

TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Carey M. Wright, Ed.D., State Superintendent of Schools 

DATE: June 25, 2024

SUBJECT: COMAR 13A.07.06.02 *Definitions*
COMAR 13A.07.06.08 *State Program Approval Requirements*
PERMISSION TO PUBLISH

Purpose

The purpose of this item is to request permission to publish amendments to the Code of Maryland Regulation (COMAR) 13A.07.06.02 *Definitions* and 13A.07.06.08 *State Program Approval Requirements*.

Background

Under Maryland law, the State Board of Education (SBOE) shares joint authority with the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board (PSTEB) to develop regulations governing teacher certification and preparation. When the PSTEB initiates a regulatory change, the SBOE must also review the proposed regulation, and vice versa. If a majority of the SBOE members approve of the regulation, the regulation promulgation process continues.

After the PSTEB and SBOE vote to approve a regulation, the proposed regulation is sent to the Administrative, Executive, and Legislative Review Committee (AELR) for a 15-day review period. If the AELR Committee does not hold up the proposed regulation for further review, it is published in the Maryland Register for a 30-day public comment period. At the end of the comment period, Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) staff reviews and summarizes the public comments, which are presented to both boards. Thereafter, MSDE staff will present a recommendation to both the PSTEB and SBOE to either: (1) adopt the regulation in the form it was proposed; or (2) revise the regulation and adopt it as final because the suggested revision is not a substantive change; or (3) withdraw the regulation and re-propose it because the suggested revision is a substantive change. At any time during this process, the AELR Committee may stop the promulgation process and hold a hearing. Thereafter, it may recommend to the Governor that the regulation not be adopted as a final regulation or the AELR Committee may release the regulation for final adoption. The PSTEB and SBOE would then vote to formally adopt the regulation.

The PSTEB and SBOE adopted new program approval regulations in November and December 2023, respectively. Since its adoption, MSDE identified areas in the regulations that require further alignment to newly adopted laws. The PSTEB voted to publish amendments to COMAR 13A.07.06.02 *Definitions* on

February 8, 2024, and voted to publish amendments to COMAR 13A.07.06.08 *State Program Approval Requirements* on June 6, 2024.

Executive Summary

The MSDE is amending 13A.07.06.02 *Definitions* and COMAR 13A.07.06.08 *State Program Approval Requirements* to align the language with Md., Code Education §6-120, §6-125, and §6-126, which were modified during the 2023 and 2024 Maryland Legislative Sessions.

Action

The MSDE is requesting permission to publish amendments to COMAR 13A.07.06.02 *Definitions* and COMAR 13A.07.06.08 *State Program Approval Requirements*.

Attachments

COMAR 13A.07.06.02 *Definitions*

COMAR 13A.07.06.08 *State Program Approval Requirements*

Title 13A
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Subtitle 07 SCHOOL PERSONNEL

06 Programs for Professionally Licensed Personnel

Authority: Education Article, §§2-205, 6-120, 6-121, 6-704, and 11-208, Annotated Code of Maryland

.02 Definitions.

A. In this chapter, the following terms have the meanings indicated.

B. Terms Defined.

(1) “Accreditation”, also referred to as "national accreditation", means a teacher education program has met standards set by a national accrediting agency recognized by the Department and the Commission.

(2) “Action research” means a deliberate, solution-oriented investigation to enhance student achievement that is conducted by the teacher candidate, under the guidance of a mentor teacher and clinical faculty.

(3) “Alternative teacher preparation program” means a sequence of courses established by a county board, *an institution of higher education, or a nonprofit organization* and approved by the State Superintendent that leads to a participant receiving a *[resident teacher certificate] Resident Teacher License* issued by the Department and includes teaching assignments with supervision and mentoring by a qualified teacher.

(4) “Approval” means a program has met all requirements set by the Department.

(5) “Approval with conditions” means a program has met some, but not all, requirements set by the Department and may operate under certain circumstances.

(6) “Candidate” means an individual enrolled in an educator preparation program who is preparing for or serving in a position as an educator in schools that educate students in preschool through grade twelve.

