

OFFICE OF CHIEF ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER
Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Item
Consent Agenda
November 9, 2023

OFFICE OF TEACHING AND LEADING
DIVISION OF EDUCATOR LICENSURE

- G. Approval to revise Miss. Admin. Code 7 – 4: Part 4: *Licensure Guidelines K-12*, to amend criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi
(Has cleared the Administrative Procedures Act Process with public comments)

Background Information: The Office of Teaching and Leading, Division of Educator Licensure continues to review all guidelines pertaining to the issuance, renewal, and reinstatement of an educator license to ensure that all requirements remain relevant to the contextual framework of present day. On January 21, 2021, the State Board of Education granted approval, as a necessary protection for all Mississippi's prospective and practicing educators seeking to obtain initial licensure in the state of Mississippi by way of completion of a program outside of Mississippi, to require that such candidates shall first be licensed in the state where the preparation occurred. Upon obtaining the out-of-state license, the candidate shall submit an application with required supporting documentation to the MDE Division of Educator Licensure for the purpose of determining eligibility to obtain a Mississippi license via Reciprocity guidelines in effect on the date the complete application is received by the MDE.

While the implementation of this policy has helped to improve the Mississippi resident's experience with institutions outside of Mississippi over the past two years, an unintended consequence is the negative impact it is posing for local school districts that recruit and employ educator preparation program completers coming to Mississippi from another state attempting to use their CAEP accredited/state approved program alone. The policy as currently written, is further hampering the state's ability to address the shortage long faced not only in teaching fields but also in other hard-to-staff supplemental service provider areas such as Professional School Counseling among others.

On September 14, 2023, during a special-called meeting, the Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Licensure and Development granted approval to amend requirements related to licensure-track preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.

The temporary rule and final action are necessary to implement the policy revisions immediately upon its filing with the Secretary of State in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 25-43-3.113(2)(b)(ii). See also Miss. Code Ann. § 25-43-3.108. For a

rule to become effective immediately upon its filing, the Board is required to make a finding that the rule only confers a benefit or removes a restriction on the public or some segment thereof.

The public comment period was open from September 18, 2023, through 5:00 p.m. on October 27, 2023, with public comments received. Based on the comments received, the MDE recommends no changes to the proposed policy.

Recommendation: Approval

Back-up material attached

Document Submission

All applications and supporting documentation must be submitted electronically through the educator's assigned Mississippi Educator Career Continuum Archive system (MECCA) account. No documents should be submitted via postal mail. Licenses will be valid from the day the completed application packet is received and validated by the Division of Educator Licensure. A completed application packet includes the licensure application and all supporting documentation required for your requested license type. Applications that are submitted without supporting documents will be considered incomplete and the educator will be emailed a "requirements" letter stating which documents are needed to process the licensure request. Please review the Licensure Application Checklist to identify the documents required for obtaining licensure in your desired area of certification: <https://www.mdek12.org/OEL/Licensure-Application-Checklist>.

Transcripts must be submitted electronically directly from the institution and licensure test score reports directly from the appropriate testing company. All original documents to be used as part of the licensure application review process must be scanned and then uploaded to your MECCA system account as a Portable Document Format (PDF) file, captured using the camera on your cellular device, or by utilizing free software applications available for download that are compatible with most smartphone models. When capturing a photograph of the document to be submitted, please be sure to remove any content and/or extra spacing that is not part of the document. This should be done prior to document upload to not obstruct access to information pertinent to reviewing and processing your licensure request.

All documents submitted to the Division of Educator Licensure become the property of the Mississippi Department of Education and will not be returned to the applicant, unless otherwise stated, nor will the Department provide copies of the documents to the applicant or third parties. Only the following documents will be duplicated and returned to the applicant if submission is required: Original – Out-of-state license, Professional Association Card, Marriage License, Birth Certificate, and Licensure Test Score Report. It is the responsibility of the educator to obtain copies of documents prior to submission to the Division of Educator Licensure.

SPECIAL NOTE

A grade of "C" or higher must be obtained on all coursework taken for renewal of license, reinstatement of license or the adding of supplemental endorsements. This includes all coursework outlined on planned programs required to convert a special license to a standard license.

Acceptable Degrees or Coursework for Licensure

The Division of Educator Licensure accepts degrees or coursework from any nationally or regionally accredited institution. An institution's accreditation status can be verified using the United States Department of Education website (<https://www.ed.gov/accreditation>) or the Council on Higher Education Accreditation website (<https://www.chea.org/>). Section 37-3-2 of the Mississippi Code authorizes the Certification Commission and State Board of Education to approve all educator preparation programs offered by Mississippi-based educator preparation providers for any license-type offered in Mississippi. The Commission does not approve programs completed in other states.

Licensure Preparation and Other Programs Completed Outside the State of Mississippi

Prospective and practicing educators seeking to obtain initial licensure in the state of Mississippi by way of completion of a traditional state approved or nationally accredited licensure-track teacher, administrator, certain supplemental service provider, and supplemental endorsement preparation program from a regionally/nationally accredited institution of higher education program outside of Mississippi, shall first obtain Institutional Program Verification (IPV) from the educator preparation provider ~~be licensed~~ in the state where the preparation occurred. Upon obtaining Institutional Program Verification (IPV) using the form established by the MDE Division of Educator Licensure ~~the out-of-state license~~, the candidate shall submit an application with required supporting documentation to the MDE Division of Educator Licensure for the purpose of determining eligibility to obtain a Mississippi license via Reciprocity guidelines in effect on the date the complete application is received by the MDE. Educators that complete a nontraditional licensure-track program outside of Mississippi shall first be licensed in another state and seek to obtain a Mississippi license via Reciprocity guidelines in effect on the date the complete application and required supporting documentation is received by the MDE.

Summary of Administrative Procedures Act (APA) Comments

Approval to revise Miss. Admin. Code 7 – 4: Part 4: *Licensure Guidelines K-12*, to amend criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.

