67.1-02-04-09. Community expert letters of approval for teacher shortages.

Community expert letter of approval requests will be considered by the education standards and practices board at their meetings when a school district requests permission to hire an individual who is not a licensed educator, but has a specific area of expertise that is related to the teaching assignment and has work experience demonstrating the necessary communication skills for the teaching assignment.

The community expert letters of approval will not be considered for any elementary education core subjects including mathematics, English Language Arts, science, and social studies. The community expert letters of approval will be considered for any elementary education non-core areas including, but not limited to health and physical education.

In accordance with state law, the community expert letters of approval will be considered for any middle school or high school individual who is not a licensed educator, but has a specific area of expertise that is related to the teaching assignment.

Community expert letters of approval will be issued under the following conditions:

1. The school district shall apply in writing to the education standards and practices board for approval to hire a non-licensed community expert. This request must be approved by the education standards and practices board prior to the individual's beginning to teach.

2. The required application for permission to hire a non-licensed community expert will include:
    a. A resume of the individual the district proposes to hire as a non-licensed community expert.
    b. All official post-secondary transcripts of the applicant;
    c. Fingerprint background check as states in subsection 9 of section 67.1-02-02-02;
    d. Other recommendations that attest to the individual's expertise and/or ability to teach others;
    e. A detailed explanation of the professional duties the non-licensed community expert is proposed to assume, including a description of the position;
    f. A detailed description of the school's efforts to obtain a fully licensed educator for the position, include:
        i. What reasonable efforts have been made to assign an existing licensed educator to fill the position;
        ii. The dates you advertised and where the advertisement appeared.
        iii. Number of applications received;
        iv. Number of licensed educators that applied for the position.

    g. A letter of explanation, signed by the school's hiring authority, of why the district believes this individual to be qualified to fill this position.
    h. A letter of explanation of the support, staff development, mentoring/coaching, and/or supervision to be provided to assist the non-licensed community expert's successful fulfillment of the proposed professional duties.
3. In approving or disapproving the application for each community expert, the education standards and practices board shall consider:
    a. The qualifications for the community person whom the district proposes to hire;
    a. The reasons for the need for a variance from the educator licensure requirements;
    b. The district's efforts to obtain licensed educators, who are qualified for particular course or subject area;
    c. The amount of teaching time for which the community expert would be hired;
    d. The extent to which the district is utilizing other non-licensed community experts under this section;
    e. The nature of the community expert's proposed teaching responsibility; and
    f. The proposed level of compensation of the community expert as compared to the salary schedule compensation for a first year teacher.
4. The fee for the community expert letter of approval is one hundred dollars.
5. The community expert letter of approval is valid for one school year. No community expert is eligible for the pension plan.
6. These community expert rules sunsets at the conclusion of the 2016 school year.
7. Every community expert must meet regularly with a mentor employed by the school district.
8. At the conclusion of the 2016 school year, ESPB shall prepare a written report on the results of the program and shall include comments and recommendations from the ND Council of Education Leaders, the ND School Board Association, and North Dakota United.