



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
23 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0023

PAUL R. LEPAGE
GOVERNOR

Stephen L. Bowen
COMMISSIONER

EXHIBIT: # VII.E.

TO: Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Stephen L. Bowen, Commissioner*
DATE: April 11, 2012
SUBJECT: Consideration of the Review Team Report of Findings Concerning State Program Approval for the University of Maine at Farmington Educator Preparation Programs

BACKGROUND:

The University of Maine at Farmington requested a campus visitation to review, for renewal of State program approval, the following teacher preparation programs:

Undergraduate Programs:

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| Early Childhood Education B-5 | Secondary Education – Life Sciences, 7-12 |
| Early Childhood Education K-3 | Secondary Education – Mathematics, 7-12 |
| Early Childhood Special Education | Secondary Education – Physical Sciences, 7-12 |
| Elementary Education, K-8 | Secondary Education – Social Studies, 7-12 |
| School Health Education, K-12 | Special Education K-8 |
| Secondary Education – English, 7-12 | Special Education 7-12 |

The State of Maine Program Approval and NCATE Unit Accreditation for Professional Education Units in the State of Maine Partnership Agreement stipulates that a joint state and national visitation team, for continuing accreditation, will be composed of Maine educators, representing the Maine State Board of Education, and national educators representing NCATE. The team is to be chaired by an NCATE team member and co-chaired by a Maine team member - the Maine team being one less in number than the NCATE team.

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For the Board's information and reference excerpted portions of Chapter 114, § 3.8 Joint Program Approval are provided as follows:

3.8 Joint Program Approval.

“In lieu of meeting the standards for approval contained in Standards two (2) through six (6), in Section 2 of this rule, preparation programs may obtain approval for purposes of Maine Department of Education Regulation 115 under the following circumstances:

- a) The applicant unit is accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) or
- b)
 - 1) A joint visitation by State representatives and the accrediting authority will provide the basis for decisions of both state program approval and national accreditation. This process will result in a recommendation to the State Board and a report to the accrediting authority.
- f) The Commissioner shall forward the materials received from the joint team to the State Board along with a recommended disposition. On the basis of the documents and information received from the Commissioner, and any other pertinent information, the State Board shall approve, approve with conditions, or deny approval to a preparation program. This final decision rests solely with the State Board.”

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A joint State and National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) program approval/accreditation visit to the University of Maine at Farmington was conducted October 3-5, 2010 for the purpose of reviewing the professional educator preparation programs. Following the on-site visit a State Team report was prepared which included the findings resulting from the application of both State and NCATE standards. Commendations, recommendations, and a recommendation for State program approval status were contained in this report.

The State Board voted to receive and to hold the State Team Report in abeyance until the Board’s State program approval decision could be informed by the NCATE Unit Accrediting Board’s action on continuing national accreditation of UMF’s preparation programs (see attached receipt exhibit dated and acted upon by the Board during its November 10, 2010 meeting; see also attached copies of the State Team Report and the UMF Application for renewal of State program approval which accompanied the November 10, 2010 exhibit).

Because the NCATE Unit Accrediting Board meets twice per-year (mid-October and mid-April) it was anticipated that the State Board would be able to act upon UMF’s State program approval following the mid-April decision by NCATE. On April 22, 2011, the Associate Provost and Dean of the UMF College of Education received a notice that “. . . the professional education unit at University of Maine At Farmington has been deferred until the October 2011 UAB meeting because the board found that Standard 4 was not met” (see attached notice from NCATE). Following a formal rejoinder being filed on behalf of UMF and numerous communications to and from NCATE, in a message from the Senior Vice President of NCATE, dated October 28, 2011 UMF was informed “...We are pleased to inform you that accreditation without qualifications has been continued for the professional education unit at University of Maine At Farmington.

Congratulations!” While this message was welcome, and a well-deserved relief to the folks at UMF, the State Board was not subsequently asked to consider and act upon the UMF State Team Report for renewal of State program approval; an oversight which it is now sought to be remedied.

RECOMMENDATION: Given the NCATE Unit Accrediting Board’s decision to grant full continuing national accreditation to the University of Maine at Farmington’s educator preparation programs it is recommended: That the State Board of Education approve the State Review Team’s report of findings, as received by the Board during its November 10, 2010 meeting, and grant State program approval of the UMF educator preparation programs with the effective program approval cycle being from Fall 2010 through Fall 2017.

*Prepared by Harry Osgood,
Higher Education Specialist