The Office of Teaching and Leading received the following APA comments regarding the establishment of a Performance-Based Teacher License.	
Summary of Comments	MDE Response
Kristen Richey, New Albany Special Services Director New Albany School District - I support the revision. I believe this will help our teacher shortage.	<u>No change recommended.</u> Comments support the amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.
Rachel Powell, PhD, CCC-SLP, BCS-CL, District Literacy Lead Brookhaven School District - As a 215 licensed speech-language clinician and nationally certified speech-language pathologist through the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, I fully support this revision.	<u>No change recommended.</u> Comments support the amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.
Stacey Mathis, MS, CCC-SLP, Lead SLP, DeSoto County Schools, AAC Evaluator/Support - Thank you again for MDE's response to MSHA members' concerns regarding the policy for out-of-state educator preparation. We appreciate how quickly MDE responded to this matter and have already heard from several professionals whose licensure had been delayed under the previous policy. Their situations are now resolved.	<u>No change recommended.</u> Comments support the amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.
Skylar Nance, MA, CF-SLP, Speech Language Pathologist, Horn Lake High School - Thank you for MDE's response to speech-language pathologists' concerns regarding the policy for out-of-state educator preparation. I appreciate how quickly MDE responded to this matter and have already heard from several professionals whose licensure had been delayed under the previous policy. Their situations are now resolved.	<u>No change recommended.</u> Comments support the amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.
Catherine Masters, M. S. CCC-SLP, CHMS and CHHS speech language pathologist, Center Hill High School - Thank you for MDE's response to speech-language pathologists' concerns regarding the policy for out-of-state educator preparation. I appreciate how quickly MDE responded to this matter and have already heard from several professionals whose licensure had been delayed under the previous policy. Their situations are now resolved.	<u>No change recommended.</u> Comments support the amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.

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Summary of Comments	MDE Response
Alissa Warren, M.S. CCC-SLP/co-MET Chair, Speech Language Pathologist, Horn Lake Intermediate School - Thank you for MDE's response to speech-language pathologists' concerns regarding the policy for out-of-state educator preparation. I appreciate how quickly MDE responded to this matter and have already heard from several professionals whose licensure had been delayed under the previous policy. Their situations are now resolved.	<u>No change recommended.</u> Comments support the amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.
Jennifer Brown, M.S., CCC-SLP, Speech-Language Pathologist Greenbrook Elementary School, DeSoto County School District - Thank you for MDE's response to speech-language pathologists' concerns regarding the policy for out-of-state educator preparation. I appreciate how quickly MDE responded to this matter and have already heard from several professionals whose licensure had been delayed under the previous policy. Their situations are now resolved.	<u>No change recommended.</u> Comments support the amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.
Katie Brownlee, M.S., CF-SLP, Speech Language Pathologist Pleasant Hill Elementary School - Thank you for MDE's response to speech-language pathologists' concerns regarding the policy for out-of-state educator preparation. I appreciate how quickly MDE responded to this matter and have already heard from several professionals whose licensure had been delayed under the previous policy. Their situations are now resolved.	<u>No change recommended.</u> Comments support the amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.
Lacie Jones, MS, CCC-SLP, Speech Language Pathologist Southaven Middle School - Thank you for MDE's response to speech-language pathologists' concerns regarding the policy for out-of-state educator preparation. I appreciate how quickly MDE responded to this matter and have already heard from several professionals whose licensure had been delayed under the previous policy. Their situations are now resolved.	<u>No change recommended.</u> Comments support the amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.

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Summary of Comments	MDE Response
Leigh Steadham, MS CCC-SLP, Lewisburg Primary School - Thank you for MDE's response to speech-language pathologists' concerns regarding the policy for out-of-state educator preparation. I appreciate how quickly MDE responded to this matter and have already heard from several professionals whose licensure had been delayed under the previous policy. Their situations are now resolved.	<u>No change recommended.</u> Comments support the amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.
Michelle Perry, M.A. CCC-SLP, Speech-Language Pathologist, Chickasaw Elementary - Thank you for MDE's response to speech-language pathologists' concerns regarding the policy for out-of-state educator preparation. I appreciate how quickly MDE responded to this matter and have already heard from several professionals whose licensure had been delayed under the previous policy. Their situations are now resolved.	<u>No change recommended.</u> Comments support the amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.
Patricia Martin, University of Southern Mississippi - I believe these noted changes to the SLP licensure requirements would be a great benefit to the students who need these services in our state.	<u>No change recommended.</u> Comments support the amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.
Angie Bain, M.S., CCC-SLP, Speech-Language Pathologist Center Hill Elementary - Thank you for MDE's response to speech-language pathologists' concerns regarding the policy for out-of-state educator preparation. I appreciate how quickly MDE responded to this matter and have already heard from several professionals whose licensure had been delayed under the previous policy. Their situations are now resolved.	<u>No change recommended.</u> Comments support the amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.

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Summary of Comments	MDE Response
Nikki Elam, Speech Pathologist, SLP Coordinator/Preschool Evaluator, Rankin County School District - Thank you for reconsidering the licensure guidelines for Speech Language Pathologists that work in the educational setting. Here in Rankin County, we employ 39 SLPs that work for the district and serve our children and it is not always easy to fill those positions.	<u>No change recommended.</u> Comments support the amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.
Heidi Stringer, CCC-SLP, Preschool Special Education Coordinator, Rankin County Schools - I would like to ask you to consider supporting the revision to Miss. Admin Code 7-4. This revision is very important to School Districts across the State as they regularly hire Speech Language Pathologists.	<u>No change recommended.</u> Comments support the amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.
Suzanne Hirsch, Ed.D., Executive Director, Mississippi School of the Arts - The process of requiring teachers to gain licensure in the state where that university is located puts up one more obstacle for teachers in a state where there is a shortage of teachers.	<u>No change recommended.</u> The recommended amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi addresses the issue raised by the education stakeholder.
TERESA LANEY, M.S., CCC-SLP, Early Learning Collaborative Coordinator, MDE Office of Early Childhood - Thank you for your diligence in making these changes to the licensure guidelines. I have received countless emails from school districts and SLPs who have been negatively impacted by the previous requirement. This change makes it easier for MS school districts to address the critical shortage of school-based SLPs needed to serve their children with speech and language disabilities.	<u>No change recommended.</u> Comments support the amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.

