



Nancy S. Grasmick
State Superintendent of Schools

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TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Nancy S. Grasmick *Nancy*

DATE: January 26, 2010

SUBJECT: COMAR 13A.12.02.24 (NEW)
American Sign Language (Prekindergarten-Grade 12)
APPROVAL

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is to request approval of a new regulation, COMAR 13A.12.02.24, American Sign Language (Prekindergarten- Grade 12). Since the adoption of the regulation that includes two credits of American Sign Language (ASL) or two credits of foreign language as one element of Maryland's graduation requirements, it becomes increasingly important to ensure that students in Maryland schools have teachers who are qualified to teach ASL.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

According to the American Sign Language Teachers Association (ASLTA), American Sign Language is one of the most widely used languages in the United States. More than forty states including Maryland recognize ASL as a language. ASL is used primarily by Deaf and Hard of Hearing Americans and Canadians but is also used by hearing relatives of the Deaf. ASL is a visual language with its own grammatical rules and semantics.

Information about this potential certification area has been presented at numerous meetings of the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board (PSTEB) over the past two years. At the February 5, 2009 PSTEB meeting, staff presented a synthesis of the discussion from the American Sign Language Work Group regarding potential elements to be considered when developing requirements for certification in ASL, one of the original recommendations from this work group. Two pathways were suggested:

Pathway 1

- Minimum degree requirements with a major in ASL, or
- Completing a minimum of thirty credits of content course work in ASL;
- Presenting qualifying scores on the appropriate teacher certification tests (both basic skills and content assessment);
- Completing the requisite professional education course work; and
- Presenting the requisite satisfactory teaching experience in ASL.

Pathway 2

- Minimum degree requirements;
- Presenting a current certificate at an appropriate level issued by a Department-recognized ASL provider; and
- Completing the requisite professional education course work.

The topic of a potential certification in ASL was presented to the Directors of Human Resources at their January 22, 2009 and May 13, 2009 meetings. The group was in general agreement with the proposed certification.

At the August 6, 2009 meeting of the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board (PSTEB), staff presented the proposed regulation which incorporated suggestions from previous meetings; at its September 3, 2009 meeting, the PSTEB voted to publish the proposed regulation. A copy of the proposed regulation, as published in the Maryland Register on November, 20, 2009, is attached.

SUMMARY:

American Sign Language (ASL), one of the most widely used languages in the United States, is primarily used by Deaf and Hard of Hearing Americans but is also used by hearing relatives of the Deaf. More than forty states, including Maryland, officially recognize ASL as a language. This proposed regulation will ensure that teachers possess the requisite skills and knowledge to teach American Sign Language and the culture of the American Deaf community. A copy of the proposed regulation, as published in the Maryland Register on November, 20, 2009, is attached.

ACTION:

I am requesting approval of COMAR 13A.12.02.24, American Sign Language.

NSG: jhe

Attachment

demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the relationship between the products, symbols, beliefs, and values of the target culture.

(3) *Connections:* Students reinforce and further knowledge of other content areas through a language other than English. Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are available only through a language and its cultures.

(4) *Comparisons:* Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and English. Students demonstrate an understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

(5) *Communities:* Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting. Students use the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

C. *Curriculum Documents. Consistent with Education Article, §4-111, Annotated Code of Maryland, each local school system shall provide world languages curriculum documents for the secondary schools under its jurisdiction that:*

(1) *Include the content standards set forth in §B of this regulation; and*

(2) *Are aligned with the State curriculum, as developed by the Maryland State Department of Education in collaboration with local school systems.*

D. *Student Participation. Each student shall have the opportunity to participate in the world languages program required by this chapter.*

.02 Certification Procedures.

By September 1, 2011, and each 5 years after that, each local superintendent of schools shall have certified to the State Superintendent of Schools that the instructional programming within grades 6 — 12 meets, at a minimum, the requirements set forth in Regulation .01 of this chapter. This certification shall describe how the regulations are being met at each learning level in accordance with reporting standards developed by the Department of Education.

NANCY S. GRASMICK
State Superintendent of Schools

Subtitle 12 CERTIFICATION

13A.12.02 Teachers

Authority: Education Article, §§2-205, 2-303(g), and 6-701 — 6-705,
Annotated Code of Maryland

Notice of Proposed Action

[09-368-P]

The Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board proposes to adopt new Regulation .24 under **COMAR 13A.12.02 Teachers**. This action was considered at the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board meeting on February 25, 2009.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this action is to ensure that students in Maryland schools have teachers who are qualified to teach American Sign Language (ASL) since the adoption of the regulation that includes two credits of ASL or two credits of foreign language as one element of Maryland's graduation requirement.

Comparison to Federal Standards

There is no corresponding federal standard to this proposed action.

Estimate of Economic Impact

The proposed action has no economic impact.

Economic Impact on Small Businesses

The proposed action has minimal or no economic impact on small businesses.

Impact on Individuals with Disabilities

The proposed action has no impact on individuals with disabilities.

Opportunity for Public Comment

Comments may be sent to Jean E. Satterfield, Assistant State Superintendent, Certification and Accreditation, Maryland State Department of Education, 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201, or call 410-767-0385, or email to jsatterfield@msde.state.md.us, or fax to 410-333-2226. Comments will be accepted through December 21, 2009. A public hearing has not been scheduled.

Open Meeting

Final action on the proposal will be considered by the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board during a public meeting to be held on February 4, 2010, at 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201.

.24 American Sign Language (Prekindergarten — Grade 12).

A. *To receive certification in American Sign Language (prekindergarten — grade 12), the applicant shall meet one of the following options:*

(1) Option I:

(a) Earn a bachelor's or higher degree from an institution of higher education (IHE) with a major in American Sign Language; or

(b) Complete a minimum of 30 semester hours of content coursework in American Sign Language taken at an IHE and meet:

(i) The professional education coursework required in Regulation .06A(2) of this chapter; and

(ii) The experience requirement in Regulation .06A(3) of this chapter; or

(2) Option II:

(a) Earn a bachelor's degree or higher from an IHE;

(b) Present a valid professional certificate issued by the American Sign Language Teachers Association or another Department-approved national or regional organization; and

(c) Meet the professional education coursework required in Regulation .06A(2) of this chapter.

B. *For the content coursework required in §A(1)(b) of this regulation:*

(1) A minimum of 50 percent shall be taken at the same institution; and

(2) A minimum of 12 semester hours shall be upper division coursework.

NANCY S. GRASMICK
State Superintendent of Schools