

**CERTIFICATION STANDARDS & PRACTICES**  
**ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

THURSDAY, JULY 19, 2007

*Red Lion Colonial Inn  
2301 Colonial Drive  
Helena, MT*

**CALL TO ORDER**

CSPAC Chair, Dr. Douglas Reisig, called the Certification Standards and Practices Advisory Council meeting to order on Thursday, July 19, 2007 at 8:37 A.M. CSPAC council members present were: Chair, Dr. Douglas Reisig, School Administrator, Missoula; Vice-Chair, Ms. Melodee Smith-Burreson, Teacher, Missoula; Ms. Tonia Bloom, Trustee, Corvallis; Ms. Charla Bunker, Teacher, Great Falls; Ms. Judie Woodhouse, Teacher, Polson; and Dr. Mary Susan Fishbaugh, Dean of Education, MSU-Billings. Members absent were: Ms. Kim Warrick, Reading Specialist, Bozeman. Staff members present were: Mr. Peter Donovan, Administrative Officer for CSPAC; Mr. Steve Meloy, Executive Secretary for the Board of Public Education; and Ms. Megan Kerzman, CSPAC Administrative Assistant. The following people signed the meeting roster: Nancy Marks, OPI Paraprofessional Consortium; Claudette Morton, Montana Small Schools Alliance (MSSA); Beckie Squires, paraprofessional, Helena School District, MEA-MFT; Bob Clemens, MSU; Linda Peterson, OPI; Elizabeth Keller, OPI; Bonnie Jones Graham, MSU-Billings; and Larry Nielson, MEA-MFT.

**Motion: Ms. Melodee Smith-Burreson moved to approve the agenda. This was seconded by Ms. Judie Woodhouse. Motion was unanimously approved.**

**Motion: Ms. Tonia Bloom moved to approve the March 7-8 CSPAC meeting minutes. Ms. Melodee Smith-Burreson seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved.**

Mr. Peter Donovan provided a review of CSPAC correspondence, which included some letters pertaining to the MSU education program moving from the NCATE accreditation process to the TEAC process, two letters thanking Mr. Donovan for his participation in events, and a copy of a presentation from the Troops to Teachers program.

**\*Items are in the order they were discussed at the meeting.**

**ITEM 1      PARAPROFESSIONAL ISSUES PANEL DISCUSSION – Ms. Elizabeth Keller, Ms. Beckie Squires, and Ms. Nancy Marks**

Ms. Elizabeth Keller is the Unit Manager for OPI Licensure, Ms. Nancy Marks is a member of the OPI Paraprofessional Consortium, and Ms. Beckie Squires is a paraprofessional at C.R. Anderson and treasurer of the local union. Ms. Marks began the discussion with some of the developments of the consortium, including a current paraprofessional resource guide, professional development for paraprofessionals to meet N.C.L.B. highly qualified requirements, “Para-educators Achieving Standards Successfully” training and tests, the development of a page on the OPI website that will have all of the paraprofessional resources on it and be easy to navigate to, and recognition of paraprofessionals. The biggest issue seems to be “highly qualified” status portability for paraprofessionals, due to the status being determined not at the state level but at the individual district level. Ms. Squires agreed, stating she often hears at trainings, “Will I be highly qualified in another district?” With teachers, they are qualified anywhere in the state, but that is not the case with paraprofessionals; this would be a great direction to move in, state-wide certification.

Ms. Marks explained that this fall the OPI Paraprofessional Consortium will be conducting a needs assessment to determine what methods different districts use to establish highly qualified status. Ms. Squires gave the Council an overview of the PASS program: there is a math component and a reading component (for which she does the training), which train paraprofessionals to help children learn these concepts; the training consists of 30 hours of intense training and completion of tests at the end; often completion of this program and passing the tests qualifies a paraprofessional for highly qualified status (again, depends on the individual district). Dr. Linda Vrooman Peterson spoke on the topic of the statute-required qualifications of a paraprofessional as stated in Title I, as well as a guidance letter that was sent to

districts along with a list of possible avenues for paraprofessionals to gain highly qualified status. The Council discussed resurfacing this letter and the list of acceptable avenues, perhaps on the OPI website, as well as the possibility of a certificate stating that so-and-so has gained highly qualified status is District X and listing the way(s) that was accomplished. Perhaps this certificate could be a downloadable form/template from the state level, so that every district could use the same template; however, this would not be a certificate claiming state approval of the highly qualified status. Dr. Mary Susan Fishbaugh asked about the possibility of having a long-term plan to give state recognition to paraprofessionals. The Council now has several options for how to handle paraprofessional issues.

