



Outcome-Based Education for Teachers

A major overhaul in teacher licensing that affects every public and private teacher, and every classroom in Minnesota is now complete! Many teachers are not even aware that their livelihoods have been radically redefined by 250 pages of new rules that force implementation of the federally-directed education reform sweeping the Nation. Even the Minnesota State Board of Teaching justified the overhaul by acknowledging a ***"nationwide effort to redefine and restructure the mission of schooling and the nature of teaching."*** (1)

Just for starters, the new rules mandate that *"teachers must understand Minnesota's Graduation Standards and how to implement them."*(2) In other words, teachers will be denied license unless they embrace the Profile of Learning.

As a member of the Board of Directors for Southwest Christian High School in Eden Prairie, and a concerned parent, I have studied the new education system extensively and travel the state warning parents and educators that implementation of the Profile is only *the tip of the iceberg*. The Profile, as well as the new licensing rules, is part of the federal "coup de tat" of education under Goals 2000 and the federal School-to-Work (STW) Opportunities Act. The new licensing rules require teachers to embrace a specific state-defined, politically-correct, world view. If allowed to stand, *academic freedom* will be part of a bygone era for Minnesota parents and teachers!

The new teacher licensing rules reflect STW by requiring teachers to implement all of its elements, including, *"work-based learning,"* defined as, *"learning through paid and unpaid...experiences where the work-site is the educational setting [during the school day]."*(3) Even teachers of *"preadolescent" children must "understand key legislation germane to school-to-work transition programming."* (4) State documentation clearly shows how STW shifts the focus of education away from core academic knowledge to "work-based competencies." (5) The emphasis is on meeting local business labor requirements rather than laying a solid educational foundation.

More disturbing, however, is the fact that the new rules define a specific "world view" ideology. For example, the new rule embraces relativism, rather than absolute truth. According to the new rules, teachers *"must understand that knowledge is not a fixed body of facts, but is complex and ever developing."*(6) Even in mathematics, teachers *"must recognize that there are multiple mathematical world views and how the teacher's own view is similar or different from...students."*(7) As for history, *"A teacher of social studies must understand that historical knowledge and the concept of time are socially influenced constructions..."*(8)

The new rules demand allegiance to big government rather than limited self-government: Teachers must *"understand the historical development of power, authority, and governance and their evolving functions... and how its powers are acquired, used, and justified."*(9) But you cannot find any such requirement that teachers understand how government power is limited. <p>

The new rules demand respect for socialist economics rather than free-market enterprise: Teachers must *"understand the relationship of production, distribution, and consumption in establishing socially desirable outcomes for resolving public issues."*(10) Who gets to define "socially desirable outcomes?" Is "resolving public issues" really the purpose of the marketplace?

The new rules require teachers to *"understand the cultural content, world view, and concepts [of] Indian Tribal Government" and the "vital role of the American Indian value system...philosophy...and tribal sovereignty."*(11) Yet, the new rules make no such requirement to understand America's founding principles, nor the vital role, value system or philosophy of America's founders.

The new rules also force a change in curriculum at our teacher colleges to insure adherence to the new system. The DCFL denies they are dictating curriculum, yet all the evidence points in the opposite direction. Even the Administrative Law Judge, whose opinion approved the new licensure rules, admitted, *"The [State] Board must provide guidance to institutions...so these institutions can appropriately design and tailor their curricula."*<12)

The Judge assures us this will not affect private schools since, "*private schools are not legally obligated to hire licensed teachers.*"(13) This is like saying your driver's license is voluntary since you are not legally obligated to drive! Under the old system, teachers enjoyed the freedom to teach (drive) in either private or state schools (roads). Furthermore, private schools typically prefer "licensed" teachers because they too want professional teachers. The new rules will now force us all to choose between our convictions and our freedom.

The DCFL denies the rules will affect currently licensed teachers, yet their own prepared statement regarding licensure states: "*This new system of teacher licensure will focus on standards and performance-based assessments as the criteria for granting **and renewing licenses.***"(14)

The Board of teaching acknowledged in their report that the proposed rules are "*Outcome-based*" Education (OBE) for teachers, just as the Profile of Learning is OBE for children.(15) Rather than setting high standards, OBE focuses on *minimum competencies* that "ALL MUST DEMONSTRATE." When the *required outcomes* include a specific world-view of values, beliefs, and attitudes, the state usurps freedom by dictating which world view everyone *must demonstrate*. If that isn't a clear violation of the first Amendment; I don't know what else could be!

By Michael J. Chapman

Endnotes

1. State of Minnesota, State Board of Teaching; Statement of Need and Reasonableness (SONAR) In the Matter of the Proposed Permanent Rules Relating to Teacher Licensing. Page 1, Para. 1.
2. Proposed Rules for teacher licensure, p. 8 Sec. 8710.2000, subd. 5, A.; See also: p. 13, Subp. 9., A.
3. Proposed Rules for teacher licensing, p. 172., Part 8710.4825, Subpart 1.
4. Ibid., p. 171, Part 8710.4800, Par. K.(9).
5. See, for example: "Making Connections" p.30, item 1 under, "School-Based Components: Restructure schools around career majors" and item 3: "Establish career paths - K16 system." Also: Mission Statement, front title page: "...tied to the needs of...marketplace." Also see: "Work-based Learning Guide", p. 107 under "Core Competencies: [defined] Those tasks that are fundamental for occupational career cluster." Also p. 94, "Foundational Skills and Workplace Competencies" listed from SCANS (Secretaries Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills) source.
6. Proposed Rules for teacher licensure, p. 5, Sec. 8710.2000, Subp. 2. D.
7. Ibid., p. 111, Sec. 8710.4600, Subp. H.(2).
8. Ibid., p. 163, Sec. 8710.4800, Subp. B.(1).
9. Ibid., p. 166-167, Sec 8710.4800, Subp. F. - F.(2).
10. Ibid., p. 168, Sec. 8710.4800, Subp. G.(10). See also "human resource" at G.(1).
11. Ibid., p. 7, Sec. 8710.2000, Subp. 4.G; Also, p. 165, D.(4).
12. Report of the Chief Administrative Law Judge; In the Matter of the Proposed Permanent Rules Governing Teacher Licensing; March 1999; p. 13, Par. 34.
13. Ibid., p. 47, par. 146.
14. SONAR, p. 2; par. 4. Last sentence.
15. See SONAR, page 3, Sec. III, item 1: "The proposed rules are 'outcome-based [results oriented]'specifically in their requiring competence as a condition of licensure. Required competencies have been established for all teachers...