Office of
The Governor

No. 52 FY 19/20
DATE May 12, 2020

**AN ORDER REGARDING CERTAIN EDUCATION MATTERS**

**WHEREAS,** I proclaimed a state of emergency on March 15, 2020 and a renewed state of emergency on April 14, 2020 to authorize the use of emergency powers in order to expand and expedite the State's response to the serious health and safety risks of the highly contagious COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS**, Maine faces an ongoing shortage of qualified educators and school employee workforce, and teacher certification and other school staff certification processes have been disrupted during the state of emergency, as some individuals complying with state orders to stay at home in order to slow the spread of COVID-19 have been unable to complete professional development activities, preservice activities, access credentialing assessments, or access fingerprinting services for background checks ; and

**WHEREAS,** it is necessary to promote the safe delivery of essential food and supplies to school-aged children and their families via school buses; to require motorists to stop while school aged children and their families are approaching the bus to receive said goods; and to protect against injury and death of pedestrians, including children, as well as bus drivers and other motorists; and

**WHEREAS**, a governor's emergency powers expressly include the authority to adjust time frames and certain deadlines imposed by law when necessary to mitigate an effect of the emergency pursuant to 37-B M.R.S. §742(1)(C)(13)(a); modify or suspend the requirements for professional or occupational licensing or registration if strict compliance hinders coping with the emergency pursuant to 37-B M.R.S. §742(1)(C)(13)(c); and suspend the enforcement of statutes or agency rules inconsistent with managing the emergency pursuant to 37-B M.R.S. §742(1)(C)(1) and §834;

**NOW, THEREFORE,** I, Janet T. Mills, Governor of the State of Maine, pursuant to 37-B M.R.S. Ch. 13, including but not limited to the provisions referenced above, do hereby Order as follows:

## I. ORDERS

A. The requirements for credentialing set forth in 20-A M.R.S. Chapters 221, 502, and 502-A, as well as Department of Education Regulation Chapter 13 and State Board of Education Regulation Chapter 115, are modified or suspended, and related timelines are adjusted, as follows:

1. Notwithstanding renewal action by the applicant, certification expiration dates of February 1, 2020 through July 1, 2020 are adjusted to February 1, 2021 through July 1, 2021. The expiration date of such a renewed certificate will be four years from the date of renewal issuance.

2. For applications submitted during this period of state of emergency, enforcement of the requirement for fingerprinting is suspended until 30 days following the end of the state of emergency.

3. For applications submitted during the of state of emergency, enforcement of the requirement for Praxis testing is suspended.

4. A conditional certificate that because of incomplete coursework is due to expire on July 1, 2020 is extended to July 1, 2021.

B. The Department of Public Safety is authorized during this period of emergency to suspend enforcement of 29-A M.R.S. §2308(4) and permit the Department of Education to authorize school bus drivers to use flashing red lights on school buses to control traffic while delivering food, supplies and other school related materials to students and their families.

## II. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Order shall take effect on May 12, 2020.

Janet T. Mills
Governor