

Union #93

**Blue Hill – Brooksville – Castine
Penobscot – Surry**

**Professional Learning Community Support
System**

Teacher Certification Handbook

June 14, 2010

This is the latest update of the Professional Learning Community Support System (Teacher Recertification Handbook) revised by the Certification Support Team, September 2009 – June 2010. Modifications have been made to reflect past practice as well as take into consideration changes in the Maine State regulations.

Respectfully Submitted,
Certification Support Team

Brooksville: Kathy Allen, Chairman

Castine: Cheryl McFadden, Vice-Chairman

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Revised October 17, 2010 by:

Cheryl McFadden, Chairman

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Certification/Recertification Process For Union #93 and Surry

Introduction

The primary objective of this process is to improve student achievement by increasing the effectiveness of classroom instruction. This is accomplished by developing local support teams/mentors to assist teachers in meeting certification and recertification requirements, which are objective and measurable: (1) transitional; (2) conditional; (3) provisional; and (4) professional certificates.

Scope:

Union #93 and Surry includes the towns of Blue Hill, Brooksville, Castine, Penobscot and Surry, and is composed of five K-8 schools. This Professional Learning Communities Support System (PLCSS) plan is designed to provide support for all teachers, guidance counselors, library-media specialists, special education consultants, speech and hearing clinicians, literacy specialists and the participation of any persons who are not school employees.

The Recertification Team will work closely with area institutions of higher learning, such as UMO and area professional organizations such as the Down East Education Partnership (DEEP), to direct the development of in-service programs and the training of staff members.

The PLCSS Responsibilities:

1. To meet on the first Wednesday of each month September to June.
2. To recommend provisional teachers for the first professional certificate from the Commissioner;
3. To provide support service to provisional, transitional and conditional teachers;
4. Supervise the development and submission of:
 - a. Initial Professional Certification Action Plans and supporting documentation for new educators and for master teacher candidates
 - b. Renewal plans for teachers and educational specialists
5. Provide for a formal orientation for provisional, conditional, targeted need teachers and educational specialists which describes responsibilities, roles, procedures, available services, training professional development opportunities and the process for achieving a professional certificate.
6. Assign mentors to provisional/conditional teachers;
7. To prepare an annual report of committee activities to be distributed to school board chairs and the superintendent of schools.

No part of the above should be considered part of the evaluation process.

The Support Team will maintain separate, confidential files accessible only to the certification candidates, Support Team members, and the Commissioner. A candidate's file shall become his/her personal property upon receipt of the certification sought from the Department of Education (DOE), except for the documentation required by state law. The

superintendent of schools, local principals, and local school boards will not have access to any materials involved in this process.

Teacher Support Team Membership

The Support Team must consist of a majority of professional teachers. One teacher from each of the schools will be appointed by the teachers at that school to serve on the team. The superintendent should choose an administrator representative. If additional members are needed, outside consultants and DOE staff may be selected to join the Support Team. All members will have the approval of local school faculty.

A teacher chairperson and a vice-chairperson will be elected at the final meeting of the school year. The chairperson will be responsible for all of the internal communications within the Support Team. This includes meeting-dates and times, preparing an agenda, maintaining of certification candidates and mentors, correspondence with the DOE and the superintendent.

To qualify for Support Team membership, team members must have a professional certification with three (3) years of teaching experience. Non-teacher members must have had at least three (3) years of experience in education.

Members of the Support Team will be trained and serve a term of three (3) years. Members should be prepared to assume chairmanship of the team as necessary in the third year of their term. Terms will be staggered in such a way as to ensure experienced members on the Support Team.

In the event of a Support Team member applying for certification, that member shall abstain from all aspects of the Support Team process for his/her certification only.

Training in all applicable state laws, rules and regulations will be provided to all Support Team members and alternates. This training will be made available to all interested professional staff. The committee will provide for orientation and training of new members.

Mentor Network

Each provisionally certified or temporarily certified (targeted needs, conditional, and transitional (if necessary)) staff member supported by this plan will be assigned a mentor whose main task will be to coach his or her mentee in reaching a higher level of certification (see Ch.118). In doing so, mentors will provide guidance and support based on a professional learning community model.

Qualifications of mentors (see Ch.118):

1. At least three years of experience as an educator.
2. Working under a professional certificate.
3. Completed a mentor training program approved by the State of Maine Department of Education.