**ITEM 2 THE VANISHING BREED?: THE 2006-2007 MONTANA RURAL TEACHER SALARY AND BENEFIT SURVEY – Dr. Claudette Morton**

Dr. Claudette Morton of the Montana Small Schools Alliance presented her recently completed research on small school district and teacher data. This research on Montana small schools was first done in 1992 and this set of data is the fourth to be gathered in fourteen years; this provides good longitudinal data as well as the most current data. There was a return rate of 97-98% on most of the questions and a 100% return rate on some. The research was conducted via a survey sent to districts that had multi-grade or one-room small schools. The survey covers a wide range of topics, including salaries, benefits, janitorial duties, budgets, student enrollments, leaves, clerk salaries, and library and guidance/counseling services. Some highlights include:

- there are 114 independent elementary school districts supervised by the county superintendents;
- size of these districts varies from one student to 146 students;
- number of teachers varies from 1 in the smallest district to 15.5 in the largest district;
- lowest annual salary is \$13,000 with only housing provided and no other benefits;
- highest annual salary is \$53,848 with benefits.

**ITEM 3 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT – Dr. Douglas Reisig and Ms. Melodee Smith-Burreson**

The Council voted by acclamation to maintain the committees as they currently stand. The committees are: Pre-Professional Preparation and Continuing Development – Dr. Mary Susan Fishbaugh and Tonia Bloom; Licensure and Endorsement Committee – Kim Warrick and Charla Bunker; Montana Commission on Teaching – Melodee Smith-Burreson and Judie Woodhouse; Executive Committee – Dr. Douglas Reisig and Melodee Smith-Burreson. The Council approved Mr. Donovan’s attendance of the Professional Practices Institute for NASDTEC, as well as some meals and hotel fees. The Council members discussed the calendar dates for the meetings for the upcoming year. The tentative dates are:

- Wednesday-Thursday, October 10-11, 2007 in Missoula
- Thursday, January 17, 2008 in Helena
- Wednesday-Thursday, March 5-6, 2008 in Helena with Board of Public Education
- Thursday, July 24, 2008 in Helena

The Council agreed to maintain the five general goals they currently have. The members held a brief discussion on specific projects and short-term goals, including: NCTQ report, looking at a couple areas each meeting, possibly having someone come in and speak to the Council about those areas, possibly writing a letter about the positives; possible research into Braille instructors, certification, barriers, etc.; distance-learning; dual-enrollment; Chapter 57 review; and mentoring research and program-planning. The decision was made to solidify these goals at the fall meeting.

**ITEM 4 BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION REPORT – Mr. Steve Meloy**

Mr. Steve Meloy spoke to the Council about the latest and on-going work of the Board of Public Education. Some highlights include: Phase II of the Distance Learning Task Force; possibility of a “Class 8” license for higher education instructors to teach high school classes; K-College workgroup; workforce development for students after high school; Counsellorship Initiative and Writing Proficiency work of the former P-20 workgroup; meeting with Governor’s office to review legislative session and outcomes; loan assistance program for educators in critical shortage areas, to be administered by Board of Regents, with educator critical shortage area list developed by OPI and BPE; plan to change “certification” to “licensure” in statute during the next session; and refining license denial process/appeal process. Mr.

Meloy also told the Council about the person who has been hired as the new CSPAC Administrative Assistant, who will begin on August 6, 2007. He briefly talked about the possibilities for a new building for office space.

**ITEM 6 OPI UPDATE – Dr. Linda Vrooman Peterson**

Dr. Linda Vrooman Peterson spoke briefly to the Council about the latest developments at OPI: six new curriculum specialist positions. The six positions cover mathematics, communication arts, science, middle school/at-risk, early childhood, and library media. The positions entail developing model curriculum based on standards, reviewing and revising standards when necessary, helping implement curriculum, making sure curriculum has electronic capability for dissemination. Dr. Peterson suggested perhaps having the new curriculum specialists come speak to the Council, introduce themselves, talk about what they do, etc., at the next Helena CSPAC meeting. She also touched briefly on the assessment work the curriculum specialists will do: after setting up the curriculum, classroom assessments will be developed to help direct classroom instruction.

**ITEM 5 ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER’S REPORT – Mr. Pete Donovan**

Mr. Peter Donovan spoke to the Council about the meetings he has attended since March 12, 2007. Mr. Donovan also gave a review of the NASDTEC conference, including some of the speakers and the comments received. He spoke about the Mobility Study that NASDTEC has been funding; although the study is not completely finalized, a preliminary report was presented at the NASDTEC conference. Mr. Donovan will keep the Council apprised of the final outcome of the study. As NASDTEC President, Mr. Donovan will be asked to travel more and attend more events, but he weighs the importance of the event and information before attending and asks the Council’s permission and understanding for all the travel.

