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State Superintendent of Schools

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TO: Legal Authorities and Education Directors of Nonpublic Schools Approved Under COMAR 13A.09.10 Educational Programs in Nonpublic Schools and Child Care and Treatment Facilities

FROM: Sarah Spross, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Educator Effectiveness

Alan for Sarah Spross

DATE: August 25, 2015

RE: Upcoming School Year Information

Welcome back to the 2015-2016 school year. Over the past year the Nonpublic School Approval Branch (NSAB) has continued to support our nonpublic schools in the area of compliance. We have offered a yearly training series based on compliance data, provided feedback regarding the trend data, and have welcomed input from the nonpublic school community regarding ways to improve our services to you.

Over the past six months, the Division of Educator Effectiveness (DEE) has experienced several staff and programmatic changes. For the first time in several years the Certification Branch has all positions filled for certification specialists, support staff, and the document management team. Kelly Meadows and Alex Cambra are serving as Branch Chiefs, available to support the division, and I have transitioned into the Assistant State Superintendent position.

As we embark on yet another school year, MSDE will continue to:

- Conduct the onsite monitoring visits in the same manner outlined in the September 6, 2011 and September 9, 2013 memos. These memos are available on the nonpublic school website at: <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/NR/rdonlyres/B58EAA7C-22A4-4B09-9048-1128D3E0D7C9/29834/September62011Memo.pdf>.
- Provide up-to-date certification information at the time of your school's onsite monitoring visit.
- Post all of the current monitoring tools used during onsite monitoring visits on the NSAB website under "Current Forms." This information may be accessed at: http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/nonpublicschools/npschools/comar13A.09.10_cf.htm.
- Make additional materials of interest that may be pertinent to your educational programs available on our website. Materials may include MSDE announcements, resources for the Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards, and regulatory and statutory changes. Please check the "Materials of Interest" section regularly as we will continue to upload new information as it becomes available. This section may be accessed at: <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/nonpublicschools/npschools/mi.htm>.
- Provide an extensive training series focused on regulatory compliance, which is reflective of the feedback we received from each of you regarding topics of interest. Please see the attached training flyer. This year all training registration will be accessed online. All training dates and registration forms may be accessed in the "Training Series" section at:

MarylandPublicSchools.org

<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/nonpublicschools/npschools/ts.htm>.

We are grateful for the partnership we have with our nonpublic schools, giving particular thanks to those schools who have extended an invitation to us and to the community, enabling us to provide trainings for the school year.

- Allow electronic signatures in the same manner outlined in the September 4, 2012 memo. The memo is available at:
<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/NR/rdonlyres/B58EAA7C-22A4-4B09-9048-1128D3E0D7C9/33532/September42012UpcomingSchoolYearMemo.pdf>.
- Mail all official communication to the Chief Officer of the Legal Authority. This practice will ensure that the entity that is responsible for the governance and operation of the program is notified of all issues affecting the operation of the program. Included with this letter is a one page sheet indicating who is identified in our database as the Chief Officer, Administrative Head, and Education Director. We are asking you to confirm the accuracy of the identified individuals by returning the form with any corrections to Karen.Gardner@Maryland.gov by October 2, 2015. If we do not hear from you by October 2nd, we will continue to communicate with the individual identified in our database. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation with this matter.
- Monitor a school's instructional materials and equipment during the classroom observations. We will look to see that teachers and students have access to appropriate materials. During planning periods or after the school day, we are asking that teachers who were observed make themselves available to answer any questions regarding the availability of instructional materials and equipment.
- Be available to you at the following emails: Kristine.Angelis@Maryland.gov; Alexandra.Cambra@Maryland.gov; Karen.Garnder@Maryland.gov; Kelly.Meadows@Maryland.gov; Denise.Scott@Maryland.gov; and Sarah.Spross@Maryland.gov.

Please note the following for the upcoming school year:

- **SB 508 Children – Child Care Facilities, Public Schools, and Nonpublic Schools –3 Contractors and Subcontractors:** This bill was passed during the 2015 session. This bill does not require regulatory changes to the nonpublic school approval regulations as it is adding further clarification as to who **must** be fingerprinted and to the role of the employer. Furthermore, COMAR 13A.09.10.06A.(1) already requires nonpublic schools to be in compliance with Family Law Article, Title 5, Subtitle 5 and Education Article 2-206.1

As such, the Nonpublic School Approval Branch will continue to monitor the application for criminal history background checks the same way with one exception, now schools will be required to include contractors; which I might add, many already do. As is our current practice, we will randomly select 20% of the employees to check if criminal history record checks have been applied for as per the requirements. This bill may be found at <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2015RS/bills/sb/sb0508f.pdf> for your review.

- **Begin the Transition to Paperless Monitoring:** In an effort to minimize the use of paper during our onsite monitoring visits, we will begin instituting a paperless monitoring system which will be fully implemented by the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year. We will still provide hard copies of the monitoring packet to any of our locals in need, but will be requesting access to Wi-Fi when monitoring within a school, if available. Our hope is that, in the future, we will provide the Record of Onsite Monitoring Findings to our schools and our local school systems electronically as well. You may find a copy of our new Record of Onsite Monitoring Findings form on our website. We will be using this form

copy of our new Record of Onsite Monitoring Findings form on our website. We will be using this form throughout our visits this school year, making modifications to the form at the end of this "trial" year. What this means for our schools is that you will no longer be required to self-monitor prior to your site visit.

