



PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS BOARD

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Date: October 2023

From: Brendan O'Connor, PTSB Executive Director

RE: Director's Memo

The fall semester is halfway through, and I hope that all is running smoothly in your districts.

EXCEPTION AUTHORIZATIONS (EAs)

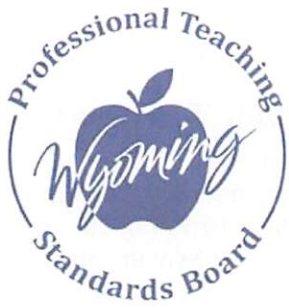
Over the past few months I have received a number of calls and emails asking about expectations regarding supervision of educators on Exception Authorizations. Here is what I have provided in response to these queries.

An educator on an Exception Authorization (EA) is not fully licensed and thus not fully autonomous in the classroom, especially in regards to Special Education and the additional federal statutes and regulations in this area. PTSB rules for EAs state: "the applicant shall be supervised by a fully licensed educator" and "the district accepts responsibility for ensuring the applicant completes all requirements and becomes eligible for full licensure."

The intent about supervision is that the individual on the EA would be directly mentored and supported by a fully licensed educator in the same content/assignment area. A building principal provides additional supervision, but likely does not have as much direct interaction with the educator as a peer. The same may be true for a Special Education Director who is overseeing all special education services for the district, and who might not have the time to regularly monitor individuals. For Special Education, PTSB has recommended that fully licensed educators complete any compliance or legal documentation and not have the individual on an EA sign them. For example, completing IEPs, conducting IEP meetings, and any other required monitoring paperwork. It is possible that the individual on an EA does not have any experience with completing IEPs that meet requirements, and the district would be setting themselves up for liability issues if they are not providing any oversight. The person on the EA can help develop IEP goals and participate in meetings, but should not be leading the meeting or completing any official documentation. Even for non-Special Education subject areas, the individual is still learning the content and pedagogy of their subject area, and needs support to be successful so that their students may be successful.

SPECIAL EDUCATION LICENSURE

Related to Special Education: a year ago the US Department of Education Office of Special Education sent out guidance about qualifications for Special Education educators ([Memo: OSEP](#))



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[22-01](#)). This guidance notes that all special education educators must hold at least a bachelor's degree. I understand that this poses additional challenges in hiring these already hard-to-staff areas. PTSB staff will continue to work with districts to seek solutions to hiring and licensing that will not pose any Federal compliance issues for districts.

PROPOSED RULES CHANGES

PTSB is proposing to promulgate rule changes for Chapters 4, 5, and 6. The proposed rule changes come from requests from the Wyoming Association of School Psychologists, Wyoming Game & Fish Department, the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence, individual educators, and Board discussions. Specific information about these and other changes can be found in the Statement of Reasons. Copies of the proposed rules may be obtained from the Professional Teaching Standards Board at the following URL:

<http://wyomingptsb.com/home/rules-and-regulations/>

Interested persons may present their views on the intended action by email to: ptsbrules.publiccomment@wyo.gov **before November 1, 2023.**

EXPIRATION DATES

Our office has received a number of frantic calls and emails this month from educators whose license has expired. This may have been prompted by districts preparing the WDE 602 mis-assignment report. Again, I encourage you to have all administrators, teachers, substitutes, and coaches double check the validity dates of their licenses so the expiration date is not a surprise. We are still manually adjusting all expiration dates to the educator's birthday – this also happens during renewals – but we have not completed transitioning everyone's expiration date yet.

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

The Board will hold a special meeting to consider public comments received for the proposed rules, and take action to move forward with the promulgation process on Monday, November 20, 2023.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on Monday, January 29, 2024.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS/CONCERNS

We are available and open to all discussions that fall within the agency parameters of licensure, educator discipline, and program approval. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns you would like to share with PTSB, please do not hesitate to contact our office. The PTSB continues to engage our stakeholders, implement changes proactively, be a resource, and plan for the future to meet our mission "to ensure that every student is served by competent, ethical educators, who meet rigorous performance standards" in Wyoming. Thank you for your continued support and partnership!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Breandan H. O'Leary".