(7) “Clinical experience” means guided, hands-on, practical applications and demonstrations of a candidate’s professional knowledge and the application of theory through collaborative and facilitated learning, including in the practicum and in field-based assignments, tasks, activities, and assessments across a variety of settings.

(8) “Clinical supervisor” means an individual employed by the education preparation provider who oversees a candidate, is trained or experienced in the field in which the individual is supervising, and is trained to work with and provide feedback to candidates.

(9) “Commission” means the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

(10) “Completer” means the candidate has met exit requirements outlined in .08E of this regulation.

(11) “Department” means the Maryland State Department of Education.

(12) “Educator preparation program (program)” means either a traditional or alternative Maryland-approved sequence of courses and experiences required to train candidates to become licensed educators in a specific area.

(13) “Educator preparation provider (provider)” means an accredited college, university, or other post-secondary institution, public or private educational association, local school system, corporation or institution approved to operate traditional or alternative educator training programs in Maryland.

- (14) “Entrance” means matriculation into a program.
- (15) “Exit” means completion of a program.
- (16) “Focused revisit” means the subsequent review by the Department of a program that holds the status of approved with conditions or probation.
- (17) "Institution of higher education" means a place of postsecondary education that generally limits enrollment to graduates of secondary schools, and awards degrees at either the associate, baccalaureate, or graduate level.
- (18) "Interstate Certification Compact (ICC)" means a legal agreement with other states to facilitate the certification of out-of-State teachers and other professional educational personnel as authorized by Education Article, Title 6, Subtitle 6, Annotated Code of Maryland, or as otherwise provided by law.
- (19) “Local school system (LSS)” means a Maryland public local education agency a State-operated school, or a nonpublic school.
- (20) “Maryland Teacher-Principal Evaluation” means an assessment framework for the performance of teachers administered annually by the local school system, a State-operated school, or a nonpublic school, and recommended by the State.
- (21) “Mentor teacher” means a highly competent educator, trained and selected by the partner school, who will work to instill in the participant the skills, attitudes, values, and knowledge necessary for the next generation of teachers.
- (22) “Partner school” means a local school system, nonpublic school, [or] nonpublic special education school, *or eligible prekindergarten provider* that has a written partnership agreement with an institution of higher education or alternative teacher preparation program to provide a teacher training practicum for participants enrolled in a teacher preparation program at the institution of higher education or alternative teacher preparation program.
- (23) “Practicum” means the clinical experiences in which candidates have an increased teaching responsibility under the guidance of a mentor teacher.
- (24) “Probation” means a program has seriously failed to meet program requirements or has demonstrated a pattern of noncompliance.
- (25) “Professional development” means a variety of specialized training, formal education, or advanced learning intended to help administrators, teachers, and other educators improve their professional knowledge, competence, skill, and effectiveness.
- (26) “Traditional program” means a sequence of courses for educator preparation that:
- (a) Is offered by a college or university leading to a degree that includes:
 - (i) General education and content coursework;
 - (ii) Professional coursework;
 - (iii) Clinical experiences; and
 - (iv) Demonstration of standards and competencies required to prepare educators for teaching students in the classroom environment; and
 - (b) On completion, makes candidates eligible for licensure in Maryland.

.08 State Program Approval Requirements.

A. Entry Requirements for Teacher Preparation Programs.

(1) A provider of a traditional program shall require candidates to have a grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale during the most recent 2 years of the candidate's post-secondary education or demonstrate mastery of general knowledge by providing evidence of a qualifying score, as established by the State Superintendent of Schools and as approved by the State Board of Education (SBOE), on a basic skills assessment.

(2) A provider of an alternative program shall require candidates to submit:

(a) A GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale at the post-secondary level, or demonstrate mastery of general knowledge by providing evidence of a qualifying score, as established by the State Superintendent of Schools and as approved by the SBOE, on a basic skills assessment; and

(b) Evidence of one of the following:

(i) A conferred bachelor's degree or higher with a major related to the program licensure area;

(ii) A conferred bachelor's degree or higher with a minimum of 24 semester hours of credit related to the licensure area; or

(iii) A conferred bachelor's degree or higher and evidence of a qualifying score on an approved content assessment, as established by the State Superintendent of Schools and as approved by the SBOE.

