

Public Comment to MD State Board of Education
May 22, 2018
Christopher Lloyd, NBCT

Good morning. I appreciate the opportunity to be with you and offer a few comments on the proposed revisions to COMAR 13A.12.04.03, related to certification requirements for superintendents in our state. This is a topic of information during the new business section of this morning's agenda, and this morning I speak to you as an individual.

As you know, in November of 2017, the State Superintendent convened a multi-stakeholder workgroup to make recommendations on the certification requirements for superintendents. That group completed its work in late March of this year, and last month MSDE presented the workgroup's recommendations to this body.

State staff heard from this body on April 24th that the language proposed by the workgroup could be too restrictive and was asked by this body to draft certification language consistent with the minimum requirements of state statute. This language is contained in Attachment 1 of today's packet and was presented to us as members of the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board at our meeting earlier this month.

PSTEB reviewed the language of both the workgroup and in Attachment 1 -- having a rich discussion of the interests and potential implications of such language. As you know, local school boards hire one employee, the superintendent of schools. And while needs differ from a large county such as mine in Montgomery, to a smaller county such as Kent, there is an underlying philosophy that our state holds, of what it takes to be an effective superintendent. That philosophy is manifested in minimum certification requirements. Much as a budget is a view into the priorities and values of an organization, such is true with COMAR as it relates to our values and service to young scholars.

That's why PSTEB unanimously adopted a motion asking for a conference committee meeting with the state board, as it relates to the certification requirements for superintendents -- because of the importance of the language to our state and our students. I understand that today's discussion is focused on information, and I appreciate the urgency building language for publication. But I also believe that conversations between the two boards responsible for certification is critical, so that together we can understand shared interests, and seek to create options to meet those interests. Please take the opportunity to gather information today, and then convene in a conference committee with PSTEB prior to a request for publication.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service to public education.