

Teacher Preparation Manual

Chapter 4

Obtaining and Maintaining Program Approval

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4 Obtaining and Maintaining Program Approval

4.1 OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

In addition to approving and overseeing unit approval, PELSB is responsible for approving all teacher licensure programs in Minnesota.¹ A teacher preparation program (sometimes called “licensure program”) is licensure specific training (e.g. elementary education, visual arts) provided to teacher candidates. A teacher preparation provider seeking to prepare candidates for teacher licensure in Minnesota must have each of its programs approved prior to enrolling candidates.

APPROVAL PROCESSES

The processes for initial program approval and continuing program approval are outlined in Minnesota Rules, chapter 8705. A provider may submit a Request for Initial Program Approval (RIPA) after it submits its notice of intent to apply for unit approval. A provider may seek unit and program approval simultaneously.

Approval of New Programs

For new programs, each provider must seek approval through the Request for Initial Program Approval (RIPA) process. The Request for Initial Program Approval must demonstrate that the program meets the license-specific content and pedagogy standards set forth in Minnesota Rules, chapter 8710, and the program design requirements outlined in Minnesota Rules 8705.2100. Rule identifies the process a provider must take for the RIPA application, which includes many requirements beyond meeting the content and pedagogy standards, including, for example, requirements for clinical experiences. The RIPA is submitted online through EPPAS. Instructions for accessing EPPAS and submitting RIPAs can be found in Appendix D.

Similar to the unit approval process, the RIPA process includes peer review. A team of peer reviewers who are content experts in the program area are responsible for evaluating the RIPA and for providing findings on whether the license-specific content standards are “met.” If the content reviewers find that all standards are met, the RIPA is sent to the Board with a recommendation for initial approval. However, if not all standards are found to be “met,” the RIPA may be sent back to the provider for further clarification, sent for a second review, and/or sent to the Program Review Panel (PRP).

The PRP is a group of educators from differing stakeholder groups that meet to review certain RIPA applications and provide recommendations to the Board whether to grant initial program approval. A RIPA will be sent to the PRP for further review when:

- Standards have been identified as “Met with Concern” and/or “Not Met;” or,
- The program is seeking a discretionary variance request.

The PRP is responsible for reviewing the RIPA and preparing recommendations to approve or not approve programs. The Teacher Preparation Committee (TPC) reviews the PRP recommendations and makes recommendations to the full Board, which appear on the Board consent agenda. After the Board acts to approve or deny approval, PELSB staff notifies providers of Board action.

PROGRAM APPROVAL PROCESS

Request for Initial Program Approval (RIPA)

SUBMIT RIPA

In order to enroll candidates, a teacher preparation program must be approved by the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board. The program approval process begins when the provider submits the “Request for Initial Program Approval” or “RIPA.”



REVIEW BY CONTENT EXPERTS



The RIPA is reviewed by content experts to determine whether the program design includes the required teacher standards. At the conclusion of the review, the content experts prepare findings. If the content experts find all standards are met, the RIPA is sent to the full board with the recommendation to grant initial approval.

REVIEW & RECOMMENDATION FROM THE PROGRAM REVIEW PANEL (PRP)

The PRP is a 13-member panel representing stakeholders in teacher education. The PRP is responsible for reviewing content expert findings and preparing recommendation to the Teacher Preparation Committee.



RECOMMENDATION FROM THE TEACHER PREPARATION COMMITTEE (TPC)



The TPC is comprised of 3 board members. The TPC is tasked with reviewing all PRP recommendations and discretionary variances and making a final recommendation to the Board.

BOARD DETERMINATION

Using the recommendations from the PRP and TPC, PELSB must approve or deny initial program approval. A program that receives initial program approval can begin enrolling candidates.



Continuing Approval

Once a licensure program is approved, the provider must maintain approval by submitting a triennial report, called the Program Effectiveness Report for Continuing Approval (PERCA). The requirements of a PERCA include both ongoing compliance to teacher standards and reporting on program effectiveness.

