachers.

Any consideration will be greatly appreciated.

Educationally yours,

Barbara S. Lucas

Barbara S. Lucas
Assistant to the Superintendent

To: Dr. Cory Murphy, State Director
Office of Educator Licensure
From: Karen Maily, MAPQT Coordinator
Date: May 22, 2017
Subject: Response to Possible Changes to Alternate Route Entrance Requirements

We understand that there is a recommendation to change the entrance requirements of an alternate applicant for all approved alternate route providers. We feel that the proposed changes will adversely affect the number of applicants to all alternate route programs. At a time when school districts throughout the state are already experiencing a shortage of teacher applicants, we feel that this will only exacerbate this problem. For example, based on the applications received for the MAPQT Summer Session 2017, at least one third of the applicants would not be eligible for consideration based on this proposal.

The change from a bachelor's degree in the requested area of endorsement, or 21 hours of a C or higher in the content area for which an individual wishes to be endorsed in, leaves us with some thoughts/questions as follows:

1. Is Praxis II not a good indicator of content knowledge?
2. What data is being used to determine that this change needs to be made? As referenced below, the last report conducted gave high marks to alternate route training*.
3. How is this going to affect the special education candidate? The vast majority of candidates would not have 21 hours of content hours in special education. Oftentimes, these candidates have life experiences that draw them to this area of certification.
4. Who is going to determine if the coursework meets the 21 hours in the content area? This in itself could be subjective dependent on the university/college that the applicant graduated from.
5. How does this affect the participant who is seeking a 4-6 teaching certificate? Is that candidate going to have to select a "subject" area to focus on?
6. Individuals, for whatever reason, chose to major in an area other than education. As such, they demonstrated that they could successfully complete a degree from an accredited university/college. So should we not consider the fact that if they had chosen to major in education or a different content area, that they would have been also equally successful?

Is knowledge of content necessary to be an effective teacher? **Absolutely!** However, it is only one of the key characteristics that makes for an effective teacher. As an illustration, The Peanut Butter & Jelly Guide to Teaching, contains an mnemonic device that is worth considering.

H - Human Relation Skills
I - Instructional Skills
C - Classroom Management Skills
K - Knowledge of Content
U - Use, After Selection, of Appropriate Materials
P - Planning Skills

The purpose of an alternate route teaching program should be to provide specific training and peer collaboration developing & building on all of the above. However, it is assumed that each alternate route candidate has the content knowledge based on previous experiences, passage of the Praxis II and/or the ability to gain the needed content knowledge.

Alternate route programs were designed to provide training for individuals that have a desire and passion to teach in our K-12 schools. Our particular alternate program, MAPQT, was established in 2002. From its inception, we have provided training for over 3000 teachers in the state of Mississippi. *Quoting from the Feistritzer report (presented 2008), "The MAPQT alternate route preparation program gets the highest marks across the board from participants entering teaching through Mississippi's alternate route teacher preparation programs". The report went on to say, "The analysis ... makes this a very effective route to teaching." In addition, the presented report indicated that "Mississippi's alternate route programs for the preparation of teachers and school administrators are producing candidates who are committed and passionate about teaching and school leadership, feel competent to do their jobs effectively, rate their programs of preparation highly, have high levels of job satisfaction and plan to stay in the profession a relatively long time."

In closing, we would greatly appreciate any opportunity to meet and discuss these changes and/or any other proposed changes that pertain to our MAPQT program.



Greenville Public School District

Office of the Superintendent
412 South Main Street, P. O. Box 1619
Greenville, MS 38701
Phone (662) 334-7001

Mississippi Department of Education
Office of Educator Licensure
P.O. Box 771
Jackson, MS 39205-0771

To Whom It May Concern:

This correspondence is in reply to the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) process to revise the Licensure Guidelines K-12 to include revisions to the criteria for a special, non-renewable license. More specifically, my comments relate to the One-Year Certification Special, Non-Renewable License (Year One Documentation Requirements).

The Greenville Public School District takes this opportunity to thank the State Board of Education and the Mississippi Department of Education for the non-renewable three year license. Every year we attend as many college career fair as possible in search of teachers. We advertise via our website, the MDE teacher website, newspapers and other media outlets. Even with our diligent search, we were not able to find the total number of highly qualified teachers this year. The three year non-renewable license was a great help and although we would prefer to have all highly qualified teachers during the 2017-2018 school year, the teacher pool from our visits was not encouraging. It is with this in mind that we, the Greenville Public School District request, request that you consider allowing applicants who have not completed all testing requirements to enroll in schools of education's alternate route program without having met all testing requirements as noted in the administrative procedures for the One-Year Certification Special, Non-Renewable License-Year One Documentation Requirements.

