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MEMORANDUM

TO: Maryland Approved Alternative Teacher Preparation Program Providers
Deans and Directors of Teacher Education
Directors of Human Resources

FROM: John E. Smeallie
Assistant State Superintendent
Certification and Accreditation

DATE: May 15, 2007

SUBJECT: Revised Resident Teacher Certificate Policy Recommendations

In September 2005, I issued a memorandum regarding revisions that were current at that time concerning issuance of the Resident Teacher Certificate (RTC). This memorandum provides updates that are designed to assist you as you develop and implement these programs in your partnerships. All programs that utilize the Resident Teacher Certificate must now be Maryland Approved Alternative Preparation Programs (MAAPP), which continue to be framed by COMAR 13A.12.01.07 and the *Guidelines for Implementing Resident Teacher Program*, (both of which can be found on the Maryland State Department of Education website.)

Included in this package are two documents that Local School System partners will use to request issuance of both the RTC and the SPC. Requesting LSSs will insert the school system letterhead at the top of the documents, and either scan or send the documents by mail to the Certification Branch of MSDE. The Program Approval Branch has worked with the Certification Branch to develop documents that are clear and concise and aligned with the requirement for program approval for all providers of programs that utilize the RTC.

This memorandum further clarifies general guidelines for program provider partnerships to use when reviewing the eligibility – particularly academic qualifications - of an individual who is seeking entry into a MAAPP. Accompanying this memorandum are documents that Local School Systems (LSSs) will use to request both the RTC and the Standard Professional Certificate (SPC I) on behalf of a candidate who is participating in a MAAPP to acquire certification. LSSs will use these documents beginning with the July 1, 2007 certificate requests.

MAAPP

All programs must address the standards of the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) Standards or Maryland's Essential Dimensions of Teaching (EDoTs).

Secondary Candidate Content Requirements

Secondary candidates must hold a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution with a concentration in a discipline appropriate to an assignment in the secondary school curriculum. A secondary applicant who does not possess an academic major as defined by his or her institution of higher education appropriate in the secondary school curriculum, but does have a minimum of 30 semester hours of academic content in the certification area, may satisfy the intent of the regulation.

The intent of the regulation is satisfied if the secondary RTC applicant has an average of 2.75 or better in the 30 semester hours, at least fifty percent of the 30 semester hours are taken at the same institution of higher education and 12 semester hours are upper division coursework. No "D" or lower grades may be included in the 30 semester hours. Pass/fail grades are unacceptable unless we are assured "D" grades are not considered passing grades at the specific university. Some colleges and universities in Maryland accept both ACE and CLEP credits toward the total count of credits an individual accumulates. While MAAPP partnership designers will not be able to use these credits to amass the 2.75 GPA, developers of such programs may elect to use these credits in qualifying an individual for entry into a program; those decisions will be made by the partnerships themselves and will be a part of the program approval process.

Social Studies

Candidates who seek a RTC in Social Studies must possess 24 semester hours in commonly and easily identifiable social studies courses and 6 related hours, for a total of 30 hours. The 24 hours must reflect 6 hours in history, 6 in geography, 6 in political science, and 6 in economics. Related courses include psychology, conflict resolution, labor relations, history(ies) of other disciplines, archaeology, anthropology, and humanities. Local latitude may be used in selecting coursework from the related areas to fulfill the 24 hour requirement.

Mathematics

Candidates who seek a RTC in mathematics must possess 24 semester hours in commonly and easily identifiable mathematics courses and 6 related hours, for a total of 30 hours. Identified related courses include computer science, engineering, physics, and other disciplines with substantial mathematics content. Local latitude may be used in selecting coursework from the related areas to fulfill the 24 hour requirement.

English

Candidates who seek a RTC in English must possess 24 semester hours in commonly and easily identifiable English courses and 6 related hours, for a total of 30 hours. Related courses include speech, communications, linguistics, literature in other languages or cultures, journalism (writing or editing), theatre, comparative literature and non-print literacy. Local latitude may be used in selecting coursework from the related areas to fulfill the 24 hour requirement.

Science, Biology

Candidates who seek a RTC in biology must possess 24 hours of biology and 6 related natural science hours, for a total of 30 hours. Local latitude may be used in selecting coursework from the related areas to fulfill the 24 hour requirement.

Science, Chemistry

Candidates who seek a RTC in chemistry must possess 24 hours of chemistry and 6 related natural science or conceptual mathematics hours, for a total of 30 hours. Local latitude may be used in selecting coursework from the related areas to fulfill the 24 hour requirement.

Science, Physics

Candidates who seek a RTC in physics must possess 24 hours of physics and 6 related natural science, conceptual mathematics, or engineering hours, for a total of 30 hours. Local latitude may be used in selecting coursework from the related areas to fulfill the 24 hour requirement.