PELSB staff review PERCA submissions. If time allows, staff seek clarification regarding compliance. If concerns remain, staff direct any licensure program that does not clearly meet the requirements of the PERCA to the PRP for further review. The PRP makes a recommendation to the Board, which may decide to grant continuing approval or continuing approval with a focus area. The PRP may also recommend that the Board require the provider to prepare an interim report. PELSB may take additional actions toward specific licensure programs if continuous improvement is not made, including placing a program on “probation” or, in extreme cases, the Board may discontinue a program.

PROGRAM TYPES

When applying for initial approval, a program must identify program type or types. For programs with continuing approval, PELSB strongly recommends that programs identify optional program types (including options of classroom-based, hybrid, and online; residency).

Program type data may be used for grant purposes (e.g. Grow Your Own grant).

Initial Licensure Program

An initial licensure program is a teacher preparation program designed for preparing candidates for their initial professional license.

A program may be designed to be an initial licensure only program or to accommodate both initial and additional licensure candidates.

PELSB TIP

If you think that there's potential in the future for an initial licensure program to also be offered as an additional licensure program, consider designing your program to meet standards for both "candidates who do and do not hold an initial license."

Additional Licensure Program

An additional licensure program is a teacher preparation program designed for preparing candidates who already hold or qualify for a professional license. After completing these programs, the candidate can “add” a license to their existing license(s).

For additional licensure candidates, it is the provider’s responsibility to ensure the candidate holds or qualifies for an initial license. If an additional licensure candidate does not hold a Tier 3 or 4 license and is not concurrently enrolled in an initial licensure program, the teacher preparation provider is encouraged to either advise the candidate to apply for the Tier 3 or 4 license or check with PELSB prior to enrolling the candidate.

If a provider wishes to offer an additional licensure program only, the provider is only required to submit content application(s).

While candidates completing an additional licensure program do not need to complete the edTPA or 12 weeks of student teaching, candidates must complete a practicum.

Endorsement Program

An endorsement is a program specific to a license that only can be added to an existing standalone license. In contrast to initial licensure programs, endorsement programs do not need to demonstrate meeting the SEPs, because candidates seeking the endorsement have already completed a licensure program that includes the SEPs or some type of pedagogical training (if from another state).

Some endorsement areas require that the candidate hold a specific teaching license (e.g. preprimary candidates must hold or be eligible for a Tier 3 or 4 elementary K-6 license, DAPE candidates must hold or be eligible for a Tier 3 or 4 physical education license).

Please refer to Teacher Preparation Manual Chapter 3 for endorsement-specific requirements.

Transfer Programs

A program that meets only a subset of licensure standards and does not recommend candidates for licensure. This program type is only available to units approved as restricted units. The provider would need to submit evidence to demonstrate learning opportunities and assessments aligned to the subset of licensure standards. Prior to program development, contact PELSB’s Teacher Education Specialists.

Classroom-based

A program with more than 80 percent of instructional content provided in a shared physical space.

Hybrid

A program with between 20 and 80 percent of instructional content provided in a shared physical space and the remainder provided in a virtual format.

Online

A program with more than 80 percent of instructional content provided through a virtual format. Candidates must complete field experiences and student teaching in a face-to-face format.

Residency

A program offered in partnership with a designated school partner that provides a year-long clinical experience integrating learning opportunities and student teaching. A residency program uses a cohort-based model that pairs candidates, often referred to as residents, with cooperating teachers. The residency program must ensure each candidate is placed for a full academic year to co-teach and participate in professional development for at least 80 percent of the contracted school week. The residency program must ensure that each cooperating teacher serves as the teacher of record and receives ongoing professional development in co-teaching, mentoring, and coaching skills. Candidates may receive a stipend, salary, or other form of commensurate financial support during the residency program.

A provider must complete the [Residency Identification Form](#) and provide supplemental information to demonstrate that it meets the criteria stated in rule to be labeled as a “residency program.” Once identified as a residency program, submit updated supplemental information with each PERCA submission to maintain this recognition.

For more information about residency programs, visit the [National Center for Teacher Residencies](#).

Other

A provider may request recognition of another program type. The Board must approve or deny the request.



4.2 TEACHER STANDARDS

To seek approval for an initial licensure program, a provider must submit both a pedagogy application demonstrating how the program meets the Standards of Effective Practice (SEPs) and an application demonstrating how the program meets the content area standards (sometimes called the licensure-specific standards or teacher standards). Each program must have a learning opportunity and an assessment aligned to each pedagogical standard.