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Summary of Comments	MDE Response
<p>Billy J. Carroll, Ed.S., Moss Point Career & Technical Education, Moss Point School District - Please consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reciprocity agreements with other states • Allowing future administrators to complete out of state programs as in the past • Restarting the summer alternate route to administrator program that met prior to COVID • Allowing school districts to create their own future administrator programs similar to the programs in Texas. 	<p><u>No change recommended.</u> Comments submitted by the education stakeholder are not applicable to the proposed amendments.</p>
<p>Kimberly Fisher, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, SLP Coordinator/District Case Manager, Harrison County Schools - While I'm very excited about the proposed changes to this licensure requirement, I suggest it go a little further for ASHA certified SLPs. If an SLP has their certification, they should be able to get MDE certification without additional requirements. They have completed a long arduous process and are indeed ready to serve the children of Mississippi.</p>	<p><u>No change recommended.</u> The recommended amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi addresses the issue raised by the education stakeholder. Furthermore, current State Board of Education <i>Licensure Guidelines</i> already allow for the granting of a standard Mississippi license in the area of Speech-Language Pathology by way of completion of an approved master's degree program for Speech Pathology and a valid Original American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA) membership card.</p>

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Melanie Clyatt, Clinton Public School District - We are in critical need of speech therapists throughout the state. Please make it easier to recruit therapists. We do not want to burden them with having to have a reciprocal license in another state; that is punishing them for having a degree from a graduate school somewhere else! If they are a board certified therapist then they have passed rigorous standards established nationally; every state allows licensure with these same standards. Let's not add another time consuming step and hinderance.	<u>No change recommended.</u> The recommended amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi addresses the issue raised by the education stakeholder. Furthermore, current State Board of Education <i>Licensure Guidelines</i> already allow for the granting of a standard Mississippi license in the area of Speech-Language Pathology by way of completion of an approved master's degree program for Speech Pathology and a valid Original American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA) membership card.
Katie Ginn, MFA – It has come to my attention that there is a proposal to amend licensure protocol for individuals seeking to obtain a nontraditional license track but who have a degree completed out of state. I have recently begun to consider obtaining an 'adjunct license' to teach K-12 in the State of Mississippi. I hold a terminal degree in my field and have been an active contributor to my field within the state of Mississippi throughout my career including teaching at the University level. I have even worked on Mississippi Department of Education publications. I, and others like me, who have worked in our fields have the potential to provide valuable in class instruction to the deserving students of Mississippi. However, this new proposal will create a much larger hurdle for myself and others to obtain said license to teach and may even discourage us from attempting to do so.	<u>No change recommended.</u> Comments submitted by the education stakeholder are not applicable to the proposed amendments.
LaQuandra Jones, Director of Special Services, Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind - The district would like to submit a public comment in support of the most recent proposed revision, Miss. Admin. Code 7-4: Part 4: Licensure Guidelines K-12.	<u>No change recommended.</u> Comments support the amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.
Patricia Springer, Administrative Assistant, Personnel Department, DeSoto County Schools - I appreciate the Mississippi Department of Education for listening to our concerns and the	<u>No change recommended.</u> Comments support the amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.

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<p>willingness to work together to ensure we are given every opportunity in filling our teacher shortage with highly educated teachers. Please consider voting in favor of the proposed revision to Miss. Admin Code 7-4: Part 4: Licensure Guidelines K-12 to help us remove these obstacles to licensure as we work to recruit the best educators for Mississippi's future.</p>	
<p>Alesha Bailey, MS, CCC-SLP, Jackson County School District - If the policy is amended, we will be able to recruit and hire more of these SLPs, which will have a positive impact throughout the state! Thanks for considering my experience/ opinion on this matter!</p>	<p><u>No change recommended.</u> Comments support the amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.</p>
<p>Lori Edge and Emily Frayser, Lead Teacher Mentors, Dept. of Academic Support and School Improvement, DeSoto County Schools - The existing licensure process can be convoluted and discouraging for out-of-state applicants, even if they possess the requisite qualifications and experience. This has the potential to deter promising educators from seeking employment within our state and only intensifies the teacher shortage crisis. We appreciate your attention to this pressing matter and look forward to the Mississippi Department of Education's commitment to improving the teacher licensure process for out-of-state applicants. Together, we can work towards a stronger, more vibrant education system in Mississippi.</p>	<p><u>No change recommended.</u> Comments support the amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi.</p>
<p>Lisa Roane Langford, Ph.D., Superintendent of Education, Calhoun County School District - The purpose of this letter is to express my strong opposition to the reversal of the out-of-state licensure requirements. Furthermore, I am well aware of the challenges associated with hiring speech pathologists and special education teachers, but my concerns of lowering these standards far outweigh the potential benefits in my opinion.</p>	<p><u>No change recommended.</u> The recommended amendment of criteria regarding educator licensure preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi would require any applicant, both current citizens of Mississippi and those seeking to relocate to the state, completing a licensure-track program outside of Mississippi to apply directly to the MDE using the degree earned in the other state without first having to obtain a license in another state. In addition to the awarded degree, the applicant shall be required to meet all other ancillary criteria required by Mississippi State Law/State Board of Education prior to license being granted. Ultimately, the choice of where one might choose to matriculate is at the discretion of the prospective applicant for licensure. The MDE is not authorized to steer candidates towards one program over another. If approved, initial</p>

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	licensure in the state of Mississippi would be granted in part by way of completion of a traditional state approved or nationally accredited licensure-track teacher, administrator, certain supplemental service provider, and supplemental endorsement preparation program from a regionally/nationally accredited institution of higher education
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Cory Murphy

From: Kristen Richey <krichey@nasd.ms>
Sent: Wednesday, October 4, 2023 11:31 AM
To: Licensure
Subject: Proposed revision of Miss. Admin. Code 7-4: Part 4:

External Email

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the MDE organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I support the revision. I believe this will help our teacher shortage.

