

# **ABE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

## **Meeting Minutes 12/8/00**

**Members Attending:** B. Ash, H. Chernow, J. Koss-Cole, M. Forry, J. McCarthy, L. Soricone, P. Veysey, S. Waldron

**Members Absent:** D. Branco, K. DeJesus, J. McGovern, S. Martin, K. Skinner

**DOE Staff Attending:** B. Bickerton, M.J. Fay

**DOE Staff Absent:** R. Derfler, M. Gillon

**SABES Staff Attending:** C. Reid

**Minutes Compiled by:** M.J. Fay

### **Agenda Item #:**

#### **1) Meeting Minutes**

Motion to approve: Approved.

Meeting minutes are a matter of public record: minutes will be posted on the web

#### **Announcements:**

A) We've spoken with the USDOE to let them know that we're breaking new ground. It appears that this will be the first stand-alone ABE teacher certification in the country. In other states, ABE certification either sits on top of a preexisting preK-12 certification, or a certificate is issued that is not recognized by the respective certification office.

Mary Jayne will be moderating a national listserv or discussion group in which participants can discuss issues related to ABE certification. Several interested states have already expressed interest in participating. Committee members are invited to participate and if interested, should give MJ your email address.

B) The Board of Education Meeting is Tuesday, January 23, 2001 from 4-7 p.m. in the Board Rooms at the Department of Education. [Please note that the meeting time and place is subject to change. MJ will email everyone the week before if there is any change.]

Committee members or others wishing to speak before the Board in support of the license, the process and criteria are as follows:

“The Board of Education makes available a maximum 30-minute period for persons in the audience to address the Board on specific agenda items. In order to hear as many speakers as possible, the Board limits individuals to 3 minutes, although written material of any length may be submitted. Also, the Board asks associations or groups to select only one speaker to represent the organization. Persons wishing to speak at the Board meeting should submit their request at least 5 days before the meeting. Fifteen written copies of the testimony should be submitted at or prior to the meeting so that it can be distributed to all members. Please send all testimony and requests to the Board of Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148.”

#### **2) Role of the Guidelines and Regulations**

- Regulations carry the force of law; Guidelines are suggestions about how the regulations should be carried out.
- The Guidelines are intended to be read by everyone (e.g. teacher preparation programs and teachers) and used as suggested ways of meeting the requirements of the Regulations.
- After discussing comments on the Guidelines received from Ralph Devlin of the MTA, there was discussion about what, if anything, should be moved from the Guidelines into the regulations. We have not heard from DOE legal regarding the draft of the Guidelines and whether the legal department agrees that the information needs to be moved.

- The DOE legal department did review and comment on the draft of the Regulations, but has not reviewed the Guidelines. They advised us of the following:
  - 1) The Regulations cannot go out to the Board of education without the language “*Evidence of sound moral character.*” (In previous discussions the Committee, and with the field, people were concerned by the vague language and raised several questions regarding the meaning of the phrase. The legal department previously gave the Committee language to be used on the application for the ABE teacher’s license: “The Massachusetts Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, national origin, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation.” which the Committee agreed to use in the application.)
  - 2) The portability of the license as covered in section .09(2) has to be deleted. If we want ABE teachers to be able to add on a preK-12 license, we will need to write new language regarding portability that will answer the question of what will licensed ABE teachers need to do to become certified in preK-12 (i.e., practicum requirements, subject matter test, child development, etc.).
  - 3) When the streamlining options (now Routes 3 & 4) were written, the old preK-12 regulations were in force. The new preK-12 regulations will require that all new teachers take the appropriate subject matter test, and in some cases two subject matter tests (their subject matter test plus a reading instruction test). Routes 3 & 4 of the ABE license do not require a subject matter test. The Committee restated its earlier position that requiring a subject matter test for experienced practitioners would unnecessarily discourage them from pursuing ABE certification. The purpose of Routes 3 & 4 is to validate the knowledge and skills of experienced practitioners encourage them to enter this voluntary certification process.
  - 4) At the last meeting the Committee voted to adopt a Provisional license as an optional entry point into the ABE license. This vote raised the question of whether or not the practicum equivalent as outlined in .09(6) should be eliminated. The Provisional license allows practitioners to get a job in the field and to work to fulfill the practicum requirement (known as an in-service practicum).
 