Standards
of Effective
Practice
8710.2000

+

Mathematics
8710.4600

=

Initial
Mathematics
Licensure
Program

Standards
of Effective
Practice
8710.2000

+

World
Languages
& Cultures
8710.4950

=

Initial World
Language
& Cultures
Licensure
Program

Both special education and career and technical education (CTE) programs must include core skills standards that are applicable to each field respectively. Special education programs must include a core application (outlined in [8710.5000](#)), as well as a disability specific content application. Career and Technical Education also requires a core application (outlined in [8710.8000](#)) as well as an industry-specific application. It follows that for initial licensure special education and career and technical education programs, there must be three applications submitted.



For approval, additional licensure only and endorsement programs are required to address only content and content methods standards. A program designated as an additional licensure only or endorsement program may not accept initial licensure candidates.

Refer to the Teacher Preparation Manual Appendix D for more information on demonstrating how content standards are met.

STANDARDS OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

The Standards of Effective Practice (SEPs) for Teachers are set forth in [Minn. R. 8710.2000](#) and are the pedagogical standards that all teacher candidates completing a board-approved initial licensure program or licensure via portfolio must meet. The categories include student learning, learning environments, assessment, planning for instruction, instructional strategies, professional responsibilities, collaboration and leadership, and racial consciousness and reflection.

A provider may have one SEP sequence that is used for multiple programs or may have a SEP sequence specific to a single program. Within SEP sequences, electives may be used as long as all elective options meet standards.

CONTENT-SPECIFIC STANDARDS

Each application for program approval must demonstrate that the program meets the contentspecific standards for that program. These standards are found in [Minnesota Rules 8710.3000 through 8710.8080](#).

Process for Showing Compliance to Updated Standards

Each time that new license-specific content standards are adopted, the Board will set an effective date in rule and publicize that information on the Board website and via email. Generally, as soon as rules are adopted, providers may choose to meet those standards. Providers seeking new program approval may be required to align with newly adopted standards prior to providers with initial or continuing program approval.

The Board will develop forms for each new rule where providers will indicate where standards are met. These forms must be completed and uploaded into EPPAS along with updated syllabi.

Finally, all programs will be reviewed to ensure alignment with new standards. If new standards are not met by programs with continuing approval, the Board may grant a provider interim conditional approval.²



[2] Minn. R. 8705.2600, subpart 1.



4.3 PROGRAM DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

Each new program must include a number of different components or requirements into its program design. These program design requirements are audited by Board staff. If it is not evident how these requirements are met, Board staff will reach out for additional information. If the provider wishes, it may seek a discretionary variance related to these standards (refer to the RIPA section for process).

Note: The Board cannot grant a discretionary variance that would exempt a provider from meeting a requirement set forth in state statute (e.g. teacher preparation programs are required to include student teaching).³

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Each program must be developed in partnership with key stakeholders, including teacher educators, content instructors, practicing teachers in the licensure field, and school partners.

[3] Minn. Stat. 122A.092, Subd. 2 (2019).

Program Leader

Each program must have a designated program leader, who is responsible for the delivery of the program. A program leader must be qualified under Standard 23 (refer to Teacher Preparation Manual Chapter 3 for more information about teacher educator qualifications).

Clinical Experiences

For all programs offered as initial licensure programs, there must be a minimum of 100 hours of field experience with at least 60 hours aligned to the scope and content of the licensure area sought.

For all programs offered as initial licensure programs, there must be a minimum of 12 weeks full-time of student teaching aligned to the scope or content area or the equivalent number of weeks where the candidate is participating in at least 80% of the contracted school week.⁴

For programs offered as additional licensure programs only and for which candidates are not dually enrolled in an initial licensure program, there must be a minimum of an 80 hour practicum.

Each program must ensure its candidates have adequate clinical experiences. Please refer to the Teacher Preparation Manual Chapter 3.3 for additional information.

PELSB TIP

For programs where candidates may be more likely to enroll in two programs at the same time (e.g. Elementary Education and a Middle Level endorsement), it is recommended to attach a 30 hour field experience to the content-specific methods (as the requirement for candidates seeking more than one professional licenses is 30 hours aligned to the scope and content of each license and endorsement sought).

