

Education Standards & Practices Board Report

Vol. 1 Issue 1 August 1996 Standards Board Completes Its First Year

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History

The autonomous Education Standards and Practices Board has completed its first full year of service to educators in North Dakota. Those of us in the education profession have accomplished a thirty year goal: that of being able to govern our own profession as other professionals do. The ESPB replaced the former Teachers' Professional Practices Commission which served in an advisory capacity to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Effective January 1, 1995, the ESPB came into being through legislation to undertake the duties of certification, teacher preparation program approval, and professional development, all of which had previously resided in the Department of Public Instruction. Interim funding was designated by the 1995 Legislature during the transition period, to allow the ESPB time to establish basic fee structures and begin to receive income from those sources. In addition to autonomous governance and decision making, the funding for these professional governance areas becomes the responsibility of educators in the profession through the support provided under the new fee structure.

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Accomplishments

Following a whirlwind start last summer, in which the ESPB office processed more teaching certificates in two months than are normally submitted in an entire year, the turn-around time for issuance of certificates has settled back into its normal two-three week processing period. During this year's summer busy season, every teacher who presented qualifying information to the ESPB office for certification or renewal received their certificates prior to the start of the new school term, with many receiving them within a week of submission. To help alleviate the last minute rush, educators always

have the opportunity to renew their teaching certificate within a six month period prior to its expiration date.

The ESPB has updated and reprinted the Rules of Certification brochure in a user friendly form. It is available on request in single or multiple copies. The brochure includes information on the ESPB structure, teacher preparation, certification, renewal and reeducation requirements, endorsements and restrictions, denial and appeal procedures, professional development, and the educators' code of ethics.

The ESPB has developed collaborative working relationships with many professional organizations around the state. These collaborations have included, among others, working with the English Language Arts Standards and Assessments Projects in their development of standards, frameworks, benchmarks and assessments; the North Dakota Colleges of Teacher Education on teacher preparation program reviewal standards and protocols; and joint sponsorship of training for individuals involved in the North Central Association (NCA) accreditation process for K-12 and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) accreditation process for teacher preparation. Board members and staff have also worked with a number of individual districts and consortia on Goals 2000 grant projects involving professional development initiatives, school improvement, and mentoring of new teachers. One of these projects, the Professional Development Guidelines: Effective Practices, involved the input of over 200 educators and community members in the development of a best practices guidelines document for professional development activities. The Professional Development Guidelines will be shown at several of the professional conferences this fall and a training of trainers will be held in November to provide teams with expert information on effective professional development practices in each Teacher Learning Center region around the state.

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Members of the ESPB

- Mr. Don Haugen, Langdon (classroom teacher)
- Mr. Randy L. Gordon, Dickinson (non-public school)
- Dr. Doug Johnson, Bismarck (school administrator), Vice-chair
- Mr. Michael Schatz, New England (classroom teacher)
- Ms. Linda Davis, Bismarck (classroom teacher)
- Dr. Mary Harris (higher education)
- Ms. Maryjane Martens, Fargo (classroom teacher), Chair
- Ms. Sue Andrews, Fargo (school board)
- Ms. Beverly Sandness, Minot (school administrator)

Staff of the ESPB

- Ms. Marilyn Ridenhower, Executive Director
- Ms. Deb Jensen, Program Approval & Professional Development

As the Board continues, great care will be taken to assure that the board includes not only the broad based representation indicated above, but also balance according to geographic and gender representation, elementary, middle level and secondary levels, and large and small schools.

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Definitions and Duties

Certification

Certification refers to an individual's qualification to teach. In order to teach in the state of North Dakota, an individual must have a current North Dakota teaching certificate.

To receive a certificate, individuals must submit official college transcripts showing they have successfully completed all necessary course work in an approved teacher education program with a minimum 2.5 grade point average, including student teaching, be recommended for certification, pay the required fees, and clear screening for criminal records that would prohibit them from teaching according to state law.

The ESPB is responsible both for issuance of teaching certificates and for hearing review requests on certification denial and revocation. [Go to Top](#)

Credentialing

Some areas of education such as special education and administration require additional coursework beyond teacher certification. Individuals completing these specific requirements receive a credential. Credentialing is still handled by the Department of Public Instruction, in collaboration with specialty area professional organizations.

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Endorsements

An individual's area of endorsement refers to the area in which they are allowed to teach. North Dakota currently has endorsements for elementary education, middle school, secondary, kindergarten, and bilingual education or English as a second language. Endorsements may be completed as part of an original program of study or as additional reeducation coursework.

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Accreditation

Accreditation refers to the school or institution meeting specific standards. The North Central Association (NCA) deals with K-12 accreditation and the overall accreditation of

institutions of higher education. Accreditation of K-12 schools is administered through the Department of Public Instruction. The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), in partnership with state education agencies, accredits the higher education teacher preparation programs. The ESPB is the ND partnership agency for NCATE and teacher education program approval.

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