B. Waiver of Entry Requirements.

(1) A provider of a program may waive the entrance requirement for up to 10 percent of the candidates admitted in an annual cohort.

(2) A provider of a program shall implement strategies to ensure that candidates admitted under a waiver receive assistance to successfully demonstrate the required standards and competencies and meet requirements for licensure on exit from the program.

C. Standards and Competencies.

(1) A provider shall ensure that its teacher preparation programs provide the following for all candidates:

(a) Instruction and experiences in the core academic subjects that the teacher will be teaching, aligned with Maryland-recognized national content and pedagogy standards listed under Regulation .03A of this chapter;

(b) Instruction and experiences aligned with Department-approved competencies under Regulations .12—.15 of this chapter;

(c) Instruction in the Department-approved Model Code of Ethics for Educators;

(d) Instruction in teaching in high poverty, culturally diverse, and linguistically diverse schools under Regulation .15 of this chapter; **[and]**

(e) Instruction in research-based literacy instruction aligned to the science of reading for the grade level the individual will be teaching[.]; **and**

(f) Training in the skills and techniques for teaching effectively in a virtual learning environment, including the use of online curriculum.

(2) A provider of a teacher preparation program leading to licensure in early childhood education, elementary education, English as a Second Language, and special education shall:

(a) Provide coursework demonstrating coverage of research-based literacy instruction aligned to the science of reading including phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension;

(b) Use high-quality curricula and materials that accurately detail the principles of scientifically-based reading practices;

(c) Provide opportunities for candidates to demonstrate mastery of reading instruction through in-class assignments, tests, and instructional practice; and

(d) Prepare candidates to interpret reading assessment data to identify students with reading difficulties and inform instruction.

(3) A provider shall ensure that programs preparing candidates for licensure in early childhood and elementary education provide content instruction in each of the following:

(a) English language arts;

(b) Social studies;

(c) Math; and

(d) Science.

(4) Programs for Specialists. The Department shall approve specialists programs according to the national standards listed in Regulation .03A of this chapter.

(5) Programs for Administrators.

(a) The Department shall approve administrator programs according to the national standards listed in Regulation .03A of this chapter.

(b) A provider of a program that offers courses in school administration shall:

(i) Develop a method for evaluating the potential of candidates to be effective school leaders;

(ii) Develop a curriculum to enable candidates to organize and manage both schools and highly skilled professionals in a professional work environment, and achieve effective peer observations and effective evaluations of other personnel;

(iii) Include clinical experiences and assessments that measure competencies established in the program curriculum; and

(iv) Include instruction in research-based literacy instruction aligned to the science of reading.

D. Clinical Experiences.

(1) Each participant in an undergraduate, graduate, or alternative teacher preparation program shall complete a teacher training practicum as a requirement for program completion.

(2) A provider shall ensure that a teacher training program incorporates classroom observations in which the candidate is observed in different school settings at the beginning of the program to assist in determining if the candidate has the aptitude and temperament for teaching.

(3) A teacher training practicum may be completed consecutively or over the course of the program.

(4) Before July 1, 2025, a provider shall ensure that a teacher preparation program has a required practicum of a minimum of 100 days.

(5) Minimum Required Practicum.

(a) Beginning on July 1, 2025, a provider shall ensure that:

(i) An undergraduate teacher preparation program has a required practicum equivalent to a full school year;

(ii) A graduate teacher preparation program has a required practicum of a minimum of 100 days; and

(iii) An alternative teacher preparation program has a required practicum equivalent to a full school year.

(b) [Exception.] *Exceptions.*

(i) Where an alternative teacher preparation program operating in Maryland on or before July 1, 2021, provides effective and diverse teachers in schools and local school systems, as approved by the State Superintendent, and has high rates of teacher vacancies, teacher turnover, and new teachers relative to other public schools in Maryland, a provider shall ensure that this program has a required practicum of a minimum of 100 days.

