

Education Quality Team
Staff Report for January 12, 2021

From the Education Quality Division: Patrick Halladay, Director

Happy New Year to all. I hope you were able to enjoy some well-earned down time over the holidays. I would like to start the new year off with a well overdue thank you. Earlier this week, I joined a call of colleagues from states who have structures akin to the Standards Board for one of our occasional conversations. What became clear to me over the course of the conversation is that standards boards in general, and ours in particular, provide two essential elements to our Pk-12 education structure.

First, the state, regional, and local standards boards give control of the profession to professionals. Obviously, this is not something that I was the first to consider; it is the organizing philosophy of the standards boards. But I want to acknowledge the expertise that is brought to bear on policy decisions because of professional control. Rather than decisions being made in isolation in a state office building, the diversity of the standards board—elementary and secondary educators, administrators, representatives from higher education, school board members, etc.—provide a grounding of decisions in the realities of education. You are pragmatic check on overwrought good intentions and a passionate check on bureaucratic regulations. I want to thank you deeply for representing practice in precisely the manner that you do.

Second, the structure of the board and our meetings allows for quick response to capricious situations from an informed perspective. This was made blindingly real during the past 10 months. Whether through waivers to OTS endorsements, flexibility with license expiration dates, or careful review of student teaching substantive change requirements, the board allowed the AOE to respond quickly, professionally, and compassionately to real needs from the field. So, thank you.

As Ron notes below, we will be opening renewals around 19 January. We will be sending out initial letters to all educators up for renewal early on the week of 11 January. We have notified all L/RSBs of the schedule (thanks, Cindy!) so that they can answer questions from local educators and updated the website to reflect the new dates. We are opening renewals about two weeks later than last year. Due to the COVID pandemic and the subsequent extension of expiration dates of 2020 licenses, we still have a small handful of licenses still waiting to be completed. As with last year, we have in excess of 5,000 renewals this year. This is the second of two years when seven- and five-year renewals will be expiring simultaneously.

Currently, there are no COVID-related delays for educators who need them to receive their fingerprints. As such, we have reverted to our previous practice that an educator needs to upload the receipt of the fingerprints within 15 days of submission of a renewal application; however, we are also informing educators to please reach out to our licensing specialists if any additional time is needed. While we want to keep educators to a timeline to expedite the processing of licenses, we also want to remain responsive to the realities educators might face in completing their applications.

In the fall, the board issued two waivers set to expire at the end of the 2020 calendar year. One educator had requested the waiver to complete the Peer Review process. He successfully defended his portfolio in November. The other educator was required to submit a completed portfolio by the end of 2020 in order

to have her provisional license extended to the end of the current academic year. She took no steps toward completing her portfolio, and her licensed was expired on 4 January 2021.

In the educator preparation realm, a committee has been formed of members from nine EPPs to work on standard surveys that will help all programs to meet VSBPE Rule 5922.2: Provider uses valid and reliable methods to systematically evaluate candidates' knowledge and performance competencies, to monitor candidates' progress, and to acquire data that is used in making programmatic improvements. **This includes follow-up studies of graduates and those who have hired recent graduates.** (bold added for emphasis) The bold part of the rule has been largely overlooked by most EPPs in the past, and they have agreed that standard surveys will allow programs to have consistent data. All programs will be free to add additional questions to the basic surveys if they like. The first meeting of the committee is scheduled for Jan. 21; we anticipate the work will be completed by this summer.

From the Education Quality Division: Ron Ryan, Education Programs Manager

2021 Renewals

- The AOE anticipates that the 2021 renewals will be released *sometime around January 19, 2021*
- The Licensing Office still has few 2020 renewals to complete due to the extension of 2020 licenses being granted due to COVID-19.
- At this point we are projecting another busy renewal season with over 5000 renewals projected. We are still in the transition phase of receiving 7- and 5-year renewals for 2021. This will be the last year of 7-year renewals.
- *It is anticipated* that sometime next week, all 2021 renewing educators will be receiving one of two memos via their preferred e-mail regarding information on Criminal Record Checks (one memo indicating the AOE has a CRC date on file for the educator or the other memo indicating that the AOE does not have a CRC date on file for the educator) and instructions on how to proceed with their renewal.

Current Work Queue based on ending 2020, per application type as of 1-8-2021: *Applications in the work queue are in various stages of processing from just received to waiting for payment from applicant.*

Application Type	Total
Initial	91
Reinstatement	12
Renewal	6
Retired	2
Temporary	12

Application Type	Total
1 Yr. Temporary – extenuating circumstance	0
Transcript Review – Initial	19
Transcript Review – Add endorsement	38
Peer Review - Initial	57
Peer Review – Add endorsement	14