



JOY HOFMEISTER

STATE SUPERINTENDENT *of* PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT *of* EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Joy Hofmeister

DATE: November 12, 2020

SUBJECT: Certification appeals

The statute that authorizes the State Board of Education to issue alternative placement teaching certificates and outlines the requirements for the alternative certification program provides that “[t]he State Board of Education may grant an exception to the requirements for certification and, upon demonstration by an individual of specific competency in the subject area of specialization, may grant a certificate to the individual” (70 O.S. § 6-122.3(D)).

The first appeal is from Valerie Cooper (Gose). One of the listed requirements for entry into the alternative certification program is that an applicant may never have received a failing grade in a course necessary to complete a teacher preparation program. Ms. Cooper has a bachelor’s degree with music emphasis and wants to pursue certification in that field but was denied admittance to the Alternative program due to failing grades on two courses required for her music education degree, Classical Piano II & III. Ms. Cooper has various experiences in the music field including serving as a teaching assistant in public and charter schools, as an instructor and a band camp director. She has also served as a member in various music organizations and served as the President of the Collegiate Oklahoma Music Educators Association. The Department has no reservations with the approval for Ms. Cooper’s appeal.

The Second appeal is from Joe Breeden. One of the listed requirements for applicants eligible for their initial alternative certificate is to pass a college credit course in both classroom management and pedagogy. Mr. Breeden is seeking business certification via the alternative route and requesting those courses be waived based on his vast experiences with technology and working in a PK-12 school setting. He has a master’s in computer information systems and a bachelor’s in business administration/computer information systems. He served as the Dean of Business and a technology professor at Oklahoma Panhandle State for 16 years and was the Director of Information Technology at Ulysses Public Schools in Kansas. However, the lack of teaching experience at the

PK-12 level or teacher education coursework gives the department reservations about waiving the course requirements.

The Final appeal is from Brittany Cole. Brittany has served as a teacher assistant in the Yukon school system for the last two years and has a job offer from Yukon Public Schools, pending a positive vote on an emergency certificate for early childhood at today's State Board Meeting. She did not complete a teacher education program, so the non-traditional paraprofessional certification program is the route she would need to pursue to be on the road to permanent certification. Ms. Cole has a retention GPA of 2.56 but a cumulative GPA of 2.24. OAC 210:20-9-102(c)(2) states the applicant must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 for the paraprofessional certification program. In contrast, the GPA requirement for the alternative program is based on retention GPA, not cumulative. The department has no reservations with this request and will work to adjust the OAC to reflect the GPA requirement for the paraprofessional certification program to align with the GPA requirement of the alternative program.

JH/js
Attachments