

## **NDE NOTES – October, 2014**

### **A QuESTT (Accountability for a Quality Education System, Today and Tomorrow)**

A QuESTT is NDE's initiative regarding the development of a meaningful, quality and statewide accountability system. Policy Forums will be held in October for invited stakeholders to participate in the development of the system which is articulated in DRAFT form in your folders. The Commissioner requested a limited number of educator preparation representatives for invitation consideration. (The individuals recommended have been advised of the submission of their names for consideration.) On 10/1 a request for additional nominations was issued – information in the packet—Sharon needs names by noon on October 7.

The NDE Policy Forums are in addition to the Statewide Vision for Education in Nebraska (LB 1103) Public Hearings being held in 3 locations. The Goals communicated by the Statewide Vision Task Force are found on the last page of the A QuESTT document. (Additional information on the NCTE Agenda.)

### **BACKGROUND CHECKS – GUIDANCE**

A question has been raised about the necessity to have two official background checks. The situation was related to a post-bac initial certification program in which the time between admittance to the program and clinical experience may be only a few months.

*After review of Rule 20 (004.06C Criminal Background Check. The institution shall conduct or verify an official criminal background check on candidates prior to admission to an initial teacher education program and again prior to clinical experience.), NDE has determined that under certain conditions, one background check will meet the requirement.*

The flexibility is found in the language 'or verify' in 004.06C. If an institution elects to create a process to 'verify' a previous and current background check, this would meet the requirement. This would likely mean a documented statement from the candidate that there are no changes to the background check on file. The other expectation is that the institution has a position (policy) on what constitutes a 'current' background check. My survey of a few institutions indicated that 'current' is not consistently defined by institutions – and generally ranges from 3 months to 1 year. I don't believe NDE will define 'current' – but rather leave that to the institution to establish their standard of practice.

### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS and JOINT UNDERSTANDING**

The State Board officially approved the new PK-12 English Language Arts Standards at the September Board Meeting. They are posted to the NDE website. At the September meeting representatives of Nebraska's postsecondary institutions recognized the standards as the college and career ready standards in the areas of reading, writing, speaking/listening, and multiple literacies. Further, the understanding is that these standards will prepare students to participate in postsecondary, credit-bearing, freshman courses without the need for remediation. A copy of the Joint Understanding is included in the NACTE packet). The joint agreement, along with direction set in Rule 20 and Rule 24 language, reinforces the importance that ALL candidates are prepared to address PK-12 standards, particularly in the core academic areas.

### **PROVISIONAL SPECIAL EDUCATION ENDORSEMENT**

This is the endorsement an individual can obtain with only 3 hours of SPED and a plan to complete the program. This was created nearly 10 years ago as a strategy to address NCLB language about emergency certificates/waivers that SPED was using at the time. NDE SPED, Teacher Ed and Teacher Certification

staff agree that it is time is time to revisit and strengthen the requirements of this provisional endorsement (with the hope to eventually bring it to extinction).

NDE staff has developed the following with intent that it will be placed in the next Rule 21 revision:

1. Candidate must demonstrate completion of a minimum 9 hours (as opposed to the current 3 hours) of special education coursework prior to being eligible to obtain the provisional special education endorsement.
2. Applicant must complete at a minimum **6 hours** of required courses toward the endorsement **each school year** for the 3 years the provisional will be valid. At the end of each school year, the applicant will submit to the NDE Certification Office a transcript documenting the completion of course work. Should applicant not complete appropriate course work, NDE will contact the district and applicant – endorsement will not be revoked. Currently, the provisional special education endorsement requires 18 hours to be completed in a 3 year time period and can be renewed. The new proposal will not permit reapplying for the provisional special education endorsement. Individuals with remaining coursework toward completion of the endorsement may obtain the regular provisional endorsement with documentation that at least 50% of the required coursework has been completed.

#### **REPORT “9/1/13 - 8/31/14 ENDORSEMENTS/INITIAL CERTIFICATES”**

On or about September 11, 2014 your institution received a report from Karen listing the individuals who received a certificate, and the endorsements on those certificates, between September 1, 2013 and August 31, 2014. You were encouraged to review the information and let her know of any issues. Some have completed that task. Please revisit Karen’s email for details and consider reviewing your list. This information serves as the basis for the 2015 Institution and HEA Reports, 1<sup>st</sup> year teacher employment report to be provided to you later this fall, basis for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year employment in subsequent years, and to generate employer follow-up surveys of 1<sup>st</sup> year teachers. We are finding that the lists are pretty accurate – but there are some things that we just can’t write into business rules and there are a few inaccuracies that slip through. Around October 15 we will send a final version for your files which will reflect any corrections requested---which may mean a name attributed incorrectly to one institution will be attributed to the correct institution. At that point we will begin to work on the reports of 1<sup>st</sup> Year Teacher employment in Nebraska schools.

#### **BUFFETT EARLY CHILDHOOD MEETING – NOVEMBER 10, 2014**

Your packet includes a copy of the letter announcing a meeting regarding the scope of early childhood personnel preparation programs in Nebraska. The mailing list used by the Buffett Institute is provided on the back side of the letter. If the correct person has not been notified of this meeting, please share the invitation.

#### **FUTURE EDUCATOR ASSOCIATION (FEA)**

The NDE contact for FEA is Nicole Coffey, 402.471.4803, [Nicole.coffey@nebraska.gov](mailto:Nicole.coffey@nebraska.gov). Nicole has recently assumed this responsibility and we will be sure to get contact for the teacher preparation programs to her, as well as encourage her to be in touch with you. In the meantime, it will certainly be appropriate to reach out to her!

