



CONNECTICUT FEDERATION OF
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS
AFSA - AFL-CIO



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To: State Department of Education
Department of Certification

From: Roch J. Girard
President

RE: Testimony on Proposed Certification Changes

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on the proposed certification changes.

Having served on the original Certification Review Committee as the CFSA representative, it is interesting to see the end product.

We do have some basic concerns about a few of the proposed changes.

Teacher Leader Certificate:

Though conceptually we would like to see such a certificate, we think this proposal is somewhat premature in nature. A BOE employee who serves more than 40% of their full time service would be REQUIRED to have such a certificate.

When the committee discussed this certificate concept we did not envision the certificate to be required for a team leader, content coach, or curriculum specialist. In fact, the term "or any other similar job title" seems awfully broad in scope.

When the original committee met, this position was supposed to be a possible stepping stone to an administrator position (Credits toward the 092). Where is that concept? Why would anyone want another master's degree instead of going for the 092? This certificate would require a master's degree AND 12 additional credits and field

experience in specific areas. What are the standards for this certificate? We did not see language that would "grandfather" the teachers that are currently acting in these capacities. As a school administrator we would be able to use their services OUTSIDE the classroom. Would this add to BOE budgets as new personnel? While the children are still in classrooms, how would this person work with the teachers/students? We believe we need to examine this concept more thoroughly. We need to gather more information from current teachers who provide this type of service; create roles and responsibilities for this position; and evaluate how administrators can effectively use such a certificated person in their school. What are the parameters of this job? If Math, Science, and literacy are included in the mix requiring this teacher leader certificate, does that mean every school will have to have these specialists in place? This would be a massive expenditure for school systems? What happens to the system-wide curriculum persons? Do we lose them to the schools at the expense of the districts wide position? This proposal needs a lot more evaluation and analysis.

Literacy Specialist PK-12 Certificate:

In this proposal the SDE wants to create a Literacy Specialist that would merge remedial reading and languages arts teachers who have consultant certificates. This appears to be another mega merger of certificates. Current certificate holders do their jobs well. Granted at times, administrators use these specialist teachers in various ways. We need this flexibility. This certificate would require up to 51 credits, with 12 more credit hours than are currently required. Why would anyone want to take on four additional 3 credit courses to do what they basically do now?

Intermediate Administration or Supervision Certificate:

CFSA is on board with the proposed changes for this certificate. We like the internship concept and /or the 450 hours of equivalent supervised experience.

Commentary:

We support the CEA's recommendation for redesigning both the remedial reading and reading consultant certificates, to expand the knowledge and skill levels associated with each certificate, and to create a separate literacy teacher and literacy coordinator certificate. We further support CEA's request for a small working group to gather information and make recommendations to the SBE by June 2010 regarding how the current reading certification should be changed. Will our college preparatory institution be able to accommodate these changes in a timely manner?

Finally, at last month's CCPE meeting, the stakeholders were asking the following questions: Why is the state consolidating certificates? Why is it even necessary? Are we making these jobs impossible to attain? Who is going to apply for these mega jobs?

If approved, are the colleges going to be able to accommodate these new certificates in a timely manner?

One major concern we have is that there seems to be an ever growing overabundance of regulations and less autonomy at the local level.

Thank you for your attention in these matters and for your service.