Kristen Richey
New Albany Special Services Director
New Albany School District

Cory Murphy

From: Rachel Powell <rachel.powell@brookhavenschools.org>
Sent: Wednesday, October 4, 2023 2:57 PM
To: Licensure
Subject: APA Proposed revision of Miss. Admin. Code 7-4: Part 4: Licensure Guidelines K-12

External Email

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the MDE organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern,

I am writing regarding the APA Proposed revisions of Miss. Admin. Code 7-4: Part 4: Licensure Guidelines K-12 regarding requirements for applicants who completed training programs outside the state of Mississippi.

As a 215 licensed speech-language clinician and nationally certified speech-language pathologist through the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, I fully support this revision. By accepting applications from individuals who obtained a degree outside the state of Mississippi, we are removing a barrier to recruitment of highly qualified candidates in teaching and speech-language pathology to our state. The requirement of being licensed in the state where the degree was obtained created an undue burden on candidates who actively wanted to be employed in Mississippi school districts. Additionally, as speech-language pathologists, this created a barrier to recruiting them to work in school districts, as they were able to obtain a department of health license to practice in private practice or healthcare settings with the same degree.

Thank you for responding to the requests of school districts, SLPs, and other applicants who wished to work in Mississippi but couldn't because of this requirement.

Sincerely,

Rachel Powell, PhD, CCC-SLP, BCS-CL
District Literacy Lead
Brookhaven School District

Cory Murphy

From: Stacey Mathis <stacey.mathis@dcsms.org>
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2023 10:56 AM
To: Licensure; Cory Murphy
Cc: Courtney Turner
Subject: MSHA follow-up on out-of-state education requirements

External Email

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the MDE organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dr. Murphy,

Thank you again for MDE's response to MSHA members' concerns regarding the policy for out-of-state educator preparation. We appreciate how quickly MDE responded to this matter and have already heard from several professionals whose licensure had been delayed under the previous policy. Their situations are now resolved.

Also, thank you for clarifying the IPV and wording regarding "[t]he Commission does not approve programs completed in other states". The requirements on page 63 of the licensure policies document for SLPs seeking certification in Mississippi are what MSHA is and has been in favor of.

Once again, MSHA appreciates the time and attention the MDE has given to our members' concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions on these issues.

Stacey Mathis, MS, CCC-SLP
Lead SLP, DeSoto County Schools
AAC Evaluator/Support



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Cory Murphy

From: Skylar Nance <skylar.nance@dcsms.org>
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2023 11:26 AM
To: Licensure
Subject: Public comment on out-of-state education requirements

External Email

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Thank you for MDE's response to speech-language pathologists' concerns regarding the policy for out-of-state educator preparation. I appreciate how quickly MDE responded to this matter and have already heard from several professionals whose licensure had been delayed under the previous policy. Their situations are now resolved.

Also, thank you for clarifying the IPV and wording regarding "[t]he Commission does not approve programs completed in other states". The requirements on page 63 of the licensure policies document for SLPs seeking certification in Mississippi are what all SLPs are in favor of.

Once again, I appreciate the time and attention the MDE has given to our concerns.

Skylar Nance, MA, CF-SLP
Speech Language Pathologist
Horn Lake High School

Hearing/Vision Screener Request

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Cory Murphy

From: Catherine Masters <catherine.masters@dcsms.org>
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2023 11:33 AM
To: Licensure
Subject: Public comment on out-of-state education requirements

External Email

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To Whom It May Concern:

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Once again, I appreciate the time and attention the MDE has given to our concerns.

Best,

Catherine Masters, M. S. CCC-SLP
CHMS and CHHS speech language pathologist



Center Hill High School
U.S. Department of Education
National Blue Ribbon School

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Cory Murphy

From: Alissa Warren <alissa.warren@dcsms.org>
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2023 11:52 AM
To: Licensure
Subject: Public comment on out-of-state education requirements

External Email

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Thank you for MDE's response to speech-language pathologists' concerns regarding the policy for out-of-state educator preparation. I appreciate how quickly MDE responded to this matter and have already heard from several professionals whose licensure had been delayed under the previous policy. Their situations are now resolved.

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Once again, I appreciate the time and attention the MDE has given to our concerns.

*Ali Warren, M.S. CCC-SLP/co-MET Chair
Speech Language Pathologist
Horn Lake Intermediate School
Speech Referral link: <https://form.jotform.com/222214381280143>*

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Cory Murphy

From: Jennifer Brown <jennifer.brown@dcsms.org>
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2023 1:28 PM
To: Licensure
Subject: Public comment on out-of-state education requirement

External Email

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Once again, I appreciate the time and attention the MDE has given to our concerns.

Jennifer Brown, M.S., CCC-SLP
Speech-Language Pathologist
Greenbrook Elementary School
DeSoto County School District

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Cory Murphy

From: Katie Brownlee <katie.brownlee@dcsms.org>
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2023 2:44 PM
To: Licensure
Subject: Public comment on out-of-state education requirements

External Email

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Thank you for MDE's response to speech-language pathologists' concerns regarding the policy for out-of-state educator preparation. I appreciate how quickly MDE responded to this matter and have already heard from several professionals whose licensure had been delayed under the previous policy. Their situations are now resolved.

