

Nemr, Georgette

From: Christine_Newman@whps.org
Sent: Monday, April 26, 2010 12:27 PM
To: Nemr, Georgette
Cc: McQuillan, Mark; Pugliese, Nancy; Martinez, Marion; Feldlaufer, Harriet; Richards, Deborah; linetteb@cea.org
Subject: re: proposed certification changes-Teacher Leader
Importance: High
Sensitivity: Private

April 26, 2010

Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification:
 ATTN: Georgette Nemr
 P.O. Box 150471-Room 243
 Hartford, Connecticut, 06115-0471

State Board of Education:

I am writing in response to the proposed changes regarding a "Teacher Leader" Certificate, specifically Sec. 10-145d-906 through Sec. 10-145d-908.

I am currently the K-5 Math/Science Curriculum Specialist for West Hartford Public Schools. I have been in the Math position for the past 6 years and adopted the Science role 3 years ago. Prior to the K-5 Math Curriculum Specialist position, I was a consultant for Everyday Mathematics. I provided training and professional development for districts who were adopting the Everyday Mathematics program. I received extensive training from the University of Chicago and Everyday Mathematics in order to be able to provide adult learners with quality professional development.

I feel my work, resume, the volumes of professional reading I have done and the CEU's I have received over the past 6+ years speak for themselves regarding my qualifications to serve in my current position. West Hartford Public Schools has provided me with the tools necessary to be a successful K-5 Math/Science Curriculum Specialist. West Hartford has provided (and all curriculum specialists have taken) professional development from the Leadership and Learning Center (Lead and Learn) about Data Teams; Effective Teaching Strategies was taught by the Center for Performance Assessment. In addition, curriculum specialists have monthly meetings in which we study different educational topics. We are currently finishing our study of *Taking the Lead* by JoEllen Killion and Cindy Harrison. Earlier this year, we studied Douglas Reeves' *Leading Change in your School*. Last year, we studied James Popham's *Test Better, Teach Better* and *Classroom Instruction that Works* by Marzano, Pickering and Pollock. West Hartford Public Schools also provided the opportunity for me to take CREC's Priority Standards and Common Formative Assessments courses taught by Larry Ainsworth. This coursework was the basis for my work last year as I worked with other math curriculum specialists and teachers to determine West Hartford's Priority Standards for Mathematics. This year, I have read; *RTI & Math: The Classroom Connection* by Kemp, Eaton and Poole and *Accessible Mathematics* by Steve Leinwand in order to be as prepared as possible as we implement SRBI in all subject areas.

I have spent nearly half of my teaching career in the role of a "Teacher Leader". I enjoy the area of curriculum and instruction and providing colleagues with professional development in the areas of mathematics and science. I find it challenging, exciting and professionally fulfilling. In addition to providing curriculum and professional development, I am also responsible for the development and implementation of district math assessments in grades K-5. I work with teachers as they instruct students in the State Grade Level Expectations for Mathematics and Science and implement of our district math program. I work with students to diagnose their mathematical

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deficiencies and then work with the student and teacher in order to provide the student with the background knowledge and support needed to help the student advance their understanding of specific mathematics skills.

The proposed changes directly affect me and the work I do. I feel this wide sweeping change to certification will devastate and irreparably damage my career. Districts will lose the teacher leaders they have taken the time and care to develop. It is hard to not be professionally insulted by the lack of forethought on the State Board of Education and especially the Department of Certification's part crafting these requirements. From my perspective, there has been no time taken on the State Board of Education's part to involve current teacher leaders in this process. To ask us for our thoughts after the legislation is proposed is thinking backwards. We should have been contacted and involved *from the beginning*.

Specifically referring to Sec. 10-145d-906 through Sec. 10-145d-908; in order to obtain an initial educator certificate, build to a professional educator certificate and keep my current position, I would have to take coursework on the educational topics I have been studying for the last several years. Not only will this be taking a step backward for me professionally; on a personal level, it will be financially draining. In addition, I may actually need to take a math course! Again, I find this professionally insulting. Over the course of my career, I have done extensive work developing my own Mathematical Knowledge for Teaching through professional development which are in the form of CEUs. I regularly work with Mari Muri (who has been a mentor to me) and Bob Borello from PIMMS in order to continue to grow my own knowledge in the areas of mathematics and science. Work being done by Deborah Loewenberg Ball (University of Michigan) to develop a teacher's Mathematical Knowledge of Teaching is what I would be interested in learning about and working on.

I want to take *new* coursework and keep learning! I don't want to REDO the work I have already done, I want to use what I have already learned and learn more!

I feel very strongly that the State Board of Education should rescind the current proposed changes to the Teacher Leader certification.

Sincerely Submitted,

Christine Newman

Cc:

COMMISSIONER STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION: Mark K. McQuillan
EDUCATOR STANDARDS & CERTIFICATION: Bureau Chief Nancy Pugliese
TEACHING, LEARNING & INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP: Associate Comm Marion Martinez
TEACHING & LEARNING: Bureau Chief Harriet Feldlaufer
ACCOUNTABILITY & IMPROVEMENT: Bureau Chief Deb Richards
CEA

You are not here merely to make a living. You are here in order to enable the world to live more amply, with greater vision, with a finer spirit of hope and achievement. You are here to enrich the world, and you impoverish yourself if you forget the errand. Woodrow Wilson

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