

**Minutes of the Early Childhood Education Licensure Task Force
Commission on Professional Standards in Education
July 13, 2010**

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The Elementary Education Task Force met via conference video in Carson City and Las Vegas on July 13, 2010 beginning at 10:20 AM with Gloria Dopf facilitating the meeting on behalf of Chair Wendy Zastawniak.

Members of the task force present in Carson City: Eva Essa, Anna Severens, Anna Savala; and in Las Vegas Andre Yates.

Staff present in Carson City: Gloria Dopf, Christina Harper, Katherine Rohrer and in Las Vegas: Jeanette Calkins.

The following individuals were present as public in Carson City: Bonnie Castiglione; and in Las Vegas: Marilyn Grish.

Ms. Dopf, Deputy Superintendent, stated that she was asked by Commission President Owens to facilitate the meeting as Chair Zastawniak was unable to make the meeting.

2. Review Nevada Administrative Code 391.088 – Qualifications for Teaching Pupils from Birth Through Kindergarten and NAC 391.089 – Qualifications for Teaching Pupils from Birth Through Second Grade; Discuss Possible Amendments or New Sections to NAC 391

Ms. Dopf informed the Task Force of the Open Meeting Law and they must follow the Open Meeting Law as a task force of the Commission on Professional Standards in Education.

Ms. Dopf stated that the Task Force is constructed by the Commission on Professional Standards in Education to bring forth a recommendation to the Commission regarding an amendment in the early childhood licensing structure. An action by this Task Force will constitute a recommendation to the Professional Standards Commission. It will then be the decision of the Commission if they want to adopt the recommendation, conceptually; and then if the recommendation is adopted, they must proceed through the process for amending regulations.

Ms. Dopf stated that this Task Force was formed, by the Commission, at the request of Dr. Nancy Sileo and Andre Yates for possible amendments to NAC 391 to consolidate the Early Childhood Education License for Birth through Kindergarten and Birth through Second Grade.

An e-mail from Dr. Sileo stated that having two licenses is causing considerable confusion for those applying for teacher licenses in Early Childhood Education in Nevada, both for graduates of in-state programs and from those coming from out-of-state. In addition, it is also the understanding that school districts can't hire applicants who hold the birth through Kindergarten license, for 1st and 2nd grade positions, even if the applicant qualifies for and should have applied for the birth through second grade license unless the applicant applies for a second license. The birth through second grade license is inclusive of the birth through Kindergarten license.

Dr. Essa provided the history of why the two licenses in early childhood were created. Dr. Essa stated that these licenses were established at a time when there were changes occurring in education. The Early Childhood Special Education License had preceded about 10-15 years

before and was working well; the thought was that perhaps there was a need for an early childhood license separate from the K-12 licenses and in part, due to the fact that there were pre-kindergarten programs in the public schools that were beginning to be funded. Dr. Essa stated that the main reason for the two licenses was the concern about the preparation that was needed when working with a two-month old, three year old, or a second grader. Also at that time, in Nevada, both UNR and UNLV were developing programs that were specific for early childhood education. The concern was that individuals might apply who had a great early childhood pre-kindergarten experience, but no experience or preparation for the elementary years and therefore would be eligible to teach first and second grade, but would not have the experience or preparation in teaching in the first/second grade.

Ms. Dopf added the relationship to the early childhood special education and the category of the birth through second grade still being discussed as early childhood. Special education youngsters who are developmentally delayed may be diagnosed in a non-categorical process up through the age of seven (second grade). The second grade factor was a vestige of how early childhood special education is defined. Since this was the beginning program, there was a need to transition for some of these individuals who would be eligible for a special education license in early childhood education as well as general education early childhood license. However, the early childhood general education program is defined through kindergarten and the true early childhood license generated intent to have individuals trained specific through the birth through kindergarten process.

Dr. Essa added that within the early childhood community, it is generally considered birth through age eight, and so most of the professional literature and the organization cover that broad spectrum.

Mr. Yates stated his concern is with the issuance of the license and the problem that Clark County School District is having is that individuals cannot transfer to different grade levels within early childhood education, as the individual completes student teaching at the kindergarten level and then for the issuance of the license, they can only qualify for the birth through kindergarten license. This interferes with the individual's ability to change grade levels and it is difficult for the school district to hire an individual with one specific license.

Ms. Severens stated that a majority of states do still have two separate licenses, but sees the value in consolidating into one license as long as ensuring that the requirements in the license help bridge the gap in teaching younger and older children; along with the growing national momentum with supporting the 0-8 continuum this proposal would also support this growing incentive. Ms. Severens offered to perform additional research with colleagues from across the country in obtaining feedback on the two separate licenses.

Dr. Essa questioned if an analysis of the two licenses has been done. Mr. Dopf responded that the Task Force could request Staff to perform this type of analysis.

Dr. Essa stated that students at UNR, whose coursework would qualify them for the birth through second grade license, sometimes do their student teaching at the kindergarten level.

Ms. Dopf stated that her expectation is that the Task Force reviews the preparation of birth through second, that particular attention on section (f), which exists in 391.089 and not in 391.088 to ensure that the exposure is with different grade levels.

Ms. Dopf summarized that there is an appetite to pursue additional information and cross-reference with regards to NAC 391.088 and 391.089 and schedule another meeting to deliberate on specific recommendations to bring forth to the Commission.

Upon asking for direction of the Task Force, Task Force Member Yates moved to discontinue the issuance of NAC 391.088 – Early Childhood Education Birth through Kindergarten License and make NAC 391.089 the Early Childhood Education License Birth through Second Grade License, seconded by Task Force Member Essa. It was discussed that UNR and UNLV currently provide the appropriate coursework required within NAC 391.089. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Savala expressed concern regarding 391.088 section (4) which is missing from 391.089 and questioned if 391.089 need to be modified to include section (4) of 391.088.

Following discussion regarding the inclusion of section 4 of 391.088 into 391.089, Task Force Member Yates moved for staff to develop a point by point cross-walk between 391.088 and 391.089 for review at the next Task Force meeting, seconded by Task Force Member Severens. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Schedule Next Meeting Date – if necessary

The Task Force requested that Chair Zastawniak and Mrs. Harper schedule a meeting in either late August or the middle of September. The Task Force members will be informed of the next meeting date as soon as it is scheduled.

4. Public Comments

There were no comments from the public.

5. Public Task Force Members Comments

There were no additional comments from Task Force Members.

Ms. Dopf stated that she will work with Dr. Jerry Barbee, Director of Teacher Licensure, to designate a staff member to perform the cross-walk between NAC 391.088 and 391.089.

6. Adjournment

Ms. Dopf adjourned the meeting at 11:10 A.M.