

Certificate of the Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board

Resolution to support teachers and schools navigating changes to the K-12 science standards and benchmarks

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) is pursuing changes to the K-12 academic standards and benchmarks in science.¹ The proposed 2019 science standards move “Earth and Space Science” from 8th grade to 6th grade, and “Physical Science” from high school to 8th grade. The standards also place greater emphasis on the teaching of “Earth and Space Science” at the high school level. While full implementation of the new standards and benchmarks is set for the 2023 - 2024 school year, many school districts have begun implementing the new standards and benchmarks.

WHEREAS, Earth and Space Science teachers in Minnesota tend to hold one of two licenses – the 7-12 Earth and Space Science license² or the 9-12 Earth and Space Science license.³ Many of the teachers who taught 8th grade Earth and Space Science will be unable to teach Earth and Space Science at the 6th grade level or Physical Science at the 8th grade level without an out-of-field permission or a new license, such as the 5-8 General Science Endorsement.

WHEREAS, Physical Science teachers in Minnesota tend to hold one of three licenses – the 7-12 Physical Science license,⁴ the 9-12 Chemistry license, or the 9-12 Physics license.⁵ Many of the teachers who hold the 9-12 Physics or Chemistry license will be unable to teach Physical Science at the 8th grade level without an out-of-field permission or a new license, such as the 5-8 General Science Endorsement.

WHEREAS, there is currently a shortage of teachers licensed to teach science courses at the high school level.

WHEREAS, PELSB supports MDE’s proposed changes and their belief that all students can and should be scientifically literate.

WHEREAS, PELSB seeks to ensure current and future science teacher who may be impacted by the proposed changes are able to access both short- and long-term solutions.

WHEREAS, the Board may issue an out-of-field permission (OFP) to authorize a teacher, who holds a Tier 2, Tier 3, or Tier 4 license, to teach outside the licensure field or scope of the teacher’s license.

Minn. R. 8710.0320, subpart 1. Purpose. An out-of-field permission authorizes a teacher holding a Tier 2, 3, or 4 license, consistent with this part, to teach in a field not aligned with the license held.

¹ 44 SR 91, the Department of Education’s Request for Comments, as published in the State Register on July 29, 2019, available at https://mn.gov/admin/assets/SR44_5%20-%20Accessible_tcm36-394252.pdf.

² The 7-12 Earth and Space Science license is a legacy license that was discontinued in 2001.

³ Note: It is not uncommon for a science teacher to hold many licenses.

⁴ The 7-12 Physical Science license is a legacy license that was discontinued in 2001.

⁵ Note: It is not uncommon for a science teacher to hold many licenses.

WHEREAS, a school district is required to post an open position for a minimum number of days prior to offering the position to a teacher who would require an OFP to hold the position.

Minn. R. 8710.0320, subpart 2 (A) (5). The board must issue an out-of-field permission upon request by the designated administrator of the hiring district. The applicant must initiate the application process, and the hiring district must show: (5) the position was posted for at least 15 days on the board-approved statewide job board.

Minn. R. 8705.0320, subpart 4 (B). Renewal. An out-of-field permission may be renewed four times. To renew an out-of-field permission, the applicant must initiate the application process, and the hiring district must show: B. the position was posted for at least 60 days on the board-approved statewide job board.

WHEREAS, Minnesota Rules limit the number of total OFPs a teacher can hold.

Minn. R. 8710.0320, subpart 5. Additional renewals. To renew an out-of-field permission more than four times, the hiring district must provide within the renewal application good cause justification for why the applicant should receive additional out-of-field permission renewals pursuant to part 8710.0310, subpart 1, item G.

WHEREAS, I, Brian Rappe, certify that I am a member and the Chair of the Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board, a board authorized under the laws of the State of Minnesota; that the following is a true, complete, and correct copy of a resolution that the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board adopted at a properly convened meeting on March 12, 2021; that a quorum was present; and that a majority of those present voted for the resolution, which has not been rescinded or modified.

THEREFORE, the Board resolved the following:

Until the science teacher licensure rules are amended, the Board will:

- Suspend enforcement of the requirement that a school district post a science position before offering the position to a teacher who is directly impacted by the changes to Physical Science and Earth and Space Science standards and would require an out-of-field permission to fill the assignment. The teacher must hold a Tier 3 or Tier 4 science license and be a current employee; and
- Not count out-of-field permissions used by teacher, who holds a Tier 3 or Tier 4 science license and is directly impacted by the changes to Physical Science and Earth and Space Science standards, to fill science assignments outside the scope or grade level of their license.



Brian Rappe, Chair
Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board

Date: March 12, 2021