- **Certification Caseloads:** The certification caseload assignments have been redistributed among the specialists. Maintaining consistency in regulatory oversight of Certification Authorized Partners and Certification Authorized Partner Assistants, streamlining our services to geographic areas, and meeting the needs of our state agencies and nonpublic schools were just some of the considerations taken when assigning caseloads. As such, your organization may have a different specialist assigned than the one with whom you have been working.
- **Continuance of the 5-Year Monitoring Cycle:** In 2008 our branch moved to a five-year monitoring cycle. Two years ago, I indicated that we would be initiating a four-year monitoring cycle in the 2014-2015 school year. Due to the continued high volume of complaint investigations during the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school years, this goal has been postponed once again. The NSAB will reevaluate its feasibility for the 2016-2017 school year.

As you may recall, in August of 2008, the NSAB revised its monitoring review schedule. At that time, it was determined that in addition to regularly scheduled onsite monitoring visits, the NSAB will conduct unannounced onsite monitoring visits between review cycles due to the increase in the number of years between review cycles. These unannounced visits will continue in the 2015-2016 school year.

Finally, as we begin the 2015-2016 school year, I would be remiss if I did not remind everyone that as administrators of nonpublic schools, you are required to assure that your school operates consistent with the regulations under which it is approved and it is our responsibility to monitor the school's compliance with the applicable regulations.

It is our hope that providing this information will assist you in assuring compliance with the regulations under which your school is approved. We look forward to our ongoing work with each of you on behalf of our students. If you have any questions or need help locating the information online, please contact me, or your Nonpublic School Approval Specialist at (410) 767-0407. Please accept my best wishes on behalf of all of us in the Division of Educator Effectiveness for successful school year.

Enclosures: Confirmation Form
2015-2016 Training Schedule

SDS:arc

- C: Cynthia Amirault, Section Chief, Nonpublic Schools, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services
Kristine Angelis, Nonpublic School Approval Specialist, Nonpublic School Approval Branch
Alexandra Cambra, Acting Branch Chief and Nonpublic School Approval Specialist, Division of Educator Effectiveness
Dorie Flynn, Executive Director, MANSEF
Marcella E. Franczkowski, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services
Kelly Meadows, Acting Branch Chief and Nonpublic School Approval Specialist, Division of Educator Effectiveness
Denise Scott, Nonpublic School Approval Specialist, Nonpublic School Approval Branch
Penelope Thornton Talley, Esq., Chief performance Officer, Office of the Superintendent

2015-2016 Training Series

New Education Director Training

Date: September 24, 2015

Time: 9:30 – 12:30

Location: Maryland State Department of Education Conference Room 8
200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201

Targeted Schools: Type I, Type II, and Type III

Targeted Participants: Only new Education Directors hired after September 23, 2014 will be able to sign up for this training.

Certification 101

Date: October 5, 2015

Time: 9:30 – 12:00 pm

Location: Sheppard Pratt Conference Center
6501 N Charles Street, Towson, MD 21204

Targeted Schools: Type I, Type II, and Type III

Targeted Participants: Teachers/School Administrators

Teacher Certification Workshop

Date: October 6, 2015

Time: 4:00 – 6:00 pm

Location: Lourie Center School/Kennedy Krieger School: Montgomery County Campus
12301 Academy Way, Rockville, MD 20852

Targeted Schools: Type I, Type II, and Type III

Targeted Participants: Teachers/School Administrators

Behavior Management Documentation

Date: October 27, 2015

Time: 9:30 – 12:00

Location: Strawbridge School Conference Center
3300 Gaither Road, Baltimore, MD 21244

Targeted Schools: Type I, Type II, and Type III

Targeted Participants: Education Directors/Behavior Coordinators/Behavior Staff

Related Services Documentation

Date: November 19, 2015

Time: 9:30 – 12:00

Location: Kennedy Krieger School: Greenspring Campus
3825 Greenspring Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21211

Targeted Schools: Type I, Type II, and Type III

Targeted Participants: Education Directors/Clinical Directors/Clinicians

MANSEF-Teacher Certification Workshop

Date: December 11, 2015

Time: AM and PM Sessions

Location: Baltimore Convention Center

1 West Pratt Street, Baltimore, MD 21201

Targeted Schools: Type I, Type II, and Type III

Targeted Participants: Teachers/School Administrators

Teacher Certification Workshop

Date: February 2, 2016

Time: 4:00 – 6:00 pm

Location: The Benedictine School

14299 Benedictine Lane, Ridgely, MD 21660

Targeted Schools: Type I, Type II, and Type III

Targeted Participants: Teachers/School Administrators

Student Records, IEPs, Transcripts, and PEPs

Date: February 11, 2016

Time: 9:30 – 12:30

Location: The Ivymount School

11614 Seven Locks Road, Rockville, MD 20854

Targeted Schools: Type I, Type II, and Type III

Targeted Participants: Education Directors/Admission Staff/ IEP Coordinators

Teacher Certification Workshop

Date: April 5, 2016

Time: 4:00 – 6:00 pm

Location: Laurel Hall School

13310-A Brook Lane, Hagerstown, MD 21742

Targeted Schools: Type I, Type II, and Type III

Targeted Participants: Teachers/School Administrators

Regulatory Compliance Data Report

Date: May 18, 2016

Time: 9:30 – 12:00

Location: Strawbridge School Conference Center

3300 Gaither Road, Baltimore, MD 21244

Targeted Schools: Type I, Type II and Type III

Targeted Participants: Education Directors/Administrative Heads/Compliance Staff