



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.  
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** March 25, 2021

**TO:** Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents  
Public School Academy Directors

**FROM:** William Pearson, Ed.D., Interim Deputy Superintendent *WAP*  
Division of Educator, Student, and School Supports

**SUBJECT:** Office of Auditor General Findings Related to Educator Evaluation,  
Mentoring, Induction and Professional Learning

The Office of the Auditor General (OAG) conducted a performance audit of the work supported by the Michigan Department of Education's Office of Educator Excellence (OEE), for the period of 2015-2018. Audits by the auditor general are conducted in accordance with [Article IV, Section 53 of the Michigan Constitution](#).

This memo summarizes:

1. **OAG Audit Objectives** – legal requirements identified by the OAG that will be reviewed during the audit and must be found in compliance with the law.
2. **OAG Findings** – identified areas where districts were unable to provide evidence that legal requirements were met.
3. **OAG Required Actions** – actions the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) must take in order to ensure compliance with legal requirements.
4. **MDE's Response Plan** – an explanation of what actions will occur to ensure districts are meeting the legal requirements.
5. **Local Education Agency (LEA) Supports** – the materials, both current and future, that will assist LEAs with documenting compliance with legal requirements.

Local education agencies, both traditional public school districts and public school academies (PSAs), will need to put forward additional effort to implement legal requirements fully and maintain documentation of implementation. In some cases, the required actions cannot be fulfilled without new data reporting by LEAs and increased audits of LEAs by MDE.

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### **OAG Audit Objective 1**

Assess the effectiveness of OEE's efforts to ensure that certificates, licenses, authorizations, and permits are only issued to educators who comply with state requirements.

### **Finding 1**

Nearly 40% of sampled educators could not provide documentation to support [Education Related Professional Learning](#) (ERPL) hours used for certificate renewal.

### **OAG Required Action 1**

OEE must implement a process to verify that educators have met the state's ERPL requirements for certificate and license renewal.

### **MDE's Response Plan**

- This finding has been partially addressed by the transition to districts entering district provided professional development (DPPD) as state continuing education clock hours (SCECHs), which eliminated the necessity for individual educators to maintain documentation of DPPD. We recognize this conversion has been challenging for some districts, especially during a pandemic. MDE expects that a resulting process will be less cumbersome for districts and will fulfill all requirements.
- New, beginning in fall 2021, MDE will begin auditing districts and state continuing education clock hour providers to ensure all DPPD and SCECHs used for certificate renewal can be verified.
- New, beginning January 2023, all certificate renewal applications will require submission of transcripts documenting successful completion of any college/university credits submitted for certificate renewal.

### **Audit Objective 2**

Assess the sufficiency of OEE's oversight of required DPPD and mentoring for teachers.

### **Finding 2**

Less than half of sampled LEAs could provide documentation that all teachers were provided professional development as required by law, and many could not demonstrate mentors were assigned to new teachers and long-term substitute teachers.

### **OAG Required Action 2**

OEE must put in place a process to help ensure that LEAs consistently provide teachers with required professional development and mentoring.

### **MDE's Response Plan**

MDE strongly believes that quality mentoring and induction programs are an integral part of teacher growth, retention, and student success. LEAs should clearly define the expectations for mentor and induction programs, ensure every new teacher, and teacher on a full-year permit, is assigned a mentor and provided ongoing support for mentors and mentees. These expectations should be maintained and reviewed by the LEA.

- New, beginning July 2021, long-term substitute permit applications will require entry of a specific mentor, rather than an assurance statement indicating a mentor has been assigned.
- New, beginning in fall 2021, MDE anticipates an additional field in the registry of educational personnel requiring entry of a specific mentor for each new teacher identified by the district.
- New, beginning in fall 2021, MDE will begin auditing districts for documentation that the identified mentor provided mentoring and induction.
- New, beginning in fall 2021, MDE will begin auditing districts for documentation that the district provided professional development required under [MCL 380.1526](#) and [1527](#) and was offered to all educators.

### **Audit Objective 3**

Assess the sufficiency of OEE's oversight of required evaluations for teachers and school administrators.

### **Finding 3**

OEE did not provide sufficient oversight to ensure the required evaluations for teachers and school administrators.

### **OAG Required Action 3**

OEE needs to implement a process to ensure that school districts have performance evaluation systems in place for teachers and school administrators that meet requirements.

### **MDE's Response Plan**

Beginning in fall 2021, MDE will audit districts for documentation ensuring consistent implementation of educator evaluation under [MCL 380.1249](#).

### **LEA Supports**

Please visit the [Educator Evaluation and Professional Learning Audit Resources Webpage](#) for audit documentation checklists and other resources designed to support districts through these new processes.

Please direct questions to: [MDE-EducatorHelp@Michigan.gov](mailto:MDE-EducatorHelp@Michigan.gov).

cc: Michigan Education Alliance  
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Directors