CERTIFICATIONS

PROVISIONAL: 2 YEAR CERTIFICATE

- For:
- a first year teacher in Maine
 - an experienced licensed teacher from another state

CONDITIONAL: 1 YEAR CERTIFICATE (renewable 2 times with affidavit)

- For:
- a person with lapsed certification
 - a person who has a Liberal Arts degree, but lacks professional requirements for certification
 - a person who needs to take the PRAXIS I test

TARGETED NEEDS CERTIFICATE: 1 YEAR CERTIFICATE (renewable 2 times with targeted needs)

- For:
- a person who needs an alternate pathway to teacher or educational specialist certification for positions designated as having a shortage of fully certified applicants
 - a person who is not eligible for any other certificate

TRANSITIONAL: 1 YEAR CERTIFICATE (renewable 2 times with affidavit)

- For:
- a person who is certified, but does not have all the credits (endorsement) needed to teach in a subject area

PROFESSIONAL: 5 YEAR CERTIFICATE

For: –a person holding a current Maine certificate

MASTER TEACHER: 5 YEAR CERTIFICATE

For: –a person who has successfully demonstrated the standards for one or more NBPTS certification areas

FAST TRACK FORM

For: –a person from out of state and some conditional, who are in state. (see fast track form pg. 26)

PROVISIONAL – CONDITIONAL – TARGETED NEEDS CERTIFICATE TO A PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE

The mentor, guided by the Support Team will govern the work of provisional, conditional and targeted needs teachers, using a Teacher Action Plan (TAP) generated by the provisional teacher. The TAP is based on Maine's 10 Teacher Certification Standards. (See Provisional TAP pg. 24 and Teacher Standards pg. 27–31) The mentor will document the activities carried out by the provisional teacher and then make a certification recommendation to the Commissioner.

A Support Team member, or mentor teacher, will meet with the provisional teacher within the first month of the starting date of employment to explain the certification process and help the candidate develop and implement a TAP. This TAP will be developed by November 1st, (or within 45 working days for teachers employed after September 15th) for approval at the November Support Team meeting. The TAP will specify goals set by the candidate and provide a work plan and a time–line. (See Provisional TAP pg. 24) Furthermore, the TAP will specify how success in meeting the goals will be measured and documented.

The provisional teacher will be expected to accomplish 80% of the goals outlined in the TAP during the first year. In addition, he/she must complete any other requirements specified by the DOE.

Every effort will be made for a mentor to work with only one provisional teacher at a time.

The TAP will be submitted to and approved by the Support Team, whose role is to verify that required procedures have been followed. It may subsequently be modified upon request of the provisional teacher with the approval of the Support Team.

While TAPs require that Support Team mentors meet with provisional teachers at least once a month during the school year, provisional teachers, in the event of a personality conflict, may request a new mentor teacher to oversee his/her TAP. They may make this request once during this process. The mentor may also be replaced, by the Support Team, if the team determines that the needs of the mentee are not being met.

CERTIFICATION SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

Teacher–mentor interaction is shown here in time order to clarify the role of each party in the procedure.

Assessment:

1. Classroom observation will be made at the request of the teacher.
2. Teacher and mentor will meet at least monthly to discuss progress.

Schedule: Year 1

By September 30th:

- Initial teacher–mentor meeting; The mentor defines process and clarifies expectations. The mentor introduces the Provisional Teacher Initial Self–Assessment sheet.

By October 15th:

- Mentor and teacher meet to consider teacher expectations and to begin TAP.

By November 1st:

- TAP submitted to Support Team for approval.

November 1st – February 1st:

- One mentor observation submitted to the Support Team for approval and monthly meetings should occur.

February 1st – June 1st:

- One mentor observation submitted to Support Team for approval and monthly meetings should occur.

By June 1st:

- Mentor reports progress to Support Team for the June meeting.

Schedule: Year 2

Between September 1st – December 1st:

- One Mentor observation submitted to the Support Team for approval and monthly meetings should occur.

By April 1st:

- A second mentor observation is submitted to the Support Team for approval.
- This observation should state whether or not the candidate should be recommended for a professional certificate.

By June 1st: (Not before April 15)

- A third observation by a Support Team member (not the mentor).
- Support Team will make recommendation for initial professional certificate or extension of provisional/transitional certificate.