[4] Note: Two exceptions include programs for candidates seeking initial licensure in Adult Basic Education and Parent and Family Education.

Program Assessments

Within each program, the provider must identify three key assessments that will be used both to monitor candidates' attainment of standards (Refer to Unit Standard 19) and to evaluate and inform continuous improvement (Refer to Unit Standards 3, 4, 5 and 8).

For a RIPA, the provider must attest that candidates will complete the following:

- [Board-adopted performance assessment \(the edTPA\)](#); and,
- [Board-adopted surveys](#) (refer to Teacher Preparation Manual Chapter 5.2 Data Summary Report section for additional information)

Credit Minimums

While each program must have a professional sequence of courses, there is no longer a minimum credit requirement for the Standards of Effective Practice or content applications. Rather, reviewers will continue to assess that the depth and breadth of standards are met.



4.4 REQUEST FOR INITIAL PROGRAM APPROVAL (RIPA)

The Request for Initial Program Approval (RIPA) must contain evidence of how a program addresses each of the required teacher licensure standards and either document how it is meeting program standards or seek a discretionary variance. The application must address the related content-specific standards outlined in rule and, depending on the type of licensure program (initial, endorsement, or additional special education), may address SEPs. The RIPA application must be submitted through EPPAS.

For detailed instructions to submit a RIPA, refer to Teacher Preparation Manual Appendix D.

RIPA APPROVAL TIMELINE

After a RIPA is submitted in EPPAS, PELSB staff audit the submission for technical concerns around program standards. If concerns are found, staff will communicate these to the provider, so the provider can either make changes or submit a discretionary variance request.

If there is a program seeking a discretionary variance and the program cannot be run without the approval of that discretionary variance, PELSB recommends that the program seek approval of the discretionary variance (through the Program Review Panel (PRP), Teacher Preparation Committee, and the Board) prior to beginning content reviews.

The next step in the process is to send the RIPA to a team of two content reviewers (Reviewers A & B).

- If content reviewers find that all standards are “Met” and no discretionary variance is sought, the program is recommended for Board approval.
- If a discretionary variance is sought, the program is reviewed by the PRP.
- If there are any standards identified as “Not Met” or “Met with Concern”, a provider may forgo a second review, and instead, justify to the PRP how standards are “Met.”
- If there are standards identified as “Not Met,” the provider is given an opportunity to revise a RIPA and submit it for a second review.
 - If after a second review, the standards are found to be “Met,” the program is recommended for Board approval.
 - If after a second review, there are still standards found to be “Not Met” or a discretionary variance sought, the RIPA is sent to the PRP.

Recommended Submission Deadlines

It is recommended to submit RIPAs by August 31, including demonstrating alignment to updated standards, if the intent is to obtain approval for enrollment the following fall. Typically, this allows time for two external reviews, program modifications, clarifications, and, if needed, Program Review Panel reviews.

For RIPAs submitted prior to December 31, the RIPA will be processed as time allows. Priority will be given to review of RIPAs submitted prior to August 31 and to PERCAs. Note that if standards are not demonstrated prior to the time of expiration, there is a risk of program discontinuation.

For RIPAs submitted after December 31, staff will process if time allows. However, it is possible that they may not be reviewed until the next fiscal year, starting in July.



MOVING FROM INITIAL APPROVAL TO CONTINUING APPROVAL

A program with initial approval must submit its first PERCA on the same reporting cycle as the unit's other programs. The Board may grant continuing approval when a program effectiveness report and data from a minimum of ten program completers is approved through the continuing approval reporting process. If, after three years, the program has fewer than ten program completers, another three years of "initial approval" will be granted. If, after six years of "initial approval," there are fewer than ten program completers, the Board may act to provide continuing approval based on performance data and other information provided by the program or may grant continuing approval with a focus area.



4.5 PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS REPORT FOR CONTINUING APPROVAL (PERCA)

The PERCA is designed to both ensure ongoing compliance with licensure and program standards as well as to evaluate program effectiveness. The PERCA must contain evidence of how a program has continued to address each of the required teacher licensure standards since its last review. This evidence should be recent, such as current syllabi and/or course outlines.

