
TESTIMONY

Testimony To: House Committee on Education
Respectfully Submitted by: Daniel M. French, Ed.D., Secretary of Education
Subject: **Impact of Home Study Proposal on AOE Staffing**
Date: January 26, 2023

Background:

We are proposing revisions to our Home Study policy to simplify the administration of that policy. The current policy is very complex relative to the policy of other northern New England states.

Historically, the agency has struggled with having adequate capacity to administer Home Study. Like many of our education policies, we do not think the policy was designed with a consideration of the resources necessary for its administration. This is not a new concept. Under Commissioner Vilaseca, a proposal was brought forth to greatly simplify this policy by making it a responsibility of local school districts.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting increase in Home Study more clearly exposed our resource challenges relative to the complexity of this policy. In short, our resource capacity was overwhelmed because the policy was too cumbersome to administer.

The interest in Home Study seems to have levelled off, so we think this would be a good time to seek a simplification of this policy.

Current Staffing Structure and Proposed Changes

The current policy is staffed through 2.1 FTEs:

- Home Study Consultant (1 FTE)
- Education Programs Manager (.3 FTE)
- Program Technician (.3 FTE)
- Education Consultant II (.3 FTE)
- Summer Temp (.2 FTE)

If the policy is simplified as proposed, we estimate we could staff Home Study with 1.4 FTEs. We would not need the summer temp resource (.2 FTE) or the portion of the Program Technician resource (.3 FTE) to support this program. We would also likely be able to reduce the involvement of the Education Consultant II position from a .3 FTE to a .1 FTE. This new capacity would be assigned to other responsibilities within the Federal Education Programs division.

