

**To: Members of the State Board of
Education & Early Development**

December 9, 2021

From: Dr. Michael Johnson, Commissioner

Agenda Item: 6A

◆ ISSUE

The board is being asked to open a public comment on regulations related to the qualification and certification of Alaska educators.

◆ BACKGROUND

- The proposed regulations address elements of two of the six essential areas identified by the Alaska Governor's Working Group on Teacher Retention and Recruitment (TRR) including expanding certification pathways, simplifying qualifications, and streamlining the certification process.
- The proposed regulations address the TRR Working Group recommendation to expanding certification pathways by:
 - Providing an additional path for teachers to qualify for a Master teacher certificate that utilizes a combination of teacher evaluations and a professional portfolio;
 - Allowing individuals holding at least a bachelor's degree to qualify for a special education teacher and special services alternative program certification;
 - Allowing for credits and degrees offered by nationally accredited institutions of higher education to meet certification requirements;
 - Expanding certification renewal and additional endorsement options to include micro-credentials;
 - Allowing all paraprofessionals with two years of experience to qualify for the Instructional Assistant Type I limited certificate that provide a pathway to full teacher certification;
 - Allowing for the addition of elementary education endorsement with two years of teaching experience and passing scores on an elementary content area exam; and
 - Allowing micro-credentials approved by the department to be qualify for an additional teaching endorsement.
- The proposed regulations address areas that will simplify qualification requirements. Regulation changes to qualification requirements include the following:
 - Increases the testing options available to paraprofessionals to achieve qualified status;
 - Removes additional coursework requirements for special education teachers providing service to preschoolers and teachers of gifted children;
 - Removes the recency credit requirements for the regular administrative (Type B) and special services (Type C) certificates;
 - Allows advanced Type C certificates to be issued to individuals holding a license issued by the Alaska Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing;
 - Removes the mathematics basic competency subtest requirement for individuals applying for the World Language Limited Certificate; and

- Allows all endorsements earned in another state and awarded on an Initial out-of-state certificate be placed on subsequent certificates without further review.
- The proposed regulations address areas that will streamline the certification process. Regulation changes to streamline requirements include the following:
 - Requires a copy of a government issued identification instead of notarization;
 - Requires all certificate types to complete the mandatory trainings;
 - Awards at no cost qualified military spouses who qualify for their first Alaska certificate and teachers who qualify for a Master certificate;
 - Allows for eligible Initial teaching certificates to be valid for up to five years and renewable;
 - Allows for limited certificates to be transferred from one district to another district;
 - Extends the amount of time that a background check conducted for a student teacher authorization can be used when applying for an Initial teacher certificate; and
 - Makes a technical correction to the qualifications for the school psychologist endorsement.
- The proposed regulations can be found behind this cover memo.
- Susan McKenzie, Director of the Division of Innovation and Education Excellence; Sondra Meredith, Administrator of Teacher Education & Certification; and Luann Weyhrauch, Assistant Attorney General will be present to brief the board.

◆ **OPTIONS**

This is a work session item. Action will take place under Agenda Item 9A.