

## EXECUTIVE DIGEST

### OFFICE OF TEACHER PREPARATION AND CERTIFICATION SERVICES

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

This report contains the results of our performance audit of the Office of Teacher Preparation and Certification Services, Bureau of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education, for the period October 1, 1991 through December 31, 1994.

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#### **AUDIT PURPOSE**

This performance audit was conducted as part of the constitutional responsibility of the Office of the Auditor General. Performance audits are conducted on a priority basis related to the potential for improving effectiveness and efficiency.

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#### **BACKGROUND**

The Office of Teacher Preparation and Certification Services administers teacher certification, administrator certification, and school psychologist certification (*Michigan Administrative Code R 390.1101 - 390.1216, R 380.101 - 380.134, and R 380.201 - 380.210*). The office's major responsibilities include issuing provisional and professional teaching certificates, vocational authorizations, teaching permits, school administrator certificates, and school psychologist certificates; reviewing teacher education programs of Michigan colleges and

universities; and ensuring that teacher personnel at Michigan school districts are properly certified and appropriately assigned.

Applicants for original, renewal, and duplicate certificates and special permits are required to pay an application fee. There are 29 different fees that range from \$10 for a duplicate certificate application to \$175 for an out-of-State original teaching certificate application. Fees are collected by and processed through a designated bank.

Revenue from certification and special permit fees totaled \$1,950,771 and office expenditures totaled \$1,946,900 for fiscal year 1993-1994. As of December 31, 1994, the office had 30 employees.

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**AUDIT  
OBJECTIVES  
AND  
CONCLUSIONS**

**Audit Objective:** To assess the effectiveness of the office in providing for proper, accurate, and timely certifications.

**Conclusion:** Our assessment disclosed that the office's certification process is effective. However, the office could improve its certification process by revising procedures pertaining to certificate application reviews, safeguarding of blank teacher certificates, issuance of special permits, and monitoring of continuing education programs (Findings 1 through 4).

**Audit Objective:** To assess the effectiveness of the office's internal controls over the fee collection process to ensure that all fees are collected and accounted for.

**Conclusion:** Our assessment of internal controls over the fee collection process did not disclose any material weaknesses.

However, we noted reportable conditions pertaining to certificate fee reconciliations and supporting documentation for examination fees (Findings 5 and 6).

**Audit Objective:** To assess the office's compliance with applicable laws and regulations relating to teacher preparation and certification.

**Conclusion:** Our assessment of the office's compliance with applicable laws and regulations did not disclose any material weaknesses. However, we noted a reportable condition pertaining to the certification verification of the school districts' professional employees (Finding 7).

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**AUDIT SCOPE  
AND  
METHODOLOGY**

Our audit scope was to examine the program and other records of the Office of Teacher Preparation and Certification Services for the period October 1, 1991 through December 31, 1994. Our audit was conducted in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States and, accordingly, included such tests of the records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

To accomplish our objectives, we reviewed internal controls over the issuance of teacher, school administrator, and school psychologist certificates. We also reviewed selected certifications. In addition, we reviewed internal controls for the fee collection process and reconciled fee revenue with certificates and special permits issued.

We reviewed legislation, administrative rules, and State Board of Education policies applicable to teacher preparation and certification. Also, we examined files for selected teacher preparation program approvals. In addition, we compared the teachers reported as employed by school districts with the teacher certification file to determine certification.

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**AGENCY  
RESPONSES  
AND PRIOR AUDIT  
FOLLOW-UP**

Our audit report includes 7 findings and 13 corresponding recommendations. The department's preliminary response indicates that it agreed with all 13 recommendations and that it has complied or will comply with the recommendations during the 1995-96 school year.

The department complied with 2 prior audit recommendations included within the scope of our current audit. We repeated 4 prior audit recommendations in this report.