Providers submit PERCAs through EPPAS every three years on a [rotating schedule](#) to maintain program approval for each of its licensure programs.

Requirements for PERCA Submissions

To demonstrate continued compliance:

- Upload current syllabi demonstrating learning opportunities and assessments aligned to PELSB standards each submission cycle.
- If you are seeking a new or renewal of a program-related [discretionary variance](#), upload the request in the attachments section (PDF or Word) with the title "Discretionary Variance of [insert rule number]"
- If standards move to new courses or experiences, indicate where they have moved.
- If there have been changes to learning opportunities and assessments for reading methods or content methods standards, indicate what those changes are.

PERCA Tip:

Verify the “program type” identification is included and updated on the program identification page.



Review Process

After a PERCA is submitted in EPPAS, PELSB staff audit the submission. Staff may return the application to the provider for correction if any of the following factual errors are identified:

- An absence of a methods course/experience or a required reading course/experience;
- The absence of three admission criteria, three exit criteria, and/or updated fiscal attestation;
- Fewer field experience hours and/or student teaching weeks than required by rule.

If all standards are met and the program has evidence of effectiveness, the program will go to the Board for continuing approval.

Once the PERCA is factually correct, PELSB staff will highlight any of the following items for the PRP to review if applicable:

- “Not met” program standards (e.g. no content specific methods course)
- “Not met” teacher standards resulting from program changes
- Pass rates for edTPA are below Board thresholds; and
- Interim program reports
- Discretionary variance requests

Programs submitted prior to October 31 will be prioritized and have opportunities to clarify submissions.

If a PERCA is sent to the PRP for review, the PRP will evaluate the evidence for areas of concern and make a recommendation to the Board.

The Teacher Preparation Committee reviews all of the PRP recommendations. The Teacher Preparation Committee recommendations appear on the Board’s consent agenda.



4.6 COLLABORATION WITH OTHER PREPARATION PROVIDERS

If a provider determines to routinely accept pedagogical standard-bearing coursework in place of a requirement in the approved “course sequence,” it must get that option approved by documenting elective options in EPPAS. All elective options must meet the designated standards.

For standards that are uniquely met in the “Introduction to Education Elective,” all elective options must meet these standards. Providers will document how each option provides a learning opportunity and assessment aligned to each standard. External reviewers will review each elective to determine whether standards are “Met.”

Example of how to report accepting a course routinely from various providers.

Course #	Course or Experience Name	Hours	Standards
ED ELECTIVE (Choose from EDU 300, ED 304, College in the Schools)	Introduction to Education Elective	15	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
EDU 300	Foundations of Education (ABC State University)	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
EDU 304	Introduction to Education (X Community College)	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
College in the Schools	Foundational Education (Y State University)	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5



4.7 THE ROLE OF THE REVIEWER

For RIPAs and revised PERCAs, PELSB solicits the help of content experts, educators whose academic preparation and teaching experience in a particular field aligns to that of the program being reviewed. Content experts review the evidence submitted by a program, most often syllabi and/or course outlines, and make a finding as to whether each of the applicable teacher standards in an application is met.

For a standard to be “Met,” there must be evidence of the following:

- There is a learning opportunity(ies) and assessment(s) aligned to the intent of the standard;
- The full standard is addressed through the learning activity(ies) and assessment(s) (full scope, all aspects);
- The learning opportunities and assessment meet the breadth and depth of the standard; and
- The syllabi validate what is reported in the spreadsheet, sometimes referred to as the matrix (refer to Teacher Preparation Manual Appendix D).

If any of the criteria above are not true, then the standard is “not met.” A standard may be “met with concern” when the substance of a standard is met but there are reporting errors. For example, if a standard is “met” in a different assignment, activity, or course than what is reported, that standard is “met with concern.” Additionally, a standard may be “met with concern” if there is an old syllabus or textbook included in a new program request.

It is not required that a provider indicate that a particular standard will be addressed in a particular session, week, or date.