Also, thank you for clarifying the IPV and wording regarding "[t]he Commission does not approve programs completed in other states". The requirements on page 63 of the licensure policies document for SLPs seeking certification in Mississippi are what all SLPs are in favor of.

Once again, I appreciate the time and attention the MDE has given to our concerns.

Katie Brownlee, M.S., CF-SLP
Speech Language Pathologist
Pleasant Hill Elementary School

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Cory Murphy

From: Lacie Jones <lacie.jones@dcsms.org>
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2023 7:59 AM
To: Licensure
Subject: Public Comment on out-of-state education requirements

External Email

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Good morning,

Thank you for MDE's response to speech-language pathologists' concerns regarding the policy for out-of-state educator preparation. I appreciate how quickly MDE responded to this matter and have already heard from several professionals whose licensure had been delayed under the previous policy. Their situations are now resolved.

Also, thank you for clarifying the IPV and wording regarding "[t]he Commission does not approve programs completed in other states". The requirements on page 63 of the licensure policies document for SLPs seeking certification in Mississippi are what all SLPs are in favor of.

Once again, I appreciate the time and attention the MDE has given to our concerns.

Lacie Jones, MS, CCC-SLP
Speech Language Pathologist
Southaven Middle School

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Cory Murphy

From: Leigh Steadham <leigh.steadham@dcsmms.org>
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2023 10:02 AM
To: Licensure
Subject: public comment on out-of-state education requirements

External Email

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Good Morning,

Thank you for MDE's response to speech-language pathologists' concerns regarding the policy for out-of-state educator preparation. I appreciate how quickly MDE responded to this matter and have already heard from several professionals whose licensure had been delayed under the previous policy. Their situations are now resolved.

Also, thank you for clarifying the IPV and wording regarding "[t]he Commission does not approve programs completed in other states". The requirements on page 63 of the licensure policies document for SLPs seeking certification in Mississippi are what all SLPs are in favor of.

Once again, I appreciate the time and attention the MDE has given to our concerns.

Leigh Steadham, MS CCC-SLP
Lewisburg Primary School
(662) 895-6001

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Cory Murphy

From: Michelle Perry <michelle.perry@dcsms.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2023 7:07 AM
To: Licensure
Subject: Public comment on out-of-state education requirements

External Email

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Thank you for MDE's response to speech-language pathologists' concerns regarding the policy for out-of-state educator preparation. I appreciate how quickly MDE responded to this matter and have already heard from several professionals whose licensure had been delayed under the previous policy. Their situations are now resolved.

Also, thank you for clarifying the IPV and wording regarding "[t]he Commission does not approve programs completed in other states". The requirements on page 63 of the licensure policies document for SLPs seeking certification in Mississippi are what all SLPs are in favor of.

Once again, I appreciate the time and attention the MDE has given to our concerns.

Michelle Perry, M.A. CCC-SLP
Speech-Language Pathologist
Chickasaw Elementary
662-895-6664

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Cory Murphy

From: Patricia Martin <Patricia.Martin@usm.edu>
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2023 10:01 AM
To: Licensure
Subject: SLP Licensure Update

External Email

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I believe these noted changes to the SLP licensure requirements would be a great benefit to the students who need these services in our state.

Patricia

Cory Murphy

From: Angie Bain <angie.bain@dcsms.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2023 10:59 AM
To: Licensure
Subject: Speech-Language Licensure

External Email

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Thank you for MDE's response to speech-language pathologists' concerns regarding the policy for out-of-state educator preparation. I appreciate how quickly MDE responded to this matter and have already heard from several professionals whose licensure had been delayed under the previous policy. Their situations are now resolved.

Also, thank you for clarifying the IPV and wording regarding "[t]he Commission does not approve programs completed in other states". The requirements on page 63 of the licensure policies document for SLPs seeking certification in Mississippi are what all SLPs are in favor of.

Once again, I appreciate the time and attention the MDE has given to our concerns.

Best,
Angie Bain

Angie Bain, M.S., CCC-SLP
Speech-Language Pathologist
Center Hill Elementary
angie.bain@dcsms.org
662-890-7705 phone
662-890-7679 fax

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Cory Murphy

From: Elam, Nikki <nikki.burke@rcsd.ms>
Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 9:10 AM
To: Licensure
Subject: Thank you

External Email

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Dr. Murphy,

Thank you for reconsidering the licensure guidelines for Speech Language Pathologists that work in the educational setting. Here in Rankin County we employ 39 SLPs that work for the district and serve our children and it is not always easy to fill those positions. This year we lost a SLP applicant because she could not get her MDE license due to her Master's degree being from Texas. Another SLP was able to get her MDE license even though she graduated from a school in Louisiana and held her Certificate of Clinical Competence through ASHA. Unfortunately, this was an extra expense for her and time consuming to an already busy beginning of the school year. SLPs are needed in school districts across the state and with the current licensure guidelines this makes it very difficult to fill all the positions needed.

Thank you for your consideration,
Nikki Elam, SLP

--

Nikki Elam, Speech Pathologist
SLP Coordinator/Preschool Evaluator
601-825-5590
ext 1070

Rankin County School District

Mission: Bring Everyone's Strengths Together! We will all intentionally focus on empowering our students to reach their maximum potential by embracing opportunities and challenges while cultivating a tradition of distinction in education.

Vision: Continue a tradition of excellence by providing a world-class education that empowers all to grow through curiosity, discovery, and learning.

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Cory Murphy

From: Heidi Stringer <heidi.stringer@rcsd.ms>
Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 9:30 AM
To: Licensure
Subject: Proposed revision to Miss. Admin. Code 7-4

External Email

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Good Morning Dr. Murphy,

I would like to ask you to consider supporting the revision to Miss. Admin Code 7-4. This revision is very important to School Districts across the State as they regularly hire Speech Language Pathologists. Rankin County School District is a very large school district and employs 39 SLPs. Every school year SLPs retire, leave to stay home with children, or take other positions within our State and as a result leave open positions that must be filled. It can be very challenging to fill so many positions and if we are not able to consider candidates from out of state. We would love to be able to hire our students from MS who go out of state colleges as well as SLPs from who live and receive an out of state degree and would like to consider moving and working in MS schools. Thank you again for considering supporting this proposed revision.

