10/1/2020

On behalf of the Delaware Association of School Psychologists (DASP), we have reviewed the proposed revisions to the Professional Standards Board regulations pursuant to certifications for School Principal/Asst. Principal, Central Office Personnel, Superintendent/Asst. Superintendent, and Special Education Director (14 DE Admin. Code 1591-1594). We are appreciative of the work that went into these proposed revisions, and we offer the following comments in response.

Overall, we enthusiastically support the broadening of the language in 1591, 1592, and 1593 to provide all educators with an opportunity to seek these certificates, not just those with classroom teaching experience. The current language limits pathways to leadership for school psychologists and other specialists who may have experience working in educational settings, but not specifically 5 years of experience teaching in a classroom. We feel that school psychologists in particular possess a variety of skills through their training and experience in their discipline that are well-matched to the needs of these leadership positions, such as:

* Knowledge of the state and federal laws/regulations governing special education, including service eligibility/provision, educational placement, and discipline of students with disabilities;
* Critical thinking/problem-solving skills;
* Crisis prevention and intervention skills;
* An understanding of the role of mental wellness in helping students be “ready to learn” (which is particularly beneficial to leaders in specialized settings for students with significant emotional/behavioral needs);
* An understanding of learning, cognitive, and developmental processes and how they are supported through evidence-based curricula and instructional strategies;
* Experience with systems-level work that impacts the whole school community (e.g., Multi-Tiered Systems of Support [MTSS]); and
* Experience in data collection/analysis and data-based decision making as it relates to educational systems.

According to the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL), educational leaders must focus on how they are promoting the learning, achievement, development, and well-being of each student. School psychologists possess skills/knowledge that are relevant to each of those areas. The other proposed requirements for these certifications in 1591-1594 would ensure that a school psychologist (or any specialist) would be adequately prepared for these leadership positions. We are in agreement with the proposed regulations that it is time for Delaware to make leadership more accessible to all educators.

Sincerely,

The Delaware Association of School Psychologists (DASP)

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| Eric Pizzini |  | Emily S. Klein |
| **Eric Pizzini, Ed.S., NCSP**PresidentDelaware Association of School Psychologistsdasppresident@gmail.com |  | **Emily S. Klein, Ed.S., NCSP**Committee ChairpersonDASP Gov’t & Professional Relations Committeeeklein@udel.edu |