Requirements for a Standard to be “Met”	Factors Leading to a “Not Met” Standard
Clear description of how candidates will learn and be assessed related to each standard in the syllabi Examples of learning opportunities: Read chapter 5 titled “XYZ” in textbook ABC; complete a module called “XYZ” in which they will watch a video called “AB” and learn about “BC”	Stating generally that candidates will “consider” or “explore” the standard Including a learning opportunity or assessment where it is not possible for reviewers to determine whether it addresses the standard (e.g. read unnamed/undescribed articles, “Reading Forum”) Including an assessment or a learning opportunity but not both Listing the learning opportunity and assessment in the matrices but not including them in the syllabi.
Learning opportunities and assessments must align to the intent of the standard Examples of verbs requiring application: use, assess, design, develop, implement, establish (depending on standard, may be within clinical experience, lesson plan, etc.)	Using a class discussion, paper, or test for standards requiring application There is false information or learning opportunities that are in conflict with the intent of the standard.
All aspects of a standard to be addressed	Addressing some or most components of a standard

1st Review	2nd Review
• Reviewer A and B review ALL standards. • Reviewers may ask the provider clarifying questions. • Reviewers submit their findings.	• Reviewer A and C review changes to standards that are “not met” and “met with concern” • Reviewers may ask the provider clarifying questions. • Reviewers submit their findings.

In the circumstance where a standard may be “Met,” but a particular assessment or learning opportunity has not been explained sufficiently for reviewers to verify, reviewers may ask the provider for clarification or additional information via Board staff. For a standard to be “Met,” reviewers need to be able to verify that the needed information is documented in EPPAS documents uploaded on course sequence page within uploads (ex. syllabi, outlines, learning plan). Then, for each standard still found to be “Not Met” or “Met with Concern,” reviewers will provide a comment that explains the finding.

If the content reviewers find that even after provider clarification there are “Not Met” standards, the program may choose to undergo a second review. For the second review, one of the reviewers is replaced by another content expert and the standards that were initially found to be “Not Met” are reviewed again. Figure 2 illustrates this process. The purpose of rotating in a new content expert is to ensure the fairness of reviewers’ findings by providing a third perspective. Again, if there is need for clarification of a particular learning opportunity or assessment, the reviewers may seek that information from the provider by contacting Board staff.

If a program is an exact copy of an approved legacy program and standards are unchanged, it does not need to be sent out for an external review. However, if the program’s Core sequence has changed or if a significant percentage of standards have been moved or standards have been updated, then the program will be sent out for external review.

Anyone interested in being a content reviewer, should [submit an application](#).



4.8 THE PROGRAM REVIEW PANEL (PRP)

The Program Review Panel (PRP) is a body responsible for assisting with program review and approval. The PRP makes recommendations regarding the approval of licensure programs referred to them and for program-related discretionary variances.

The PRP membership includes but is not limited to representatives from:

- The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board;
- Minnesota Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (MACTE);
- Education Minnesota;
- Varying types of teacher preparation; and,
- Teacher advocacy organizations.

Representatives from PELSB are considered “non-voting” members.

Recommended qualifications of PRP members:

- Understanding of licensure rules and standards (Minn. R. 8710.2000 – 8710.8080) and program standards (Minn. R. 8705.2100-8705.2200);
- Understand ways standards are embedded and evidenced in programs;
- Requirements of both initial and continuing approval;
- Understanding of EPPAS or ability to learn.

PRP RESPONSIBILITIES

RIPAs	• Review programs with one or more standards identified as “Not Met” and/or “Met with Concern” • Review program-wide discretionary variance requests
Initially Approved Programs	• Review program data if, after two approval cycles, there are fewer than 10 completers • Review if there are any programmatic standards that are “Not Met” • Review if the data does not meet Board thresholds
PERCAs	• Review programs out of compliance with one of the requirements of chapter 8705, chapter 8710, or Minnesota Statutes, chapter 122A • Review program changes that have made teacher standards to be “Not Met” or “Met with Concern” • Review if “focus area” has not been addressed • Review all “probationary” programs • Review all interim reports

If there are concerns related to items in the table above, the PRP reviews and makes a recommendation.



4.9 BOARD ACTIONS FOR PROGRAMS

The Board may take a number of actions when determining a program's approval status. Each of the possible actions the Board may take are listed and described below.