Sincerely,

Heidi Stringer, CCC-SLP
Preschool Special Education Coordinator
Rankin County Schools

--

Rankin County School District

***Mission:** *B*ring *E*veryone's
*S*trengths *T*ogether! We will all intentionally focus on empowering our students to reach their maximum potential by embracing opportunities and challenges while cultivating a tradition of distinction in education.

***Vision:** *Continue a tradition of excellence by providing a world-class education that empowers all to grow through curiosity, discovery, and learning.

--

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Cory Murphy

From: Suzanne Hirsch
Sent: Wednesday, October 4, 2023 3:42 PM
To: Licensure
Subject: comment - APA Proposed revision of Miss. Admin. Code 7-4: Part 4: Licensure Guidelines K-12

To Whom it May Concern:

There are many instances in which teachers or aspiring teachers acquire a degree outside of Mississippi online, but reside in Mississippi. For example, a dance teacher acquires her MFA at an out of state low residency program. There is no MFA in dance degree available in the state of Mississippi. The process of requiring teachers to gain licensure in the state where that university is located puts up one more obstacle for teachers in a state where there is a shortage of teachers. We already have too many times where qualified candidates have to argue, resubmit, or get the district to come to the licensure office for help in getting candidates certified.

This is a requirement that is unnecessary, adds another layer to an already lengthy process, and should not be implemented.

Thank you.

Suzanne Hirsch, Ed.D.
Executive Director
Mississippi School of the Arts
PO Box 229
Brookhaven, MS 39602-0229
601-823-1300
601-823-1555 fax
shirsch@mdek12.org
www.msabrookhaven.org

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Cory Murphy

From: Teresa Laney
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2023 11:58 AM
To: Licensure
Subject: Licensure Guidelines

Dr. Murphy,

Thank you for your diligence in making these changes to the licensure guidelines. I have received countless emails from school districts and SLPs who have been negatively impacted by the previous requirement. This change makes it easier for MS school districts to address the critical shortage of school-based SLPs needed to serve their children with speech and language disabilities. Again, thank you!

TERESA LANEY, M.S., CCC-SLP, Early Learning Collaborative Coordinator
Office of Early Childhood
601-359-2586 | mdek12.org



MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Ensuring a bright future for every child

Cory Murphy

From: Carroll, Billy <bjcarroll@mpsdnw.org>
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2023 12:03 PM
To: Licensure
Subject: Recommendation to Revise Miss. Admin. Code 7-4: Part 4: Licensure

External Email

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the MDE organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dr. Murphy:

Good morning! Hope things are well with you! Just wanted to provide some feedback regarding the **Recommendation to Revise Miss. Admin. Code 7-4: Part 4: Licensure**. Please consider:

- Reciprocity agreements with other states
- Allowing future administrators to complete out of state programs as in the past
- Restarting the summer alternate route to administrator program that met prior to COVID
- Allowing school districts to create their own future administrator programs similar to the programs in Texas

For some reason, the requirements to become an administrator in Mississippi are very stringent unlike other, more successful states like Texas. Thank you for your time and consideration!

--

Respectfully,

Billy J. Carroll, Ed.S.

Moss Point Career & Technical Education

4924 Church Street

Moss Point, MS 39563

T: 228.474.1455

<https://cte.mpsdnw.org/>

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Cory Murphy

From: Fisher, Kimberly <KFisher@harrison.k12.ms.us>
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2023 1:40 PM
To: Licensure
Subject: Proposed Revision to Miss. Admin. Code 7-4: Part 4

External Email

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Dear Dr. Murphy,

Please accept this as my comments regarding the change to licensure requirements for applicants who graduated from a program outside of the state of Mississippi. I have been a school based SLP for over 18 years and worked for the state of MS for 24. I can see retirement coming over the horizon. This year I accepted the position of SLP Coordinator for my district. Though it has been challenging I'm proud to be in a position to help the SLPs in my district and bring new ones into the fold.

I was contacted by an ASHA certified SLP who currently works in a skilled nursing facility and is wanting to come work in a school. As you probably know, school districts are in desperate need of SLPs among other personnel. She has not held MDE licensure because this will be her first time working in a school. I instructed her on how to apply for her license and was prepared to interview her to fill one of the many positions we currently have available in our district. However, image my surprise when she was informed that she had to obtain her licensure through reciprocity because she graduated from a Communication Disorders program in Louisiana! I contact Mrs. Laney just to get clarification on why this was the case. She did provide me with an explanation and the rationale behind it. And although I understand that rationale, I do not agree with it for a few reasons. First, there are a limited number of SLP graduate programs in our state with a very limited number of spaces for students. I Completed my Master's Degree at Southern University A&M College in Baton Rouge, Louisiana because I did not get accepted into a program here at home. Luckily I was able to come back and begin my career in my home state. Thankfully we have more now than when I was applying, but it's still very limited. Second, I especially do not agree with this rule in the case of ASHA certified SLPs. The American Speech Language Hearing Association puts many steps and safeguards in place to make sure that certified SLPs are fully trained and prepared to work in our field. They begin with stringent accreditation requirements for programs, over 300 required hours of clinical practicum to graduate besides all of the classwork, passed the Praxis 2 ASHA exam, and finally a nine month supervised certification year after graduation. To say once an SLP receives their C's they have been through the ringer is an understatement.