**Motion:** Eliminate .09(6) from the regulations.

**Vote:** unanimous

### 3) **Practicum**

- Clarification of Terminology in drafts:
  - 1) Pre-Practicum and Field Survey Pre-Practicum:  
 Committee members found the terms “pre-practicum” and “field survey pre-practicum” confusing. The Committee recommended defining the pre-practicum as including the field survey. It can be stated that Routes 2 and 3 will have to complete only the field survey portion of the pre-practicum at a minimum of 15 hours.
 

**Motion:** Make one reference to pre-practicum, and it will stipulate the number of hours for the pre-practicum depending upon route used.

**Vote:** unanimous
  - 2) Program Supervisor:  
 The Committee discussed the role of the program supervisor and how the term was confusing. The group agreed that appropriate terms would be “ABE Field supervisor” (within the ABE program) or “Educator preparation supervisor” (is approved by the teacher preparation program).
- Practicum Discussion:
  - 1) Practicum Hours:  
 A few Committee members advocated for a lengthier practicum of up to 300 hours. They argued that the ABE field has a breadth and depth similar to that of the 0-6 preK-12 license, which requires 300 hours, and that 150 hours might not be enough time to become adequately knowledgeable of the many ABE teaching areas and contexts. Other Committee members were concerned about raising the number of hours from 150 to 300 as most preK-12 practica require

only 150 hours and that most ABE programs do not have the staff structure to support lengthy practica. Members felt that they needed more discussion about the purpose and scope of the practicum before they could vote on the number of hours.

2) Purpose of practicum:

Committee members wanted clarification on the purpose and scope of the practicum. Members with experience in teacher preparation programs clarified that practica usually include anything that an ABE teacher would do in the course of her/her work (e.g. prep time, teaching, meetings with cooperating teacher, observations, seminar time with the provider).

The issue was raised of how long will it take to ensure that practitioners become proficient at what we're expecting them to do (e.g. assessment, curriculum, materials, learning disabilities)?

3) A number of pragmatic issues were raised and discussed with regard to the practicum:

- a) How many people will participate in a practicum?
- b) What will be the impact of practica on ABE programs?
- c) How will cooperating teachers be compensated for their time?

4) The Committee previously voted to not require practicum for Routes 3 & 4. The question was raised as to whether the Committee should revisit this earlier vote. Discussion pointed out that Routes 3 & 4 ask for the completion of a performance assessment plus a demonstration of teaching. The assumption is that if they've worked this many hours they've been supervised. Additionally, the Committee has voted by way of the streamlining options that all ABE teachers will have to fulfill the 9 common standards, plus the one subject matter standard.

**Motion:** Should the Committee reconsider its earlier vote about who should be required to fulfill a practicum?

**Vote:** 2-6 against reconsidering the earlier vote.

**Motion:** Should the practicum be 150 v. 300 hours?

**Vote:** Have a 150-hour practicum -- 4

Have a 300-hour practicum -- 3, with one abstention

The vote was close and the Committee was felt that the discussion should be reopened and other options presented, especially since only a few members present were also ABE teachers.

**Proposed Alternatives to 150 v. 300 hours--Votes**

Option A: 300/150 – Vote: 2

Option B: 200/150 – Vote: 1

Option C: 150/150 – Vote: 5 adopted

The practicum will be 150 hours for all routes requiring a practicum.

4) **Subject Matter**

Route 1: Add “each of” to the language

Add Route 4 parallel lang, “it is incumbent upon the practitioners **with the aid of their supervisors...**”

5) **Definitions**

In-service practicum and pre-service practicum are understood. Delete the definition for in-service practicum.

6) **This is the last meeting!**

The Committee would like this to be the final meeting. However, it would like to be apprised regularly of the status of the license (e.g. report from Needs Surveys, a copy of the document that's submitted to the Board, the time and place of the meeting, and of the hearings process, the final document after the public comment period). If the public comment suggests significant changes to the licensure model, the committee would like the option of deciding whether or not to meet again.

The Committee felt that a member or members of the Committee should be present at the Board meeting to represent the Group. This will be discussed with the Commissioner and if he agrees, one or two Committee members suggested by the group will be asked to participate. The Committee recommended Suzanne Martin and John McGovern.

Additionally, it was agreed upon that a process of informing and educating the field needs to occur. Promotional material with user friendly language needs to be developed. Also, information needs to be sent to the field to let them know that they will need to sign up to speak in support of the certification at the Board of Education meeting.