PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS BOARD

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From: Nish Goicolea, PTSB Executive Director

RE: Emergency Rule Adoption & Other Updates

We are pleased to announce that on April 20, 2020 the PTSB Board adopted emergency rule changes and they were approved by the Governor's Office April 30, 2020. These rules have also been submitted in the standard rule procedure and are available for public comment and permanency once the emergency rules expire.

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY:

1) Covid-19 Exception Authorization
2) Professional, Industry, & Career (PIC) Permit Changes
3) Out-of-Field Endorsement (By District Request Only)
4) Exception Authorization Transferability
5) Removal of Speech Language Pathologist Licensing

COVID-19 EXCEPTION AUTHORIZATION

PTSB has been inundated with numerous situations that have somehow affected districts and individuals meeting licensure requirements due to the pandemic. This new EA is essentially a provisional license that individuals can apply for that would give them a two (2) year window to complete whatever requirement they are missing for initial licensure, reinstatement, or renewal. We know this will be imperative for individuals who were not able to complete their teacher preparations programs, testing requirement, professional development hours, CPR/First Aid, etc.

PROFESSIONAL, INDUSTRY, & CAREER (PIC) PERMIT

Traditionally the PIC Permit has been used to get qualified individuals to teach Career Technical Education (CTE) courses where there are fewer educator preparation programs in those areas. The new rule language does not change that, but is intended to allow more opportunities for individuals from various backgrounds to teach in non-CTE content areas. For example, a physician could teach biology or anatomy classes, a professional artist could teach art, etc.

Other significant changes for the PIC permit is the opportunity for these educators to acquire a standard license. Individuals who have held a PIC permit for at least ten (10) years, and who hold a bachelor's degree or higher, may apply for a Standard Educator License with appropriate endorsements by providing verification of continuous teaching employment for ten (10) year or more for each field of occupational specialty.

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Individuals holding a PIC permit for less than ten (10) years that wish to apply for a Standard Educator License must take the following courses or their equivalent, at a minimum, from an accredited institution:

- Foundations of development and learning
- Introduction to school law
- Introduction to special education
- Methods of instruction to include classroom management
- Introduction to Psychology
- Developmental Psychology

OUT-OF-FIELD ENDORSEMENT

The Out-of-Field endorsement allows an individual to be assigned to teach in a content area they do not currently hold for a limited period of time. During that time if they passed the Praxis exam in the new content area, the individual could add the endorsement to their existing license.

The proposed language is a modification of the existing Exception Authorization (EA) that allows an individual to teach no more than two (2) class periods outside of their endorsement area(s) due to unforeseen circumstances. The proposed language allows this EA to be valid for **two (2) years** to allow applicants time to pass the appropriate Praxis exam, and does **not** allow for extensions beyond the two (2) years.

EXCEPTION AUTHORIZATION TRANSFERIBILITY DISTRICT TO DISTRICT

The proposed language is a modification of the existing Exception Authorization (EA) that does not allow individuals to transfer their EA's if they are hired by a new district. The educator must update their EA information and the new district must sign off on the pending requirements.

REMOVAL OF SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST LICENSING THROUGH PTSB

Senate File 0087, or Enrolled Act 59 Audiology and speech-language pathology compact, was signed into law March 24, 2020 and becomes effective July 1, 2020. It adopts the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact which allows the practice of audiology and speech-language pathology (SLP) across state lines. The law also provides for fingerprinting and background checks of license applicants, and sets out renewal requirements.

The law ***repealed*** a section [*W.S 33-33-104(a)(iii)*] of the previous statute that allowed the Professional Teaching Standards Board (PTSB) to license SLPs to practice only in public schools or in programs for the developmentally disabled funded by the Department of Health. PTSB conducted fingerprinting and background checks of these applicants. For decades SLPs were licensed to work in school districts by meeting different minimum requirements. Those requirements were changed in statute around 2008. Minimum education requirements were then changed from a Bachelor's degree to a Master's degree or its equivalent.

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The Board of Examiners of Speech-Language Pathology & Audiology (SLP Board) will be the **only** licensing body for SLPs and Audiologists effective July 1, 2020. Currently there are 222 SLPs licensed through PTSB. Most of these licensees hold a Master's degree in speech-language pathology and would meet the minimum education requirements of the SLP Board.

Of the 222, there are 22 who completed an "equivalency" program through PTSB around 2008 - 2010 when the law establishing minimum qualifications for an SLP was changed from a Bachelor's degree to a Master's degree or its equivalent. These individuals completed one of four routes to maintain licensure. Many completed additional college courses (14 - 27 credit hours) in addition to clinical practicum and work experience. These individuals will have to be reviewed by the SLP Board to ensure they will meet full licensure requirements. All SLP licenses through PTSB will become null and void July 1, 2020 regardless of the current validity dates of the PTSB license.

We will be contacting all of these SLP's to notify them of these statutory changes PTSB has been advocating for all of these SLP's to be licensed to ensure districts and school SLP's are not further affected by this change. If you have questions please contact us.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

PTSB now has seven (7) recognized state programs, all available online, for Computer Science Endorsement through the following institutions: University of Wyoming, Western Wyoming Community College, Central Wyoming College, Northern Wyoming Community College District, Northwest College, Casper College, and Laramie County Community College. Due the variety of face-to-face and online program opportunities in the state the PTSB Board has decided to sunset an exception authorization (EA) for "Computing Technology". PTSB is collaboratively working with the Wyoming Department of Education to develop micro-credentials for computer science that could possibly lead to endorsement, however, this is not anticipated to be completed in the near future.

We know your districts need more Computer Science educators and we have several mechanisms available to help. Please call us and we will walk through your options and situational needs.

PTSB ONLINE APPLICATION & REMOTE WORK

PTSB has been fortunate to continue functioning at nearly full capacity in-person and remotely. The office remains open to the public Monday-Friday, 8:00am-5:00pm, and also online. We have digitized all applications and are able to process remotely. Applicants are able to go to the PTSB website http://wyomingptsb.com/ and complete their applications completely online. We are experiencing some issues with background checks being able to be completed and we are working closely with DCI (as are many other agencies) to solve this issue.

U.S. & WYOMING CONSTITUTION EXAMS

We are pleased to announce that the U.S. and Wyoming Constitution Exams are now available for applicants to complete online.

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PRAXIS EXAMS

PTSB is aware many teachers are unable to take their Praxis exams at this time, however, we are told that these exams will be available to be taken remotely in the subsequent months.

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

1. Monday, June 8-10, 2019-Board Retreat/Regular Board Meeting- Cheyenne, WY

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS/CONCERNS

We are available and open to **all discussions that fall within the agency parameters of program approval, discipline, and licensure**. 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 is actively working to improve **dialogue**, 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.