

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jeanette White, Chair, Senate Government Operations Committee
FROM: Joel D. Cook, Executive Director, Vermont-NEA
DATE: April 25, 2016
SUBJECT: Joint licensees of Secretary of Education and Office of Professional Regulation

A modest proposal, limited to facilitating the licensing process for individuals needing both a Title 16 license and a Title 26 license. The proposal itself appears at “D” towards the bottom of this page.

A. There are several legitimate interests involved in the debate over the OPR-AOE licensing issue. They cannot be addressed to everyone’s satisfaction. They are, at least:

- Those who believe OPR should be the sole licenser of “clinical” professionals, extending them the right to be considered teachers for school employment, retirement and labor purposes
- Those who believe the Standards Board licensing standards are unnecessarily cumbersome
- Those who believe the Standards Board standards are fine as is
- Those who just want their licensing to be simple...and inexpensive
- Those who believe the teaching profession is and ought to be self-regulating

B. Logistics also get in the way:

- Licensees do have to interact with the state
- People are licensed and, then, relicensed
- There are cycles and fees involved, as well as qualifications

C. Proposal:

1. For an applicant seeking one license initially, but who may later seek the other, leave licensing entirely as is
2. For an applicant seeking dual licenses or dual license renewals, provide a single point of contact with the state:
 - If the applicant approaches the AOE first, AOE contacts OPR
 - If the applicant approaches OPR first, OPR contacts AOE
 - That initial contact triggers a process that results in both licenses being issued together
 - The resulting fee should be more than for one but less than for two separate licenses
 - How that is accomplished may be left to the agencies to determine jointly

D. How this might read in law – 2 simple additions to current law, which, by operation of current law, should result in moderation of what would otherwise be two full and separate fees.

16 V.S.A. §1696. Licensing

(d) The Secretary and the Office of Professional Regulation, established pursuant to section 122 of title 3, shall jointly create a process for facilitating the issuance of professional licenses from both offices to individuals seeking them. [Then relabel current (d)-(f) as (e)-(g).]

3 V.S.A. §123. Duties of Office *(of Professional Regulation)*

(h) The Office of Professional Regulation and the Secretary of Education shall jointly create a process for facilitating the issuance of professional licenses from both offices to individuals seeking them.