MENTOR AND TEACHER CHECKLIST

YEAR ONE

_____ Initial meeting with mentor (by September 30th)

_____ Read Certification Process for Union #93 and Surry

Give special attention to:

1. Provisional/Conditional/Transitional to Professional Certificate
2. Standards for Provisional/Conditional/Transitional Teachers

_____ Meet with mentor teacher by October 15th to consider teacher expectations and begin expectations and begin Teacher Action Plan (TAP) by November Meeting.

_____ November 1st TAP submitted to the Support Team for approval.

_____ Mentor Observation #1 (November – February)

_____ Monthly Meetings (Sample Contact Log pg. 32–43)

_____ Mentor Observation #2 (February 1st – June 1st)

YEAR TWO

_____ Meet with mentor teacher to revisit TAP and make any necessary changes, if needed, by Sept. 30th.

_____ Continue with Monthly Meetings

(Sample Contact Log pg. 32-43)

- _____ Mentor Observation #1
(Between September 1st and December 1st)

- _____ Observation #2 by April 1st

- _____ Observation #3 from a Support Team member
(after April 15th – June 1st)

- _____ Support Team recommendation for initial
professional certificate or extension of provisional/
transitional certificate by June meeting.

PROFESSIONAL TEACHER CERTIFICATE RENEWAL

The Support Team has the specific responsibility for conducting the recertification process at the professional level and making recommendations to the Commissioner.

To establish a recertification plan, team members will notify each professional teacher at least two school years prior to the expiration of each certificate held by that teacher.

At the request of a professional teacher, a Support Team representative will meet with the teacher to review progress on the recertification plan or to make necessary modifications.

Candidates for renewal at the professional level are responsible for submitting Recertification Renewal Plans (**RRP**) for approval by the Support Team, **before** completing the activity. (See Professional RRP pg. 25) In addition, they are responsible for securing the resources and completing the activities as planned.

Teachers may receive recertification credit at the professional level by:

1. completing 6 credit hours of approved course work in his/her field of study or a related field;
2. engaging in other activities that will benefit your students which may include, but are not limited to the following:
 - a. service on curriculum, or staff development committees
 - b. taking special training programs
 - c. attending educational conferences
 - d. completing independent projects

Non-practicing teachers, who live in the district may apply through the Support Team for recertification. They must follow the normal process as outlined above.

Teachers holding more than one endorsement on their certificate will develop recertification plans for each endorsement, if needed.

Professional to Master Teacher Certificate

The Master Teacher Certification shall be awarded using the standards for the National Board Certified Teachers as developed by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards as listed in Chapter 118. The PLCSS shall make a recommendation to the Commissioner regarding the eligibility of the teacher candidate for issuance of an initial master teacher certificate. The recommendation shall be one of the following:

- a) Recommendation that the initial master teacher certificate be issued. If the applicant candidate has been awarded NBPTS certification through successful completion of all requirements for one or more NBPTS certification areas, the candidate shall be deemed to have satisfied the requirements for the certificate, and if no other evidence is shown to be a proper basis for denial, a recommendation for issuance of the initial certificate shall be made to the Commissioner.
- b) Teachers seeking the Master Teacher Certificate, or its renewal, will work closely with a NBPTS certified teacher to develop a Master Certificate Action Plan (or Master Certificate Renewal Plan) two years prior to their certificate renewal date. The plan must support the applicant in meeting the requirements established in Chapter 118, Section 7.1., including, but not limited to,

- the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards.
The plan must also include the 6 credits/90 contact hours needed to renew their professional certification.
- c) If the candidate has successfully demonstrated the standards for one or more NBPTS certification areas, the candidate shall be deemed to have satisfied the requirements for the certificate, and if no other evidence is shown to be a proper basis for denial, a recommendation for issuance of the initial certificate shall be made to the Commissioner.

Certificate Recommendation Process

The Support Team will make the recommendation for the initial professional certificate or the extension of the provisional certificate to the commissioner by June 1 of the second year, cut in no case, before April 15. This is important in order to keep the support Team process independent of the contract renewal process for probationary teachers. All certification recommendations must be by majority vote of the Support Team. The written content of a TAP or recertification plan and documentation showing that required activities that have been completed will be the basis for any certification recommendation to the Commissioner. Documentation filed with the Commissioner will be limited to the forms required of every candidate by the Commissioner, except as the Commissioner may request, in writing, to assist in making certification decisions. The responsibility of the Support Team to a candidate is completed upon sending a recommendation to the Commissioner.