If we are allowed to hire persons with a bachelor's degree or higher who have not completed all testing requirements, then this will allow colleges and university personnel to admit them into their alternate route program. This will allow the Higher-Ed community to help them prepare for tests as they also prepare them to be better prepared to work with children. At the Greenville Public School District, we will always work to find ways to assist them in preparation for tests. This was evidenced this year by our paying for and providing the Praxis training and tests. We will mandate for the upcoming school year that they take the test at least twice per semester. We have also paid for courses taken in the alternate route program by our personnel employed on the Special Non-Renewable License. The Greenville Public School is asking for an opportunity to hire the best people possible to help our children when highly qualified persons are not available. This would be a great help in that process.

We are searching for ways to help our children and allowing teachers to get into the classroom as our district and the universities work to get them through the testing, will be a great help.

Thank you for what you do to help our children, and thank you for what you do in assisting school districts to staff their buildings as they try to meet the needs of their children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Monroe", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Dr. Janice Monroe,
Acting Superintendent

Veronica Barton

Subject: FW: Office of Educator Licensure - Memorandum regarding Non-Renewable License
Attachments: Memorandum - Special Non-Renewable License Update 52017.pdf

From: David Rock [mailto:rock@olemiss.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, May 16, 2017 5:54 PM
To: Cory Murphy <cmurphy@mdek12.org>
Subject: FW: Office of Educator Licensure - Memorandum regarding Non-Renewable License

I sent the previous email to soon....one more comment for item G.

Cory,

Here are a few comments.

1. for part B, will this be allowable for Elementary Education (4-6). I know we had said there will be no 4-6 alternative route licensure, but I am just confirming. I am sure you will be asked if this can be done!! I am not for this being allowed.

2. for part C, it states candidate is currently enrolled in an alternate route teacher education preparation program or has completed all requirements of a Traditional teacher education preparation program except achieving a passing score on all Mississippi required licensure tests on or after January 1, 2014.

Does this mean that if you are simply enrolled in an alt route program you qualify for a three year non-renewable?

The problem we had in our last meeting was that some institutions have no entrance requirements for Alt Route.....therefore, you only have to have a degree (in any field)...and this would make you eligible....

Is that what C means?

3. Part G for year 1 (this is also under year 2 and 3)

- g) Official letter of unconditional acceptance into a Mississippi State Board of Education approved non- traditional educator preparation program from the appropriate State Board approved program provider. The Mississippi educator preparation program provider must ensure that candidate has met all minimum admission requirements prior to enrolling the candidate in the non-traditional educator preparation program--- Official letter must be completed by the Dean of Education or Certification Officer; **and, if applicable,**

What does the sentence...." The Mississippi educator preparation program provider must ensure that candidate has met all minimum admission requirements prior to enrolling the candidate in the non-traditional educator preparation program" mean.

What admission requirements. MDE has only set licensure requirements.

What minimum requirements does an institution have to have for an alt route program?

As worded, it states met all minimum admission requirements prior to enrolling the candidate.....so if the only admission requirements are a bachelors degree and a 2.0 GPA...would that suffice for admission requirements?

DR

Dr. David Rock

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From: David Rock <rock@olemiss.edu>

Date: Tuesday, May 16, 2017 at 5:37 PM

To: Cory Murphy <cmurphy@mdek12.org>

Subject: FW: Office of Educator Licensure - Memorandum regarding Non-Renewable License

Cory,

Here are a few comments.

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DR

Dr. David Rock

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From: Albert Carter <ACarter@mdek12.org>

Date: Tuesday, May 16, 2017 at 9:32 AM

To: Ann Blackwell <ann.blackwell@usm.edu>, Richard Blackbourn <RBlackbourn@colled.msstate.edu>, Ben Burnett <bburnett@wmcarey.edu>, Debra Burson <bursodb@millsaps.edu>, Robert Carr <rcarr@alcorn.edu>, "cahan@mvsu.edu" <cahan@mvsu.edu>, Leslie Griffin <lgriffin@deltastate.edu>, "David B. Hand" <dhand@belhaven.edu>, Leon Howard <lhoward@rustcollege.edu>, Cindy Melton <cmelton@mc.edu>, David Rock <rock@olemiss.edu>, Pamela Russ <pruss@tougalo.edu>, "jwaddell@bmc.edu" <jwaddell@bmc.edu>, Daniel Watkins <daniel.watkins@jsums.edu>, Monica Riley <mhriley@muw.edu>

Cc: Cory Murphy <cmurphy@mdek12.org>

Subject: Office of Educator Licensure - Memorandum regarding Non-Renewable License

Good morning School of Education Chairs/Deans:

The Special, Non-renewable License has been amended and is currently open for public comment. Please see the attachment for more information.