Science, Earth/Space

Candidates who seek a RTC in Earth/Space sciences must possess 12 hours of Earth sciences, 12 hours of space science, and 6 related natural sciences, conceptual mathematics, or engineering hours, for a total of 30 hours. Local latitude may be used in selecting coursework from the related areas to fulfill the 24 hour requirement.

Languages

Candidates who seek a RTC in languages other than English must possess 24 hours in language and literature in the language for which certification is sought, 6 related history, culture, linguistics, or other language (excluding English) hours, for a total of 30 hours. Local latitude may be used in selecting coursework from the related areas to fulfill the 24 hour requirement.

Elementary Candidate and Early Childhood Candidate Content Requirements

Applicants for a RTC at the elementary and early childhood levels normally will not have earned degrees in these areas. Since it is important for elementary and early childhood educators to have a balanced academic background, we require that these applicants have an average of 2.75 or better in 36 semester hours of coursework. Candidates who seek a RTC in Elementary Education must possess 36 hours, including 6 in English grammar, composition and/or literature; 6 in conceptual mathematics; 6 in natural science; 6 in history, political science, geography and/or economics; and, 12 from any core above in any combination and/or fine arts and foreign language. Fifty percent of the 36 semester hours must be taken at the same university and “D” or lower grades may not be included in the 36 semester hours. Pass/fail grades are not acceptable unless we are assured “D” grades are not considered pass/fail grades by the institution.

Early childhood program providers must ensure that candidates meet the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Standards in addition to the INTASC Standards or EDoTs, and candidates will need to complete an internship that includes experience(s) at one or more early childhood levels. The details of such an internship should be determined through the program approval development process.

Conditionally Certified Teachers

Conditionally certified personnel working in local school systems as elementary teachers or secondary teachers may be granted a Resident Teacher Certificate under the following conditions: 1) Conditionally certified teachers must meet all eligibility requirements for a Resident Teacher Certificate, and 2) the local school system superintendent must request a Resident Teacher Certificate for each individual.

Since there is no intent for a RTC applicant to meet a plan based on the content mastery option as provided under the Conditional Certificate COMAR 13A.12.01.08, a Conditional Certificate is not possible for a RTC applicant trying to fulfill the RTC prerequisites. The applicant is either on a Conditional Certificate or a RTC, not both.

Special Education Candidates

Given the great need for special education teachers in Maryland, use of the RTC regulation for special education applicants is encouraged, provided that the approved program seeks to culminate in dual certification – content and special education. Program providers must ensure that candidates meet the Center for Exceptional Children (CEC) Standards as well as the INTASC Standards or EDoTs. Program design will require that candidates are able to complete internships and residencies that include experience(s) in each of the two certification areas. Providers who wish to develop such programs will need to work closely with MSDE staff.

Middle School Candidates

Providers who develop programs that lead to middle school certification must address the standards of the National Middle School Association (NMSA) in addition to the INTASC standards or the EDoTs. (Note: the NMSA standards require that holders of that certification be content competent in at least two areas of middle school content rather than the one required for secondary certification.) Program developers must work closely with MSDE staff to design programs that will meet approval.

Teacher Certification Tests Prior to Obtaining a RTC

The RTC regulation, COMAR 13A.12.01.07E, requires the local superintendent of schools to file a written request with the State Superintendent of Schools for the issuance of the RTC after the applicant presents requirements as outlined in COMAR 13A.12.01.07C (degree, basic skills test, content test, and pre-employment training). The teacher certification tests needed prior to application for the RTC are Praxis I (Basic Skills) and the content area Praxis II assessment in the area of certification. The Praxis II content-specific pedagogy assessment is not required prior to the issuance of a RTC. The Educational Testing Service (ETS) administers these tests throughout the school year. For an additional cost, ETS will also provide any local school

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system with special administrations of certification tests on dates convenient to the school system. MAAPPs are not currently being developed for certification areas where there is no test available to ensure content competency; however, MSDE is working to find pathways for these areas and will keep all parties updated as progress is made.

The following section reflects revised COMAR RTC regulations.

90 Clock Hours of Study

The RTC regulation requires that the program provides 90 clock hours of study that are framed by the INTASC Standards or the EDoTs. This training must include strategies for immediate engagement in the classroom and the required reading coursework: for elementary and early childhood candidates - Processes and Acquisition of Reading Skills; for secondary candidates - Reading in the Content Area Part I.

Standard Professional Certificate I

Individuals holding a RTC are eligible for a SPC I when the local superintendent of schools verifies that applicants for the SPC I have:

- Completed all program requirements, including remaining reading course requirements;
- Thorough demonstration to key school representatives and other appropriate stakeholders of standards-based professional performance;
- Demonstrated satisfactory teaching performance for each year employed as a resident teacher; and
- Submitted qualifying scores on the remaining teacher certification test(s) - Praxis II pedagogy.

I trust that this update will be helpful to you as you consider developing and/or expanding alternative teacher preparation programs to address your teacher staffing needs and provide quality instruction for your students. If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact this office.

JES:pc

c: Certification Specialists
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attachments (2)