Appeal Process

An appeal process will be in place of an initial proposal is not approved or if a negative recommendation is imminent. The candidate may appeal this decision prior to submission to the Commissioner. All appeal requests must be made in writing within 15 days of the Support Team's original decision. If an agreement cannot be reached, a three-member board will be established to settle the matter. The appeal board will consist of a representative of the candidate, the Support Team, and a mutually agreed upon third party. The appeal board will have access to all materials in the renewal file and may interview the candidate and/or chairperson of the Support Team.

The three-member appeal board will make a decision within 30 days to accept or reject the Support Team's original recommendation. The decision will be final and will be forwarded to the Commissioner.

Protecting Teachers' Rights

The activities of the Support Team and its proceedings may not be used directly or indirectly in the process by which the administration makes decisions about a teacher's employment status. All certification candidates must be notified of any discussion or meeting about their candidacy and may be present, at their option, except during voting. All written communication will be made available to the teacher.

The support Team may recommend, but not require, that a candidate for certificate renewal at the professional level select particular goals or activities for recertification.

The Support System design and any changes must be initially ratified by a majority of the teachers it is intended to serve, and approved by the local school boards and the Department of Education (DOE). The design will be reviewed and revised as necessary at least once every five years.

The responsibility for initiating changes in Support System procedures rests with the Support Team members and the teachers served by the system. Changes in applicable state laws and regulations will result in the review of the guidelines.

Responsibility for ensuring that the Support System operates according to approved guidelines rests with the Commissioner.

Annual Review

Before June 10th of each year, a meeting will be held to systematically evaluate the program's quality, effectiveness, and efficient management. The Support Team will request input from Union #93 and Surry faculty and staff. The subsequent report and recommendation will be submitted to the superintendent, and through him/her, to the school committees.

Appendix

GENERAL INFORMATION

CERTIFICATION OFFICE: 207-624-6603

Automated status: 207-626-8989

Homepage: <http://www.maine.gov/education/cert/index.html>

Certification e-mail: cert.doe@maine.gov

Certification Secretary and Fingerprint Coordinator:
pat.julien@maine.gov

Fingerprinting/Criminal History Record Check - Appointments:
http://www10.inorme.org/cgi-bin/dps/fingerprints/select_type/pl

Certification Rules:

Ch. 115 Part I:
<http://www.maine.gov/sos/ced/rules/05/071/071c1151.doc>

Ch. 115 Part II:
<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/rules/05/071/071c1152.doc>

Mentor Training Workshops:
<http://www.maine.gov/education/teacherinduction/workshops>

Tests and Scores:
<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/rules/05/071/071c013.doc>

Frequently Asked Questions:
<http://www.maine.gov/education/cert/faq.htm#5>

PRAXIS -PPST -

<http://www.umaine.edu/edhd/acadprogs/praxis.htm>

<http://www.ets.org>

PPST Scores – composite 526 –no single less than 3 under

Reading 176
Writing 175
Math 175

DEFINITIONS AND CODES

1 CREDIT = 1.5 C.E.U. = 15 CONTACT HOURS

For Professional Certificate Renewal:

6 credits or
9 C.E.U.'s or
90 contact hours or
equivalent combination

C. E. U. means Continuing Education Unit

**Provisional – Conditional – Targeted Needs Certificate
Two-Year Teacher Action Plan (TAP)**

Provisional Teacher _____ S.S. # _____

School _____ Mentor _____

Grade Level _____ Date (by Nov. 1st) _____

Areas of Strength:

Areas of Limitations:

Goals: (based on Maine's 10 Teacher Certification Standards pg. 27-31)

How Success in Meeting Goals Will Be Measured:

Professional Development Resources to be used:

Work Plan/Time-Line:

**PROFESSIONAL RECERTIFICATION
TEACHER RENEWAL PLAN
(RRP)**

Name _____

Position _____ School _____

Certificate Exp. Date _____ S. S. N. _____

e-mail address: _____

Application for credits based on:

_____ Course _____ Conference _____ Workshop
_____ Curriculum Work _____ Committee Work _____ Project
_____ Travel _____ Independent Study _____ Volunteer Work

Name/Title of Activity: _____

Dates of Attendance: _____

Sponsoring Unit: _____

Total Credits/Hours/CEU: _____

Overview of Activity: (Submit to committee **BEFORE** you complete course/activity.)

How will this activity show an impact on your students and you as a professional?

For final approval: Please submit documentation of proof of successful completion, proof of attendance, or detailed report of activity.

Support Team Use Only

Approval Date (Initial) _____ (Final) _____