Albert

Albert Carter, Ph.D. Office Director II
Office of Educator Preparation Programs
Division of Research and Development

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Ensuring a bright future for every child

To: Dr. Cory M. Murphy, State Director
Office of Educator Licensure
Mississippi Department of Education

From: Jennifer Wilson, Superintendent
Greenwood Public School District

Date: May 20, 2017

Subject: Special, Non-renewable License

As a superintendent of a Delta Area school district, I struggle in filling the teacher vacancies that exist within my district. Unfortunately, my struggle is typical of other Delta Area school districts. Because of this, I am requesting consideration of an alternate plan in lieu of the Special Non-renewable License General Guidelines outlined in a May 10, 2017 Memorandum to Local Superintendents. While this alternate plan may not be the "perfect plan," it might help districts such as mine fill its teacher vacancies for the 2017-2018 school year. This plan, along with background information on my district, is outlined below.

Background Information on my District

For the 2016-2017 school year, the Greenwood Public School District applied for and was issued twenty-five (25) special nonrenewable licenses to address the teacher shortage within the district. Although the district was issued these licenses, there were still teacher vacancies that had to be filled with retirees or in a few situations long-term substitutes. Some vacancies, such as a foreign language, just could not be filled.

The district's personnel director attended every university/ college recruitment fair that was held across the state (13 total) and even conducted a district career fair; however, the teacher candidates were just not there!

For the twenty-five (25) above-mentioned individuals who were issued special non-renewable license by the MS Department of Education, the district supported these teachers by assigning mentors and providing targeted job-embedded professional development to build their capacity in delivering rigorous high quality classroom instruction. In addition, the district required these teachers to attend district-provided Praxis I and Praxis II training held monthly throughout the school year.

If these 25 individuals had been required to achieve a passing score on Praxis I and II prior to being issued their nonrenewable licenses in August 2016, only 2-3 would have meet this criterion. As a result, the district would have had twenty-two (22) individuals who would not

have been issued a teaching license. For the students in my district, that scenario is not unacceptable.

DISTRICT 2017 TEST RESULTS (THUS FAR)

Although the district had twenty-two (22) teachers with special non-renewable licenses who had not completed the Praxis I and II testing requirements prior to their licenses being issued, the district is continuing to improve student achievement. I am pleased to report that the district improved its pass rate on the initial administration of the 3rd MAP assessment (3rd grade gate) from 74.1 percent passing in 2016 to 86.7 percentage in 2017, a 12.6 percentage point increase. Additionally one of the elementary schools, Davis Elementary, had greater than 95% of its 3rd grade students passing the assessment on the first administration. This success is indicative of the district's commitment to build teacher capacity, whether those teachers hold traditional or special non-renewable licenses. While we are pleased with the improvements, we will not be satisfied until all students demonstrate proficiency and show growth in all assessed areas.

As an alternative to the plan outlined in the May 10, 2017 Memorandum to Local Superintendents, I am requesting that an alternate plan be considered. If not, Delta Area districts such as mine will face a greater teacher shortage dilemma than ever before. The education and future of our students are at stake.

ALTERNATE PLAN FOR CONSIDERATION FOR THE 2017-2018 SCHOOL YEAR. (FOR THE YEAR ONE SPECIAL, NON-RENEWABLE LICENSE). CHANGES ARE INDICATED IN BOLD FONT

Issue one-year licenses to candidates who meet the following criteria:

- a. holds at least a bachelor's degree in the area in which the license is requested from an institution of higher learning that was regionally/nationally accredited at the time the degree was conferred; or
- b. holds at least a bachelor's degree in any area and twenty-one (21) hours of undergraduate and/or graduate level coursework with a grade of "C" or higher in the content area in which the license is requested. Both the degree(s) and the twenty-one (21) hours of undergraduate and/or graduate level coursework must have been earned from an institution of higher learning 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; and
- c. candidate is currently enrolled in an alternate route teacher education preparation program or has completed all requirements of a Traditional teacher education preparation program except achieving a passing score on all Mississippi required licensure tests on or after January 1, 2014; **OR**

- d. Candidate must successfully pass Praxis I and Praxis II by the end of Year One. The employing school district must provide and require the candidate to attend mandatory Praxis I and II trainings offered throughout the school year in order to meet this requirement. These training sessions can be offered by the district, the local university, or through the RESAs. Documentation evidencing candidates meeting this training requirement must be maintained in the district and provided to MDE upon request.**

The candidate must meet all licensure requirement for a standard, five (5) year renewable license by the end of third year.

In closing, I thank the Mississippi State Board of Education and Dr. Carey Wright for the visionary leadership provided in order to improve student achievement in the great state of Mississippi. I also thank you for your consideration of this request. In spite of the challenges, my district, along with other Delta Area school districts, can achieve the Mississippi Department of Education's goals of (a) All students demonstrating proficiency and showing growth in all assessed areas and (b) Every child having effective teachers and leaders. The future of our children depends on it!