I said all of that to say, while I'm very excited about the proposed changes to this licensure requirement, I suggest it go a little further for ASHA certified SLPs. If an SLP has their certification, they should be able to get MDE certification without additional requirements. They have completed a long arduous process and are indeed ready to serve the children of Mississippi. I could see this change being applied to new Masters' graduates, but those of us that have completed the process should be allowed to obtain our licensure. We've definitely earned it.

As you know, educators are retiring at record numbers. I'm proud to say I'm very close to reaching that milestone. The need for SLPs will not lessen anytime soon. I truly feel it will only get bigger as experienced clinicians as myself decide to retire. Making it easier in a safe manner for new SLPs to start their career and begin the work we've started will be essential.

Thank you for taking the time to re-evaluated this matter, and for allowing me the opportunity to voice my opinion and concern.

Kim Fisher, Ph.D. CCC/SLP

SLP COORDINATOR/DISTRICT CASE MANAGER



Special Services Center

Kfisher@harrison.k12.ms.us

228.832.9344

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Harrison County School District, 11072 Hwy 49, Gulfport MS 39503

Cory Murphy

From: Melanie Clyatt <mcllyatt@clintonpublicschools.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2023 2:48 PM
To: Licensure
Subject: Speech therapist

External Email

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We are in critical need of speech therapists throughout the state. Please make it easier to recruit therapists. We do not want to burden them with having to have a reciprocal license in another state; that is punishing them for having a degree from a graduate school somewhere else!

If they are a board certified therapist then they have passed rigorous standards established nationally; every state allows licensure with these same standards. Let's not add another time consuming step and hinderance.

Melanie Clyatt

Cory Murphy

From: Katie Ginn <katieeringinn@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 19, 2023 11:59 AM
To: Licensure
Subject: Comments on proposed revision

External Email

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the MDE organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dr. Cory Murphy,

It

has come to my attention that there is a proposal to amend licensure protocol for individuals seeking to obtain a nontraditional license track but who have a degree completed out of state. I have recently begun to consider obtaining an 'adjunct license' to

teach K-12 in the State of Mississippi. I hold a terminal degree in my field and have been an active contributor to my field within the state of Mississippi throughout my career including teaching at the University level. I have even worked on Mississippi

Department of Education publications. I, and others like me, who have worked in our fields have the potential to provide valuable in class instruction to the deserving students of Mississippi. However, this new proposal will create a much larger hurdle for

myself and others to obtain said license to teach and may even discourage us from attempting to do so. Furthermore, I worry that obtaining said license from the state where we completed our degrees may potentially lead to greater 'brain drain' in our state.

For instance, if I attain a teaching license in the state of California and find subsequent job opportunities in CA, what would entice me to then stay in Mississippi and seek out additional licensure? I sought and obtained an out of state degree because my

in state options were extremely limited. Do we really want to limit the opportunities of Mississippi students further by creating unnecessary hurdles and potentially repelling highly qualified license seeking educators? I hope the answer is no. Please reconsider

the Proposed Revision of Miss. Admin. Code 7-4: Part 4: Licensure Guidelines K-12.

Yours
respectfully,

Katie
Ginn
MFA

Cory Murphy

From: LaQuandra Jones <laquandra.jones@msdbk12.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2023 2:23 PM
To: Cory Murphy
Subject: Administrative Procedures Act (APA) Notice

Hello Dr. Cory Murphy,

I hope you are well! The district would like to submit a public comment in support of the most recent proposed revision, Miss. Admin. Code 7-4: Part 4: Licensure Guidelines K-12. This process impacted me a while back so this modification would help others. Please let me know if you need anything further.

Thank you,
LaQuandra

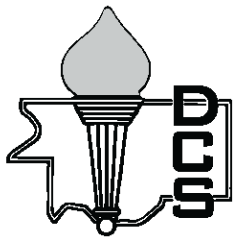
The Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (MSDB) supports the endeavor to revise Miss. Admin. Code 7-4: Part 4: Licensure Guidelines K-12. As the state's only public school that serves Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Visually Impaired/Blind students, MSDB needs a competitive gain when seeking highly specialized staff among other state schools like ours. Each student at MSDB requires instruction and guidance from teachers and staff specially trained to work with children and youth. This proposal would allow in-state and out-of-state educators to obtain the credentialing needed to educate our state's children with ease. The Mississippi Department of Education's Office of Licensure has unwavering support in helping children, families, and education with this revision.

Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind



LaQuandra Jones
Director of Special Services
Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind
1403 Eastover Drive Jackson, MS 39211
O: 601-984-8131 F: 601-984-8020
<https://msdbk12.org/>

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DESOTO COUNTY SCHOOLS

5 East South Street • Hernando, Mississippi 38632
662-429-5271 • fax 662-429-4198 • Website: www.desotocountyschools.org

"EXCELLENCE IS A COMMITMENT"

Dear Mississippi Department of Education,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed revision of Miss. Admin Code 7-4: Part 4: Licensure Guidelines K-12. Working as the liaison between our district and the MDE's licensure department, I know our district has experienced difficulties with teacher candidates that completed a teacher preparation program outside of the state of Mississippi obtaining a license in Mississippi. This has placed an immense burden on the district with the teacher shortage we are all faced with in Mississippi. I am in favor of the proposed revision to this law.

DeSoto County, MS shares a border with Memphis, Tn where many of our residents work and attend college. Our district has hired several new teachers that graduated from The University of Memphis, the closet public university to our district, who live in DeSoto County and desire to work in the community in which they live. Since the policy change that took effect on February 22, 2021, all teacher candidates must first be licensed in the state where the preparation occurred has presented roadblocks in reciprocating a license to Mississippi. One of the biggest issues is Tennessee's first issuance of a teaching license is for three-years. Although, the prospective educator completed all the traditional route program's requirements, Mississippi will not reciprocate a three-year license. The graduates that we have been fortunate to hire from universities in Tennessee, had to go through a neighboring state to reciprocate their three-year license to a five-year license. Only then were they able to reciprocate that five-year license to Mississippi license. We have had to request a special, one-year license for others while they try to get their license reciprocated to Mississippi.

