



# Minnesota Board of Teaching

**TO:** Deans and Chairs  
**FROM:** Erin Doan, Executive Director  
**DATE:** February 2016  
**RE:** Licensure and Program Reporting Updates

## Licensure Updates & Reminders

### Transcripts to Accompany License Applications: FERPA clarification

Institutions have raised concerns regarding FERPA permissions to share transcripts from other colleges for the purposes of licensure application. The Board of Teaching and Educator Licensing are permitted to receive these records as an accrediting body as has been confirmed by the Office of the Attorney General. If you or your institution continues to have concerns, you may always reinforce these permissions by having students sign off on a permissions statement at the time of licensure. Alternatively, if you prefer to have students submit sealed official transcripts as part of their application, that would be allowable and is seen as a local decision.

### Documenting Course Substitutions/Equivalency

Under the current MN Rule 8705.1000 (and formerly MN Rule 8700.7600, Subpart 5, Standards D5 and F3) units are required to have a process in place for documenting the credit given to candidates for coursework and experiences completed outside of their enrollment in the approved MN program. Documentation of the course substitutions or the granting of credit for taking a course that has been determined equivalent to the one required in your program must be approved by the unit leader and submitted at the time of licensure application. This documentation explains any discrepancy between program requirements and course work present on the transcript(s).

It has come to the Board's attention that program advisors outside of the education unit and in some cases articulation agreements have been used as a measure of determining course equivalency for licensing as a matter of practice. It is necessary for the unit to verify that standards assigned to the approved course must also be reasonably demonstrated within the incoming course in order to be deemed equivalent. While concerns have been expressed by some institutions regarding the level of scrutiny being applied at the time of application, we continue to see examples of coursework being waived with no apparent explanation. As it is the Board's responsibility to ensure that institutions maintain fidelity to the approved program requirements, audit at the time of licensure application is a necessary part of the administrative process. If there are questions regarding any of these policies, please have your unit leader contact me for additional conversation.

Please note: While student teaching may occur in an employed teacher candidate's classroom (appropriate to the license sought), student teaching may not be waived as a requirement for initial licensure.

## **Foreign Credential Evaluations**

If a teacher candidate has completed academic preparation outside the United States or its territories, a foreign credential evaluation must be received by the institution in order to make determinations regarding the alignment of their prior experience to MN standards for teacher licensure. This work may not be completed by faculty or by a local translator. Because of significant differences among nations in training and licensure requirements, candidates must submit their credentials to an authorized professional foreign credential evaluation service. A detailed course-by-course evaluation must be submitted to Educator Licensing at the time of licensure application.

Providers of these evaluation services are listed on the [Website of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services \(NACES\)](#).

## **Working with Candidates Trained in Other States**

The 2015 Legislative Session resulted in a number of changes to statute that impact the issuance of teaching licenses to those trained outside of Minnesota and in some cases, now conflict with prior Board of Teaching rules. Please keep in mind that when you are reading Minnesota rules and there is a discrepancy with the statute, the statutory language always prevails.

**If you are working with a candidate who was trained in another state to expand the scope of their license, to take an HR course or to add a field to their existing license, please have them confirm their renewal requirements with Educator Licensing if their license was printed prior to July 1, 2015.**

Candidates who hold a license in another state may be issued a Minnesota license while they complete testing requirements as long as they can evidence field specific teaching methods for the licensure area, field specific student teaching (or an equivalent experience), or 2+ years of teaching experience in another state. Educator Licensing may no longer require reading coursework, technology coursework, or a major in the content area when issuing a license to a candidate fully licensed in another state, regardless of their preparation pathway. We anticipate that these changes will have an impact on enrollment in the approved reading course work that is offered at your institutions.

Teachers who hold a 5 year professional MN teaching license need not repeat SEP coursework. Institutions need not document course equivalencies for SEP course work if this is the case.

At the training offered by BOT and MDE in February 2015, institutions were asked to identify a point of contact (to be published on your website) for candidates trained in other states. We continue to hear anecdotal information that candidates don't know who to contact and receive conflicting information from individuals within the same campus. If you've not done so already, please ensure that you have made this change prior to the end of the academic year. Consistency of expectation will ensure better support of teaching professionals in our state, regardless of their level of prior training and experience.

