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TO: Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Nancy S. Grasmick *Nancy*
DATE: October 28, 2008
SUBJECT: COMAR 13A.12.02.18 (AMEND)
Certification in Specialty Areas (Prekindergarten – Grade 12)
COMAR 13A.12 02.12 (REPEAL)
Outdoor Education

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is to present proposed amendments to COMAR 13A.12.02.18, Certification in Specialty Areas, Prekindergarten – Grade 12; and to present proposed repeal of existing regulation, COMAR 13A.12 02.12, Outdoor Education. The proposed amendments would: (1) add two new content areas, Environmental Education and Dance; and (2) bring the number of credit hours into alignment with another regulation. The proposed repeal would eliminate the area of Outdoor Education.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

At the October 4, 2007 meeting of the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board (PSTEB), staff in the Division of Instruction raised the potential need for certification in Environmental Education, a relatively new field of interdisciplinary study that has emerged from the cross-disciplinary areas of natural history, ecology, and outdoor education and focuses on human interactions with the natural world. This field of study integrates the sciences, health, and social studies areas such as public policy, economics, and geography. Subsequent presentations provided additional information.

At the May 1, 2008 PSTEB meeting, Dr. Joann Ericson, Chief, Certification Branch, and Ms. Rebecca Bell, Specialist, Environmental Education, Division of Instruction, updated PSTEB members with regard to a proposed certification in Environmental Education and the potential repeal of Outdoor Education. The discussion included creating Environmental Education as an endorsement to be added to existing teachers' certificates, as well the potential for this certification area to be an initial route to certification. Ms. Bell also briefly reviewed the differences between Outdoor Education and Environmental Education. The PSTEB directed Dr. Ericson and Ms. Bell to obtain information regarding whether the Outdoor Education regulation should be amended or repealed. In addition, the PSTEB directed Dr. Ericson to bring a draft regulation to the June meeting for discussion.

As the discussion continued, an alternative to creating a new certification regulation became apparent; that is, amending the existing regulation (COMAR 13A.12.02.18) to include Environmental Education. As staff explored this option in preparation for the June PSTEB meeting, the opportunity for updating this regulation by adding the area of Dance, inadvertently omitted during a previous regulatory change, emerged.

Another update, namely reducing the number of content credits hours required for certification under the requirements of COMAR 13A.12.02.18 from thirty-six (36) to thirty (30), will align the requirements

with the number of credit hours in a major determined by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). This change will create parallel content requirements with COMAR 13A.12.01.13, which governs adding new certification areas. It also brings alignment with Maryland's "highly qualified" content requirements to meet federal statute, *No Child Left Behind*.

Outdoor Education has become focused on recreation and outdoor activities such as canoeing, ropes course, orienteering, and hiking activities which are currently included as part of the Voluntary State Curriculum in Physical Education under the concept of lifetime activity and fitness. At the present time, there are only thirty-two (32) individuals who hold certification in Outdoor Education. Repeal is appropriate based on diminishing curricular need. It is important to note that, as with all historic endorsements, individuals holding current certification in Outdoor Education will be entitled to continuing certification provided that renewal requirements are met.

This topic was presented and discussed at the May 15, 2008 meeting of Directors of Human Resources. There was general consensus to move forward with the proposed regulatory changes. The proposed amendments to COMAR 13A.12.02.18 and the repeal of COMAR 13A.12.02.12 were also shared with the local school system Assistant Superintendents of Instruction and Superintendents at their respective meetings in September 2008.

SUMMARY:

Proposed amendments to regulation will provide for certification in the emerging area of Environmental Education, recognize Dance as a certification area, and achieve alignment in required content credit hours for this certification regulation with similar requirements in another regulation and *No Child Left Behind*. Proposed repeal of Outdoor Education as a certificate area represents recognition that this is no longer a content area with sufficient viability. The amendments to COMAR 13A.12.02.18 and the repeal of COMAR 13A.12.02.12 do not have any economic impact, nor is there any impact on individuals with disabilities. There is no corresponding federal standard for these proposed actions. Copies of the proposed COMAR amendment and repeal are attached. The Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board voted to publish the proposed repeal and amendment at its meeting on October 2, 2008 with the following TENTATIVE timeline:

<i>Maryland Register</i> Issue Date:	December 5, 2008
30 Day Open Comment Periods Ends:	January 5, 2009
Approval (MSBE):	January 27, 2009
Adoption (PSTEB):	February 5, 2009

ACTION:

This item is presented for information and to provide the option to request a Joint Conference Committee meeting prior to publication should you so desire.

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Attachments (2)

13A.12.02.18 Certification in Specialty Areas (Prekindergarten—Grade 12).

A. To receive certification in art, dance, environmental education, health, music, and physical education at the prekindergarten—grade 12 level, the applicant shall:

(1) Complete the following content course work:

(a) Earn a bachelor's or higher degree from an IHE with a major in the certification area; or

(b) Complete [36] 30 semester hours or more of content course work taken at an IHE in the certification area;

(2) Meet the professional education course required in Regulation .06A(2) of this chapter; and

(3) Meet the experience requirements in Regulation .06A(3) of this chapter.

B. For the content course work required in §A(1)(b) of this regulation:

(1) A minimum of 50 percent shall be taken at the same institution; and

(2) A minimum of 12 semester hours shall be upper division course work.

[13A.12.02.12 Outdoor Education (Grades 7—12).

A. An applicant may not seek initial certification in the outdoor education area (grades 7—12).

B. To add an endorsement in the outdoor education area (grades 7—12), the applicant shall:

- (1) Hold a professional certificate appropriate to the level of the teaching assignment and the subject area;
- (2) Complete a course taken at an IHE in the philosophy, materials, and methods of outdoor education;
- (3) Complete 15 semester hours of course work taken at an IHE in natural sciences such as biology, botany, geology, earth science, astronomy, ecology, zoology, entomology, ornithology, and oceanography; and
- (4) Obtain 1 year teaching experience in outdoor education or supervised experience in the area.]