

## **Cape Elizabeth School Department Recertification Plan**

### **Introduction**

The State of Maine requires Educational Technician and Professional certificate holders who wish to renew their certification to document 45 or 90 hours, respectively, of professional development over five years. Certificates that are not applicable to an educator's current position can only be renewed through the Maine Department of Education's Maine Educator Information System (MEIS) portal. However, certificates that are applicable to an educator's current position must be renewed through the Cape Elizabeth School Department's Recertification Committee in accordance with the procedures described below. These procedures are intended to be more responsive to the needs of educators by offering greater convenience, flexibility, and efficiency.

### **Recertification Committee**

The Recertification Committee comprises five educators: one representative each from Pond Cove Elementary School (PCES), Cape Elizabeth Middle School (CEMS), and Cape Elizabeth High School (CEHS); one representative from among the educational technicians; and one representative from the Cape Elizabeth Education Association (CEEA). PCES, CEMS, CEHS, and educational technician representatives apply for open positions and are selected by existing members of the Recertification Committee. The CEEA representative is appointed by the CEEA Board.

The Recertification Committee meets monthly to review and approve documentation in support of an educator's professional development. Within six months prior to the expiration of a certificate, the Director of Teaching and Learning, at the behest of the Recertification Committee, recommends for renewal in MEIS any educational technician and professional certificate holder who has documented 45 or 90 hours of professional development, respectively, within the five-year time frame of the certificate. Once recommended for renewal, educators are able to renew their certificates through the MEIS portal, which must be done prior to the expiration of the certificate.

Educators are responsible for maintaining appropriate certification. If a certificate lapses before the required hours are documented, the educator must work directly with the Maine Department of Education to ensure renewal. The Cape Elizabeth School Department is prohibited from employing or continuing to employ educators who lack appropriate certification.

## **Professional Development**

Professional development is a broad term that can have many meanings. Within the Cape Elizabeth School Department, professional development is defined as “specialized training, formal education, or advanced professional learning intended to help administrators, teachers, and other educators improve their professional knowledge, competence, skills, and effectiveness” and examples of common professional development topics or experiences can be found in [\*The Glossary of Education Reform\*](#) (Great Schools Partnership).

## **Process**

The operative word in the Cape Elizabeth School Department’s definition is “intended.” Just as not all professional development experiences are alike, neither do they all result in improved knowledge, competence, skills, or effectiveness. Educators themselves ought to judge whether a professional development experience was successful and worthy of recertification credit.

For this reason, the process of securing recertification credit for professional development is straightforward. Following an activity that improved an educator’s knowledge, competence, skills, or effectiveness in an area encompassed by their certificate, the educator writes a summary of their learning and an explanation of how it will improve their practice and submits this reflection, along with an indicator of time spent on the activity (e.g., workshop certificate, reading log, transcript), to the Recertification Committee via a school-specific Google form entitled *Recertification Documentation*. The Recertification Committee then votes at its next meeting whether to approve, deny, or seek further clarification regarding the request for recertification credit.

Because the point is the learning, district- or school-sponsored professional development may be considered for recertification credit. However, activities that are part of one’s job responsibilities (e.g., lesson planning, field trips, meetings) are not considered professional development and would not be granted recertification credit. Further, in accordance with state precedent, no single activity will be granted more than 45 hours of recertification credit. Finally, documentation of the educator’s learning should occur within six months of completing the activity.

## **Conclusion**

The Cape Elizabeth School Department is deeply invested in fostering a culture of continuous improvement, recognizing that lifelong learning is critical to the effectiveness of its educators and hopeful that the process outlined above will not only benefit the educators whom it directly affects but also the students whom those educators serve.