As always, do not hesitate to contact Board staff or Educator Licensing to confirm that candidates have received the appropriate advising.

## **Updates to Skills Exam Requirement**

Currently, candidates may demonstrate passing scores on reading, writing and math content by submitting scores from ACT, SAT and MTLE. At the October 9, 2015 meeting of the Board of Teaching, members adopted a motion to add GRE, NES (Pearson), and for candidates licensed outside of Minnesota, the Praxis. Score setting will take place in early 2016 with implementation planned for after July 1, 2016. Please watch the MTLE website for upcoming announcements.

## **Unit and Program Rule changes effective January 1, 2016**

Adopted unit and program rule changes can be located at <http://mn.gov/board-of-teaching/board-operations/initiatives/>. All units and programs must be in compliance by the effective date. Program Effectiveness Reports for Continuing Approval (PERCA) submitted in fall 2015 for re-approval in 2016 must show compliance to the

new clinical and student teaching requirements: 100 clinical hours prior to student teaching, and student teaching experience for initial licensure of a minimum of twelve continuous weeks, full time, face to face.

Candidates admitted to licensure programs prior to December 31, 2015 need not be held to meeting the new clinical and student teaching requirements. At the time of application, candidates admitted after December 31, 2015 must evidence meeting the new clinical and student teaching requirements.

## **EPPAS Resources Available**

Teacher Education Specialists Alex Liuzzi and JoAnn VanAernum have produced new user manuals for RIPA & PERCA as well as helpful videos to accompany the manuals. All materials are available on the EPPAS website, today!

[http://mn.gov/board-of-teaching/preparing-teachers/program\\_approval/index/](http://mn.gov/board-of-teaching/preparing-teachers/program_approval/index/)

**User access forms** are available on the EPPAS website as well. If you are making changes for any reason (adding new or removing transitioning employees) you will need to submit an updated access form to replace the existing list on file with the Board of Teaching.

As soon as a program is approved, institutions may renew the application to begin making changes for the next cycle of program reporting. This new application will simply remain “in progress” in the system until the next reporting deadline.

## **Reporting Timelines**

- Cycle I Institutions submit PERCAs between August 1 and October 31 every other year (next report 2015 for Board approval by June 2016).
- Cycle II Institutions submit PERCAs between August 1 and October 31 every other year (next report 2016 for Board approval by June 2017).

The Program Review Panel will meet twice yearly, in February and April, to review all new programs, nonconventional programs and any PERCA applications that have flagged issues. Following a February review, an institution may be asked for more information allowing for a second review of an application. Those applications submitted in November or December of each year will only have one opportunity with the PRP (April meeting) if they are flagged.

## **New RIPA Reviews Will Begin after June 30<sup>th</sup>**

Due to budget constraints for the current fiscal year, Board staff is unable to process further requests for initial program approval until after June 30, 2016. Any questions or concerns may be directed to me for further discussion. Your understanding is appreciated.

## **Rulemaking**

The 2015 legislative session resulted in a statutory mandate for the Board of Teaching to engage in rulemaking regarding candidates trained in other states. The Board published a request for comments on November 1<sup>st</sup> which we shared at the fall meeting. Drafts of this rulemaking initiative as well as the upcoming DAPE rules may be found on the “initiatives” page of the Board website. <http://mn.gov/board-of-teaching/board-operations/initiatives/>

We are waiting for the official Revisor’s draft to be returned to the Board for consideration at the February 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. From that point, the SONAR and draft rules will go to the Governor for initial approval and a hearing will be scheduled. We encourage all of you to send your comments to [Board.Teaching@state.mn.us](mailto:Board.Teaching@state.mn.us), and to participate in the discussion as rules are clarified.

## **Update on CAEP Partnership Agreement**

The BOT contacted CAEP in the fall regarding our concerns with a state partnership agreement. CEP staff was contacted for response in early December and replied that they would respond to our questions and concerns in the days ahead.

As of today's date, we continue to seek a response. As shared previously, we would like programs to be able to use PERCA reporting to meet CAEP program reporting expectations to reduce the reporting load and have asked for further consideration. Substantive updates will be shared as soon as we have information available.

**Thank you** to all for your service to the students and teachers in Minnesota!