



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING


GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR


MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 5, 2019

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Venessa A. Keesler, Ph.D., Deputy Superintendent 
Division of Educator, Student, and School Supports

Scott M. Koenigsknecht, Ph.D., Deputy Superintendent 
P-20 System and Student Transitions

SUBJECT: Response to Public Comments on the Proposed Michigan Standards for
the Preparation and Practice of Special Education Administrators

This memo addresses concerns expressed during the first round of public comment on proposed Michigan Standards for the Preparation and Practice of Special Education Administrators and invites participation in a second round of public comment.

The proposed Michigan Standards for the Preparation and Practice of Special Education Administrators were presented to Michigan's State Board of Education in August 2019. A period for public comment followed the presentation. Michigan Department of Education (MDE) received more than 100 comments. Sixty-eight (68) of the comments expressed concern that the transition to a new set of standards, which requires issuance of a new credential, would disenfranchise individuals currently approved to serve as directors and supervisors of special education. Specifically, comments included:

- concerns about the lack of a plan to transition currently approved directors and supervisors into the new credential, and
- opposition to the requirement of a teaching certificate as a pre-requisite for earning the new credential.

MDE will continue to issue approvals for directors and supervisors of special education while adding a pathway for individuals to earn the special education administrator credential under any newly approved standards. Any administrator holding a valid approval letter for special education director or supervisor will be able to continue serving in their respective roles after the introduction of the new special education administrator credential.

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MDE will develop a process for currently approved directors and supervisors to obtain the new special education administrator credential if they desire to do so.

In addition to the concern around currently approved administrators, feedback was shared about the need for a special education administrator to hold a current and valid teaching certificate. Currently, the Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (MARSE) specify that full approval in at least one area of special education is a requirement for director and supervisor approval (MARSE, R 340.1771 and 340.1772). This has been interpreted as either a teaching credential in special education or a credential to provide special education services (e.g., school social worker or a school psychologist). MDE will continue to implement this requirement broadly with the new special education administrator credential. The standards document provided for public comment erred in limiting this requirement to a teaching credential.

Michigan Department of Education is providing a second round of public comment on the proposed Michigan Standards for the Preparation and Practice of Special Education Administrators. The second round of public comment will assist with refining the standards used to prepare candidates who are seeking certification in special education administration. These revised standards are available online at www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Standards_for_Preparation_and_Practice_of_Special_Education_Administrators_672185_7.pdf.

The second round of public comment will collect feedback until 11:59 p.m., January 17, 2020, online at: [Special Education Administrator Second Round of Public Comment](#). All comments will be reviewed and considered in the final recommendation to the State Board of Education.

For additional information, please contact Sungti Hsu at HsuS@Michigan.gov.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance