TO: Illinois State Board of Education

FROM: Robert E. Schiller, Superintendent
Christopher Koch, Director
Respicio Vazquez, General Counsel

Agenda Topic: Action Item:
Rules for Initial Review - Part 25 (Certification)

Materials: Recommended Amendments

Staff Contact: Christopher Koch
Michael Long
Dennis Williams

Purpose of Agenda Item
To present the proposed amendments for initial review and secure the Board’s authorization to distribute them for public comment.

Expected Outcome of Agenda Item
A motion authorizing the staff to publish the proposed amendments in the Illinois Register to elicit public comment.

Background Information
The amendments contained in this set of rules arise from three recent pieces of legislation, as well as from the staff’s experience with approving the providers of continuing professional development for purposes of the renewal of teaching certificates.

New Section 25.444 implements the Illinois Teaching Excellence Program as amended this year by P.A. 92-796 (HB 1436). Under Section 21-27 of the School Code, teachers who have attained certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) are eligible for an annual $3,000 stipend and can become eligible for an additional incentive payment of either $1,000 or $3,000 for each year during which they provide certain services to other teachers. Section 25.444 identifies the individuals who are eligible for these payments and distinguishes among the activities that qualify for the two levels of incentive payments.
Under the statute, the higher amount is available only when mentoring is provided to teachers who work in schools that either have been placed on the Academic Early ‘Warning List or have at least 50 percent of their students receiving free or reduced-price lunches. The draft rule will permit NBPTS-certified individuals to conduct either individual or group mentoring for teachers in such schools, provided that:

- the mentoring must occur as part of a formal program or under a written agreement;
- mentors must meet face to face with those whom they are serving; and
- the mentoring must focus on specified aspects of teaching practice and relate them to specified academic needs of the recipient teachers’ students.

The requirements for the $1,000 incentive payment allow eligible teachers to provide professional development to other teachers regardless of the characteristics of their schools, including professional development related to achieving certification by NBPTS.

The revisions found in **Subpart J** (Sections 25.800 through 25.875) of the rules reflect several changes in the certificate renewal requirements enacted as part of P.A. 92-796. These are highlighted below in the order of their appearance in the body of the rules.

- Receipt of advanced degree may now be used to account for 100% of the requirement (see Section 25.805).
- LPDCs are not required to maintain all the material submitted by teachers as evidence of completion for their activities (see Section 25.835).
- There is a new maximum of 200 on the number of plans for which each LPDC outside the Chicago Public Schools will be responsible, with a maximum of 50 additional plans for each member added to an LPDC if that option is chosen (see Section 25.845).
- Preparation of a portfolio of students’ and the teacher’s work has been added as an activity for which continuing professional development units (CPDUs) may be claimed (see Section 25.875(t)). The requirements for portfolio development are based closely on those aspects of the NBPTS requirements that were feasible to incorporate given this context.

Changes have also been made in Subpart J regarding requirements for speech-language pathologists, reflecting legislative changes enacted in 2001 via P.A. 92-510.

- Under Section 25.800(d), speech-language pathologists who are licensed by the Illinois Department of Professional Regulation are deemed to satisfy the requirements for renewal of their teaching certificates based on the professional development they complete for that license.
- Under Section 25.832, speech-language pathologists who have received their Certificates of Clinical Competence from the American Speech-Language Hearing Association are permitted to renew their standard teaching certificates on a ten-year cycle, rather than the five-year cycle otherwise required of those holding standard certificates.
Finally, a new Section 25.872 has been added to deal specifically with providers of continuing professional development activities that are electronically mediated. The requirements stated in this Section are largely parallel to those already stated for other providers, but this rule also sets up requirements for these entities to provide appropriate assistance and indicate how they will verify individuals' participation. It also makes allowance for teachers to receive credit when providers are not approved, in view of the fact that the existing rules' distinction between Illinois providers and out-of-state providers is not feasible to apply to providers of this type. (Addition of this rule also requires exceptions to be inserted into existing Sections 25.855, 25.860, 25.865, and 25.870, which are otherwise not being amended.)

The revisions to Section 25.728 reflect changes made this year by P.A. 92-734 regarding institutions' use of test results. Beginning with the 2002-2003 academic year, passage of the test of basic skills is required prior to entry into a teacher education program. Beginning with the 2004-2005 academic year, each candidate must pass the applicable test(s) of subject matter knowledge before being permitted to engage in student teaching.

The proposed amendments contain additional items of technical updating as well.

These rules were reviewed by the State Teacher Certification Board at its October meeting. Following detailed discussions, the STCB voted to recommend the proposed amendments to the State Board of Education with several changes, which have been incorporated into the draft presented in this packet. These issues are discussed individually at the end of this document.

Analysis and Implications for Policy, Budget, Legislative Action, and Communications

Policy Implications: Please see above.

Budget Implications: This rulemaking has no budgetary implications for the agency.

Legislative Action: None needed.

Communications: Please see “Next Steps” below.

Superintendent’s Recommendation

Adopt the following motion:

The State Board of Education hereby authorizes solicitation of public comment on the proposed rulemaking for:

Certification (23 Illinois Administrative Code 25),
Next Steps

With the Board’s authorization, staff will submit the proposed amendments to the Administrative Code Division for publication in the Illinois Register to elicit public comment. Additional means such as the Superintendent’s Bulletin and the agency website will also be used to inform interested parties of the opportunity to comment on this rulemaking.

Recommendations of State Teacher Certification Board

1. The Certification Board asked for language interpreting the statutory reference to “outside the regular school term,” so that teachers and administrators would have clear information about when the mentoring and professional development activities discussed in this Section are permitted to occur.

   Status: This was accomplished by the addition of a new sentence to the introductory paragraph of Section 25.444.

2. The Certification Board recommended that the breadth of the aspects of teaching enumerated in Section 25.444(c)(1) be linked to the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards.

   Status: This was accomplished by insertion of a reference to the rules in Part 24, which includes not only those standards but also the language arts and technology standards for all teachers.

3. Staff presented to the Certification Board a revised version of the proposed changes to Section 25.728 that would preserve some existing provisions regarding the responsibilities of institutions in using the results of certification tests. The Certification Board concurred that these revisions were advisable.

   Status: The version of Section 25.728 that is printed in the Board packet includes the agreed-upon revisions.

4. The Certification Board recommended that the maximum number of plans for which an LPDC may be made responsible (200) be stated to include (rather than exclude) the number of individuals who identify for the LPDC the option they have chosen for moving from initial to standard certification.

   Status: Staff believes that it would be reasonable to include in this maximum the number of individuals who indicate they will be fulfilling the requirement for standard certification through accumulation of CPDUs, because these individuals will eventually submit to the LPDCs multiple items as evidence of completion. The LPDCs will need to review these documents to determine whether the statutory requirements for their distribution have been met. It should not be
necessary to include in the maximum those holders of initial certificates who choose any of the other options for attaining standard certification, because each of these will involve only a simple notice and one matching item of evidence (no plan is required in this instance). We will be attentive to the workload of the LPDCs when the relevant portion of the rules for standard certification is developed. The language of the rule as presented in this packet would include the former group and exclude the latter.

5 The Certification Board recommended that the language of Section 25.875(t) be modified to refer to “artifacts” instead of “entries”. The goal was to use whichever term or terms will be most familiar to those involved with the preparation of portfolios.

Status: A review of the literature revealed that both terms are used with some frequency, so both have been used in the proposed language of the rule as printed in the Board packet.