#### **EDUCATIONAL SERVICE UNIT MEETING – September**

THANKS to institutional representatives who were able to make it to the meeting - - that included representation from CSM, Midland, WSC, and UNL. I heard positive comments from the IHE

representatives – and the positive PR generated by institutions engaging in the conversation was noted by several ESU And NDE leadership folks. Hopefully there will be time for the participants to share their reflections, but a quick analysis is that there is significant momentum related to: teacher/administrator knowledge/skill with instructional frameworks, BlendEd delivery, and school improvement/improving student outcomes through effective practices and using data to improve instruction. New to the profession teachers will be expected to be ‘classroom ready’ in these areas—working through and with the ESUs may be an effective resource for educator preparation faculty development. Included in the packet is a May, 2014 document attributed to NASH/SHEEO.....not sure what meeting it came from.....but it does make some interesting points!

### **CONTACT LISTS**

Your folder contains a manila folder with several contact lists. If changes should be made, please indicate those and hand the sheet to an NDE staff person (preferably Marlene). We try hard to keep these up-to-date and appropriately inclusive of the names the Head designates should be on the lists.

The current Rule 20 requires a ‘Field Experience Coordinator’. We would like to create a contact list for this group. Please provide Marlene with the appropriate contact name(s). You can give her the information at the meeting, or send it to [marlene.beiermann@nebraska.gov](mailto:marlene.beiermann@nebraska.gov).

### **TITLE II MATCH VERIFICATION OF CANDIDATES**

Deadline for ETS Title II Match Verification for the 2013-2014 Reporting Year is November 2, 2014. (You will want to have this completed by the week of October 20. Remember that you can contact ETS about any needed corrections during this time, but if you wait until spring semester to make needed corrections, there is a sizable fee charged at that time.)

### **ETS Core Academic and Praxis II CONTENT TEST PREPARATION FOR CANDIDATES**

Interactive Practice Tests, complementary to the free ETS Study Companions, will be available beginning in October for the Core Academic tests and ten of the *Praxis II* tests that will be required in NE— at a discount to institutions purchasing two or more IPTs. See informational flyer and order blank in your folder.

### **Praxis PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT FOR TEACHERS (PPAT)**

A Nebraska PPAT overview webinar will be held in late October for interested institutions. ETS representative (Cathy Owens-Oliver) will be asked to give a PPAT overview as well as discuss pilot opportunities for 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of 2014-15. It is our understanding that ETS is providing opportunities for institutions to pilot the PPAT (at no cost to candidates).

The *Praxis Connection* newsletter provides updates about the Praxis program in general. The September issue includes a request for individuals who might be interested in serving as raters for the PPAT. Information from the newsletter was summarized, as well as encouragement to get signed up for the newsletter, in a 9/22 email from Pat.

### **TITLE II HEA BASIC SKILLS (CORE/PPST) REPORTING FOR THE 2014-15 COHORT**

With the implementation of the CORE tests, we have two options for reporting basic skills test information – beginning with the 2014-15 cohort and matching processes in 2015. We do not need to make a decision until early next Summer; however, we wanted you to know about the upcoming change.

- 1) If we continue the current practice of allowing institutions to use any combination of CORE and Praxis I/PPST for Title II reporting, NE can't use a composite score as we are currently doing with the 3 Praxis scores. (This means, if an institution admits someone in 2014-15 on a PPST Composite of the 3 PPST scores or a CORE Composite score of the 3 CORE tests (which continues to be allowable by Rule), this person will show up in the Title II reporting as a 'not pass' since the composite score rule will not be applied. Of course a composite score of a combination of PPST and CORE is NEVER an option for Title II purposes.) Pass rates for institutions will likely be lower.  
OR
- 2) For Title II purposes, only candidates who present passing scores in all 3 of the same test series will be considered passing. Candidates who have passing scores on the 3 tests, but 2 of the tests are from one series (CORE or PRAXIS) and one of the tests is from the other series (PRAXIS or CORE), will appear, for Title II reporting purposes as 'not passing'. Candidates who meet the requirements with a composite score WILL be reflected as 'passing'.

NDE believes that option 1 is the best option for institutions and candidates. Again, we do not need to make a decision until early Summer 2015; however, we wanted you to know we are moving in this direction since it may impact how your institution thinks about candidate admission.

Matching for content test takers on or after September 1, 2015 will begin in Summer 2016 for the 2015-16 cohort. Candidates taking the test prior to September 1, 2015 will not be subject to matching. The Title II Report will reflect passing rates of the completers who took the test on or after September 1, 2015.

### **INSTITUTIONAL DATA/LEGISLATION**

After some flurry this summer, I have heard very little about progress regarding reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. Either I have bad networks, or policy-makers have moved on to more important things (like re-elections)! Regardless, when conversations resume, I continue to believe that accountability provisions will be significantly increased---and will be delighted if I am wrong! Of course, there are also new national accreditation expectations to consider.....and likely other constituencies who will be impacting the future agenda for educator preparation. As you know, Jodi Kupper accepted the task to help us think things through and she will be facilitating some discussion at the NACTE meeting. As we continue the journey to understand what constitutes appropriate and meaningful accountability, you might find the charts included in your packet interesting. Karen compiled this information from the 2014 IPRC submission.

### **PK-12 STUDENT PERCEPTION SURVEYS**

It appears we might be able to tap a resource for "Student Perception Surveys"--which may be a component institutions are seeking to develop to respond to new CAEP requirements. The resource is work done by Victoria Bernhardt and Brad Geise. If this is of interest to you, please let Sharon know.

### **NCTQ**

You need to know that NCTQ has not made any effort to keep NDE advised regarding the 2014 edition of the *Teacher Prep Review*. What we know comes from you taking the time to let us know! They are not interested in communicating with NDE about the Teacher Prep Review.