

April 13, 2008

Comments by Michigan Protection and Advocacy Service, Inc. (MPAS) on Professional Standards for Michigan Teachers and Related Proficiencies

Michigan Protection and Advocacy Service, Inc. (MPAS) is Michigan's protection and advocacy program for persons with disabilities in the Great Lakes State. MPAS strongly supports the proposed Professional Standards for Michigan Teachers and Related Proficiencies, especially the following areas of focus:

- Linkages to the Board's Universal Education vision (1.j, 3.a);
- Use of data to measure student strengths and success (2.b, 2.c, 2.f, 2.g);
- Preparation in differential instruction serving all children as diverse learners and use of accommodations for students with disabilities (2.e, 2.j, 3.e);
- Creation of inclusive classrooms with high expectations for all (4.b, 4.c);
- Use of "respectful" discipline including positive behavior support (4.d);
- Collaborative teaching as best practice in continuing education (4.g);
- Development of positive relationships with parents (5.f, 5.g); and,
- Connection with community resources to support student learning (6.d).

Some suggestions for improvement are:

- Include parents in the list of stakeholders solicited for comment and feedback.
- Amend the profile of skills for Section 4.d to relate specifically to current best practices and school-wide practices.
- Amend the standard and profile of skills for Section 4.e to include adherence to other ethical standards not contained in law (e.g. Board policies).
- Amend the profile of skills for Section 4.g to apply best practices in professional development (e.g. learning communities) in current MDE policy.
- Amend the profile of skills for Sections 5.f and 5.g to include coordination with school-wide parent involvement plans (as required by federal and state law) and use of best practices (such as PTA standards for parent involvement).
- Amend the profile of skills for Section 6.d to conform to the Board's findings on connections between school and community.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these standards. Please contact Mark McWilliams in our Lansing office, (800) 288-5923, for more information.