The Board may take one of two actions when a provider seeks initial program approval:

Grant initial program approval: The Board may grant initial program approval for up to three years to allow the provider to launch the program and to begin to collect candidate and program efficacy data needed for continuing approval. The Board will align the expiration date with the provider's other programs.

Deny initial program approval: The Board may deny the request for initial approval. A program may not enroll candidates. The provider may not submit a new RIPA until at least one year has passed since the date of the denial action.

The Board may take one of the following four actions when a provider seeks renewal of an initially approved program:

Grant a second cycle of initial program approval: If there are fewer than ten program completers, the Board may grant a second cycle of program approval.

Grant continuing program approval: When a program meets all the required standards and requirements, the Board may grant continuing program approval for three years.

Grant continuing program approval with focus areas: When a program has one or more standard or requirement that is “Not Met,” the Board may grant continuing approval with focus areas. The Board may also grant continuing approval with focus areas when less than 70% of candidates meet board-adopted thresholds on content and pedagogy examinations and the edTPA.

Discontinue a program: In rare cases, the Board may discontinue a program when the Board determines that the failure of the program to meet standards and requirements results in an ability to prepare candidates for licensure.

After the Board moves to discontinue a program, no new candidates may be enrolled. The provider must submit a list of candidates enrolled in the program, their expected completion dates, and a plan for those candidates to complete the program by a specified date. The provider must notify the candidates in writing of the program’s discontinuation and their options to complete the program.

The provider may not apply for initial program approval for a program that has been discontinued until at least three years have passed since the Board’s action.

The Board may take one of the following four actions when a provider seeks continuing program approval:

Grant continuing program approval: When a program meets all the required standards and requirements, the Board may grant continuing program approval for three years.

Grant continuing program approval with focus areas: When a program has one or more standard or requirement that is “Not Met,” the Board may grant continuing approval with focus areas. The Board may also grant continuing approval with focus areas when less than 70% of candidates meet board-adopted thresholds on content and pedagogy examinations and the edTPA.

In the subsequent reporting cycle, the continuous improvement portion of the PERCA report must include evidence of progress in the identified focus area.

Place a program on probation: The Board must place a program on probation for up to two years when a program does not demonstrate acceptable progress on its focused continuous improvement plans. A program is given one year to demonstrate progress on identified “Not Met” standards, requirements, or candidate performance measures. After one year, and based on a written progress report, the Board may grant the program an additional one year of the probationary status. Programs placed on probation must notify enrolled candidates of its program status. Probationary status may result in federal reporting or financial aid implications or may impact other accreditations.

Discontinue a program: In rare cases, the Board may discontinue a program when the Board determines that the failure of the program to meet standards and requirements results in an ability to prepare candidates for licensure.

After the Board moves to discontinue a program, no new candidates may be enrolled. The provider must submit a list of candidates enrolled in the program, their expected completion dates, and a plan for those candidates to complete the program by a specified date. The provider must notify the candidates in writing of the program’s discontinuation and their options to complete the program.

The provider may not apply for initial program approval for a program that has been discontinued until at least three years have passed since the Board’s action.

Other actions the Board may take at any time:

Require an interim report: When there are new or repeat violations that do not rise to a board action, PELSB may still require the provider to submit an interim report to address how the provider will remediate the violations.

Grant interim continual approval: If substantial program revisions are needed due to changes to state statute or rules, the Board can place the program on interim conditional approval until the unit or program has come into full compliance with the new requirements.⁵



4.95 VOLUNTARY CLOSURE OF A PROGRAM

If a provider wishes to voluntarily discontinue a program, the unit leader must send a signed letter or [Voluntary Discontinuation of Program form](#) to the executive director of the Board including:

1. a brief rationale for discontinuing the program;
2. the last date when new candidates are allowed to enter the program; and,
3. a complete list of candidates enrolled with expected completion dates.

The provider is required to notify all enrolled candidates in writing of the program's discontinuation and their program completion options.

Note: A provider may recommend a candidate for licensure if the candidate has completed a program that has been voluntarily closed as long as the candidate has completed all the program requirements. For additional information, please see the Teacher Preparation Manual Chapter 3.