



Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC)
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January 31, 2025

Department of Education
Office of the Secretary
Attn: Regulation Review
401 Federal Street, Suite 2
Dover, DE 19901

RE: 28 DE Reg. 497/14 DE Admin. Code 1572 DDOE Teacher of Students Who are Gifted or Talented regulation (January 1, 2025)

Dear Secretary Marten:

The Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC) has reviewed the Professional Standards Board (PSB) and Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) proposal to amend 14 Del. Admin. C. § 1572 in reference to the requirements for a Teacher of Students Who Are Gifted or Talented Standard Certificate. Council **does not support** the additional pathway to obtaining this certificate for the following reasons:

1. Micro-credentialing is not meant to replace formal teacher preparation training programs and it cannot provide the same level of education as those programs.
2. Delaware will be sending unprepared teachers into the classroom, which will negatively impact gifted and talented students and those who are twice exceptional.

Delaware's proposed regulation defines micro-credential as "evidence-based professional learning activities that are competency-based, personalized, on-demand, and sharable." This is consistent with how the National Education Association defines the term. Micro-credentials have several benefits including (1) skills broken down in several smaller chunks; (2) being delivered online which improves access; and (3) allowing teachers to learn skills before applying them in their classroom. It should be noted that the use of micro-credentials is still a growing area of professional development that will benefit from additional research to identify its effectiveness on the current teacher workforce.

This proposed change will add new section 4.1.1.6 which provides for a new path to obtaining the Certificate. Specifically, it would require an applicant to have earned a bachelor's degree from a Regionally Accredited college or university in any content area and complete three specific micro-credentials from the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) which are (1) curriculum compacting; (2) identification; and (3) social and emotional needs of gifted students. Each of the other pathways to earn the Certificate identified in the 1572 regulation require some sort of instruction as preparation for teaching gifted or talented students. The new 4.1.1.6 pathway would not require any preparation for teaching this particular group of students. On its website describing the micro-credentials, the NAGC specifically states that "[t]he micro-credentials are intended to serve as an introduction to

specific topics and are not intended to replace, nor are they equivalent to, a certificate, endorsement, or graduate level program.”

It is not apparent that Delaware intended micro-credentials to replace teacher preparation when it adopted micro credentialing for professional development. Michael Watson, the former chief academic officer and associate secretary for DDOE, previously indicated the purpose of micro credentialing to be a way to personalize professional learning for educators when engaging in professional development. Micro-credentialing cannot take the place of teacher preparation programs. By allowing this alternative route to obtaining this Certificate, Delaware will be setting its teachers of gifted and talented students up for failure. This will undoubtedly have a negative impact on these students.

We appreciate your consideration of our concerns. We look forward to the opportunity to discuss our misgivings and a more collaborative partnership with you on behalf of the students of Delaware.

Sincerely,

Ann C Fisher

Ann C. Fisher
Chairperson

ACF: kpc

CC: Shawn Brittingham, State Board of Education
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