The other big issue is new graduates that completed a traditional route program from other states, in-person or online, are having difficulties in obtaining a license in that state if they are not going to teach there.

I appreciate the Mississippi Department of Education for listening to our concerns and the willingness to work together to ensure we are given every opportunity in filling our teacher shortage with highly educated teachers. Please consider voting in favor of the proposed revision to Miss. Admin Code 7-4: Part 4: Licensure Guidelines K-12 to help us remove these obstacles to licensure as we work to recruit the best educators for Mississippi's future.

Sincerely,

Patricia Springer

From: [Alesha Bailey](#)
To: [Licensure](#)
Subject: Comment: Change in the SLP licensure requirements
Date: Friday, October 27, 2023 2:29:41 PM

External Email

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the MDE organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern,

I was asked to send in a public statement for the board on the positive effects a change in the reciprocity licensure requirements will have on out of state SLP graduates.

As lead SLP of a large school district in MS, the current policy has greatly impacted our ability to hire qualified SLPs. Last spring, we were excited to offer a job to a local SLP, contingent on MDE licensure. This SLP wanted to transition to schools after 12 years in a hospital setting. She had a Master's degree from University of Memphis, an esteemed SLP graduate program. This SLP was also bilingual, which would have been a rare asset to our team. Ultimately, she was unable to obtain an MDE license due to the reciprocity policy, and we were unable to hire her. In her case, she was expected to obtain a license in TN first, then gain MDE license through reciprocity. TN would only offer her a temporary license which would be upgraded to an "advanced professional license" after 3 years of school work within the state of TN. This SLP had no intention of living or working in TN, and with the reciprocity policy in place, she would never be able to obtain MDE licensure aside from moving her family out of Mississippi for a period of time. Because that is unreasonable, she gave up on her aspirations to work for public schools.

Many Mississippi SLP undergraduates apply to out of state graduate programs due to the competitive nature of admissions and small cohort size. Oftentimes they return to Mississippi to work after their schooling is complete. If the policy is amended, we will be able to recruit and hire more of these SLPs, which will have a positive impact throughout the state! Thanks for considering my experience/ opinion on this matter!

Alesha Bailey, MS, CCC-SLP



From: [Lori Edge](#)
To: [Licensure](#)
Subject: Miss. Admin. Code 7 – 4: Part 4: Licensure Guidelines K-12
Date: Friday, October 27, 2023 3:16:45 PM

External Email

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Dear Mississippi Department of Education,

We are writing to express our concerns and advocate for a more streamlined process for out-of-state teacher preparation program graduates to receive licensure in the state of Mississippi. This issue is of utmost importance, particularly for school districts like ours that border other states. The current difficulties in obtaining licensure for out-of-state teacher candidates are exacerbating the already severe teacher shortage that our state is facing.

As residents of Mississippi and lead teacher mentors in our school district, we are acutely aware of the challenges our schools are currently facing. The shortage of qualified teachers has reached a critical level, and it has become increasingly difficult for our school districts to attract and retain educators. To address this shortage, it is crucial to open opportunities for highly qualified teacher candidates who have completed their teacher preparation programs outside of Mississippi.

The existing licensure process can be convoluted and discouraging for out-of-state applicants, even if they possess the requisite qualifications and experience. This has the potential to deter promising educators from seeking employment within our state and only intensifies the teacher shortage crisis.

We appreciate your attention to this pressing matter and look forward to the Mississippi Department of Education's commitment to improving the teacher licensure process for out-of-state applicants. Together, we can work towards a stronger, more vibrant education system in Mississippi.

Thank you for your dedication to the well-being of our students and the future of our great state.

Sincerely,
Lori Edge and Emily Frayser
Lead Teacher Mentors
DeSoto County Schools
Dept. of Academic Support and School Improvement
lori.edge@dcsms.org
emily.frayser@dcsms.org

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CALHOUN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

LEARNING TODAY FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

Dr. Lisa Langford
Superintendent of Education

Dr. Cory Murphy
359 North West Street
P.O. Box 771
Jackson, MS 39205-0771

Dear Dr. Murphy:

I recently have been made aware of the action considered by the Mississippi School Board of Education with regard to Miss. Admin. Code 7-4: Part 4: Licensure Guidelines K-12, which would amend the requirements related to licensure-track preparation and other programs completed outside the state of Mississippi. As I understand it, the revision of this code would result in out-of-state applicants not being required to have full licensure in Mississippi of an EDLD program before MDE would reciprocate their license. The purpose of this letter is to express my strong opposition to the reversal of the out-of-state licensure requirements. Furthermore, I am well aware of the challenges associated with hiring speech pathologists and special education teachers, but my concerns of lowering these standards far outweigh the potential benefits in my opinion. Please allow me to explain:

1. There is an excess of certified administrators already endorsed within our state. As a matter of fact, there are enough candidates to fully staff every leadership position three times over.
2. Most of the out-of-state EDLD programs fail to include the PSEL standards which drive the SLLA assessment.
3. Online programs are available through any of the nine Mississippi EDLD programs; therefore, there is no need to participate in a program that does not address the PSEL standards and certainly no need to lessen the requirements for endorsement eligibility.
4. We have seen firsthand that there are serious concerns surrounding the fidelity of many out-of-state programs. So much so, these students have been unable to attain the 486 endorsement through MDE because they have historically been unable to pass the SLLA. This clearly supports the notion that the candidates are ill-prepared to lead in our state.

Thank you for taking the time to review my concerns. I hope you will rethink the reversal of Miss. Admin. Code 7-4: Part 4: Licensure Guidelines K-12 since it would likely place incompetent leaders in our schools. The education system in Mississippi is on the move in the right direction. It would be unwise to take contrary action.

Please feel free to contact me with questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Lisa Roane Langford, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Education