



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

THOMAS D. WATKINS, JR.
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

April 26, 2004

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Thomas D. Watkins, Jr.
Tom Watkins

SUBJECT: Final Approval of Lake Superior State University as a Teacher Preparation Institution

In November 1989, Lake Superior State University (LSSU) entered into a collaborative agreement with Michigan State University (MSU) to prepare teachers based on MSU's approved framework. Three features of the program were leadership, distance learning, and the certification of potential teachers with sensitivity to the problems facing rural educators and the needs of Native Americans. Under terms of the agreement, the program offerings were taught by MSU faculty and candidates who completed course work at LSSU were recommended for certification by MSU because of its approved status. LSSU and MSU signed another agreement in spring 1996 to effect the gradual transfer of programs from MSU to LSSU with MSU in a mentorship role to guide LSSU toward approval as an independent teacher preparation institution.

In July 1998, LSSU submitted to the MDE, an application for approval as a teacher preparation institution. In accordance with approved procedures, a Committee of Scholars (COS) was appointed by the SBE in September 1998 to review the application and to advise the board regarding approval as a teacher preparation institution. In December 1998, the Michigan Department of Education officially recognized the program by granting to LSSU the status of preliminary approval. This approval authorized LSSU to proceed with the development of the teacher education program, but did not authorize the institution to recommend candidates for certification.

The COS visited LSSU in December 1998 and prepared a report of findings including a list of tasks to be completed prior to recommending it for probationary approval. One of the recommendations was for LSSU to establish a formal mentored relationship for the period of

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probationary approval with an experienced teacher educator consultant, an approved teacher preparation institution, or the existing Committee of Scholars. The COS agreed to serve in this capacity.

The institution responded to the COS report with program changes and other documentation as requested. The COS reviewed the documents and established a timeline by which any remaining deficiencies would be addressed. In April 1999, the State Board of Education (SBE) granted approval with probation of the LSSU professional education unit (initial level) for three years (1999-2002). This approval enabled the institution to submit independent recommendations for elementary and secondary certification candidates as it continued to refine its teacher preparation programs.

Documentation regarding the progression of program development was received from LSSU in January 2001, March 2002, August 2002, December 2002, and January 2004. Because of multiple shifts in administration and faculty at the institution, the COS delayed the recommendation for final approval until they judged that the criteria for final approval had been fully met. The State Board is now asked to grant final approval to Lake Superior State University for the professional education unit. After this approval is granted, the institution will be scheduled for Periodic Review in 2008-2009, based on outcome data that will be submitted to demonstrate that the program is effective in preparing teachers for Michigan schools.

A summary report contains the COS response to LSSU documentation submitted between April 1999 and January 2004 according to the criteria for final approval of the education unit. This report is available for review in the State Board office. The documentation submitted by LSSU is available to SBE members upon request to the Office of Professional Preparation Services.

It is recommended that the State Board of Education approve the LSSU professional education unit (initial level) for five years, with the next review in academic year 2008-2009, as discussed in the Superintendent's memorandum dated April 26, 2004.