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TO: Members of the Maryland State Board of Education
FROM: Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D. *KBS*
DATE: May 23, 2017
RE: Revocation of Educator Certificates
Informational Purposes

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is to provide information regarding the public availability of educator certificate revocations on the Maryland State Department of Education's (MSDE's) website.

INFORMATION:

This month, MSDE began posting information regarding the revocation of educator certificates on the website at <http://marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/DEE/Certification/index.aspx>. Specific information includes: the certificate holder's name, date of revocation, and the reason for revocation. This information will be updated on a monthly basis and will contain a statement that additional information regarding a revocation may be requested through a public information request, as has previously been the practice.

MSDE has begun posting this information in the interest of better informing the public about serious actions taken against educator licenses in the state. Revocations are considered public records, but not all information in an educator's licensing file is automatically subject to public disclosure. For example if an individual's certificate was revoked because of allegations of misconduct with a child, specific information pertaining to that child would not be released.

The State Superintendent may suspend or revoke a certificate for specific reasons, which are listed in COMAR 13A.12.05.02. Certain offenses automatically lead to revocation. These include being convicted of a crime of violence or one involving child abuse or neglect; or being dismissed or resigning after notice of an allegation of child sexual abuse.

Offenses that may lead to suspension or revocation include, but are not limited to:

- contributing to the delinquency of a minor
- moral turpitude if the offense bears directly on the individual's fitness to teach
- specific drug offenses
- making material misrepresentations, concealing information, or submitting false records in the application for a certificate
- failing to report suspected child abuse
- resigning or being terminated after notice of an allegation of misconduct involving a student
- having a certificate suspended or revoked in another state

While MSDE has only recently made information about revocations available on its website, it has actively participated for years in the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certificate (NASDTEC) Clearinghouse. The NASDTEC Clearinghouse is a national collection point for professional educator discipline actions taken by the 50 states, District of Columbia, U.S. Department of Defense Educational Opportunity schools, and the U.S. Territories. On a monthly basis, the MSDE Educator Information System is matched to the Clearinghouse system. Other states receive an alert if MSDE suspends or revokes an individual's certificate. Likewise, MSDE receives an alert if one of its licensees has had any action taken against him or her in another state. In the event of a match, MSDE flags the individual's file and begins an investigation. All NASDTEC member states have access to the database, and individual public and private schools now have the option of joining as "read only" members in order to view the database. Regardless of whether a local school system joins NASDTEC, all local school systems have access to MSDE's Educator Information System and would learn if a licensee is under investigation or has had a certificate suspended or revoked.

It is important to remember that the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and MSDE listing of revocations only apply to individuals who are required to hold a certificate. Maryland schools, public and private, are, however, required to conduct criminal background checks on their employees as per the Maryland Code, Family Law Article §5-560. This provides an additional check to ensure that individuals with improper backgrounds do not gain employment in Maryland schools.

Finally, it continues to be MSDE's goal to make all basic licensing information available to the public through a public facing portal through which any individual may search the certification status of an individual. This enhancement to the Educator Information System is currently in development.