**ITEM 7 MONTANA COMMISSION ON TEACHING COMMITTEE – Ms. Melodee Smith-Burreson and Ms. Judie Woodhouse**

Ms. Melodee Smith-Burreson and Ms. Judie Woodhouse gave an overview of the NCTAF Symposium they attended, the theme of which was “The Future of Teaching”. They spoke about some of the sessions they were able to attend, including one in which an informational map that was entitled “The Map of the Future Forces Affecting Education” was presented. This map looked at key things that are influencing education, not just education policy, but also public health issues, a variety of socio-economic issues, political issues, etc. Another session that the ladies attended was “Is Mentoring Worth the Money”, which presented statistics on states that have mentoring/induction programs (currently 30 states require an induction program). Information was also presented on the components of a quality mentoring program, including but not limited to: release time, selection process, professional development and training, compensation, subject matter and grade level specific, multi-year. Ms. Smith-Burreson, Ms. Woodhouse, and Mr. Donovan spoke with a NCTAF staff person about concerns and information for Montana. For this discussion, Ms. Smith-Burreson provided maps and charts representing census data and school data.

A discussion ensued about drop-out rates and developing better ways to track students in order to get numbers that more accurately represent where students are going. The Council also talked about a recruitment program at higher education institutions to attract students from two-year schools, tribal colleges, and reservations. Dr. Reisig asked Ms. Smith-Burreson and Ms. Woodhouse to work with Dr. Mary Susan Fishbaugh and Mr. Donovan to develop a skeleton proposal, to be presented at the October meeting, for a mentoring research project. The Mentoring Task Force was spoken about, and the suggestion was made to gather data on mentoring prior to beginning any research project, possibly using the Survey Monkey tool. Ms. Woodhouse provided a list of mentoring programs that are touted as exemplary programs that the Council should gather information on. These programs are: Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) in California; Silicon Valley New Teacher Project in Santa Cruz; the program in Lafourche Parish in Louisiana; and the Toledo Plan.

**ITEM 8 LICENSURE AND ENDORSEMENT COMMITTEE – Ms. Kim Warrick and Ms. Charla Bunker**

Ms. Elizabeth Keller gave the Council a brief update and timeline of the Chapter 57 Review project. She explained the workgroup assignments, the main focus of the review, and also provided the Council with a handout depicting the goals of the individual workgroups and possible suggested revisions connected with the Chapter 57 review. The workgroups are meeting individually and should have their preliminary reports to Elizabeth by August 17<sup>th</sup> and Ms. Keller will compile the results prior to a full committee meeting in either September or October.

**ITEM 9 PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION AND CONTINUING DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – Dr. Mary Susan Fishbaugh and Ms. Tonia Bloom**

Dr. Mary Susan Fishbaugh gave the Council a review of the Higher Education Consortium meeting in Polson at the Kwa Tuk Nuk May 30-31. The consortium is composed of regular and special education personnel preparation higher education faculty, OPI, and students; the consortium discusses issues with improving teacher preparation and trying for consistency across programs. Dr. Fishbaugh mentioned the presenters, the Reading First report, and some discussions about chronic issues with OPI endorsement.

**ITEM 10 PLAN FOR FUTURE CONFERENCES**

- A. Montana Educator Forum – September 28, 2007
- B. NASDTEC Professional Practices Institute – October 17-19, 2007 – Orlando, Florida
- C. Western States Certification Conference – January 9-11, 2008 – Palm Springs, California

**ITEM 11 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- A. Council of Deans joint meeting
- B. Discussion on substantive issues of TEAC vs. NCATE
- C. Copy of Linda McCulloch's letter about paraprofessional requirements
  - a. Speak with persons uploading paraprofessional information on OPI's webpage
- D. Research states that have statewide paraprofessional certification programs
  - a. Financial obligations
- E. Areas of NCTQ report
  - a. Possibly have people speak about specific sections
  - b. Maybe draft a letter about the positives of Montana
- F. Set goals
- G. Review by-laws
- H. OPI update – Dr. Linda Peterson
- I. OPI curriculum specialists at January meeting
- J. Fold-out map and its information (map from NCTAF symposium)
- K. Proposal for research project on mentoring

**ITEM 12 PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF CSPAC**

There was no public comment.

**ADJOURN**

**The meeting was adjourned by acclamation.**

Dr. Reisig adjourned the meeting at 2:20 P.M.

The Certification Standards and Practices Advisory Council will make reasonable accommodations for known disabilities that may interfere with an individual's ability to participate. Persons requiring such accommodations should make their requests to the Board of Public Education as soon as possible before the meeting to allow adequate time for special arrangements. You may write or call: CSPAC, PO Box 200601, 46 North Last Chance Gulch, Helena, MT 59620-0601, (406) 444-6576.