(ii) *Candidates in an alternative teacher preparation program for early childhood education may satisfy criteria established by the Department that evaluate the knowledge and skills from prior learning relating to early childhood education in place of a practicum.*

(6) A provider shall ensure collaboration with mentor teachers of a partner school to evaluate participants in a teacher training practicum and ensure each participant demonstrates the competencies required of licensed teachers.

(7) Special Requirements for Alternative Teacher Preparation Programs. A provider shall ensure that a teacher training practicum in an alternative teacher preparation program includes, at a minimum, the following content:

- (a) Preparing lesson plans;
- (b) Teaching;
- (c) Debriefing;
- (d) Observation of a class of students to which the participant is assigned as a student teacher; and
- (e) 40 hours of teaching during class periods.

(8) A provider shall ensure that a program leading to licensure in an area of teaching includes a practicum experience in a partner school and:

- (a) Is located in a Maryland public school, nonpublic school, or an out-of-State school with the permission of the State Superintendent;
 - (b) Is aligned with program curricula that encompass the area, subject, or category of licensure being sought by candidates, including opportunities to provide reading instruction for those candidates enrolled in early childhood, elementary, special education, and ESOL programs;
 - (c) Provides candidates on-site supervision by a mentor teacher and ongoing support by a clinical supervisor from the provider, including:
 - (i) Documented observations;
 - (ii) Collaboration between clinical supervisors and mentor teachers to evaluate candidates for demonstration of required competencies;
 - (iii) Observations and evaluations of candidates, aligned to a Department-approved educator evaluation system; and
 - (iv) Feedback, placement, remediation, or supports, informed by candidate evaluation;
- and

(d) Ensures candidates are responsible for the instruction and classroom management of a roster of students for a minimum of 150 hours during the practicum.

(9) A provider shall ensure that a program for administrators includes supervised clinical experience totaling a minimum of 240 hours distributed within the program to include observations and evaluations of candidates aligned to a Department-approved administrator evaluation system.

(10) A provider shall ensure that a program for specialists includes a supervised clinical experience in the specialty area being pursued.

E. Exit Requirements.

- (1) A provider shall establish exit requirements for programs that
- (a) Demonstrate successful completion of required coursework that is based on Department-recognized national content standards and Department-approved competencies;
 - (b) Demonstrate successful completion of the clinical experience outlined in [Regulation .08D of this chapter; and] § D of this regulation; and
 - (c) *Enable teacher candidates to, beginning July 1, 2025, complete:*
 - (i) *A nationally recognized and nationally scored portfolio-based assessment of teaching ability approved by the State Board of Education; or*
 - (ii) *A rigorous local school system teacher induction program that meets the requirements listed in § E(3) of this regulation.*

[Beginning on July 1, 2025, obtain a qualifying score on a nationally recognized and nationally scored portfolio-based assessment of teaching ability, as established by the State Superintendent of Schools and as approved by the State Board of Education, in teaching areas only.]

(2) Candidates who complete an approved program in the State who passed an approved portfolio-based assessment will not be required to take the assessment more than one time.

- (3) *A local school system induction program under in §E(1)(c)(ii) of this regulation shall:*
- (a) *Be developed by the local school system, either independently or collaboratively with other local school systems;*
 - (b) *Be approved by the Department;*
 - (c) *Last the lesser of three years or the amount of time a teacher holds a conditional license; and*
 - (d) *Include a locally developed portfolio component that is aligned with the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium Standards.*

F. Credit Requirements.

(1) A provider shall ensure that a program leading to a bachelor's degree is a 4-year program and award 120 credits, unless otherwise permitted by law.

(2) A provider may expand the program by no more than 12 semester hours of credit or an additional semester only with the permission of the Department and the Commission.

(3) *A locally developed portfolio established under § E(3) of this regulation may be used to meet a portion of the coursework requirements of the program.*