



PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR  
LICENSING AND STANDARDS BOARD

**Board Bylaws**

Revised September 2021

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## Mission

Ensuring all Minnesota students have high quality educators in their schools.

## Vision

To ensure equitable education practices through high licensure standards, quality educator preparation programs, and stakeholder engagement.

## About

The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) was created by the state legislature in 2017, when the legislature combined the work of the Board of Teaching (BOT) and the Minnesota Department of Education's Licensing Division.<sup>1</sup> PELSB is governed by an 11-member board and is tasked with:

- Licensing teachers, including related services providers, in Minnesota<sup>2</sup>
- Establishing and maintaining teacher licensure standards and requirements<sup>3</sup>
- Establishing and enforcing the Teacher Code of Ethics<sup>4</sup>
- Approving and overseeing teacher preparation providers and programs to prepare candidates for licensure in Minnesota<sup>5</sup>

The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board has rulemaking authority.

## Key Statutes and Rules

Minn. Stat. 122A (Laws governing teachers and other educators)

Minn. R. chapter 8705 (Rules governing teacher preparation)

Minn. R. chapter 8710 (Rules governing licensure standards and requirements)

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<sup>1</sup> [Laws of Minnesota 2017, 1st Spec. Sess. chapter 5, article 3.](#)

<sup>2</sup> Minn. Stat. 122A.09, subd. 4 (2021).

<sup>3</sup> Minn. Stat. 122A.09, subd. 9 (2021).

<sup>4</sup> Minn. Stat. 122A.09, subd. 1 (2019).

<sup>5</sup> Minn. Stat. 122A.092 (2019).

## History

Since 1976, the Board of Teaching had been responsible for establishing and maintaining licensure standards and requirements for teacher preparation programs and teachers in the state. The Board of Teaching worked with the Minnesota Department of Education's Licensing Division to issue licenses to Minnesota teachers.

During the 2017 First Special Session, the state legislature enacted major reforms to teacher licensure in Minnesota. Notably, the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board was established and a tiered licensure system was created. The tiered licensure system includes four tiers of licensure and establishes several different avenues by which an individual can become a licensed teacher. Notably, to obtain a Tier 4 license, which is the highest tiered license, a candidate must complete an approved teacher preparation program.

In October 2018, PELSB adopted the rules necessary to implement the new tiered teacher licensure system in Minnesota.

# PELSB Policies and Procedures

## Board Meetings

- I. Time and Location
  - A. The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board shall meet regularly at such times and places as the Board shall determine.
  - B. The regular meeting place of the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board shall be at the same location of the staff offices unless otherwise stated.
  - C. Board meetings shall be in accordance with open meeting laws of Minnesota, [Minn. Stat. § 13D](#).
- II. Rules of Order
  - A. Meetings of the Board shall be conducted according to *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised In Brief, 3rd Ed.*, unless otherwise stated.
  - B. The chair shall appoint a parliamentarian at each July meeting of the Board. The parliamentarian must attend all Executive Committee meetings unless this attendance leads to a quorum of board members present.
  - C. A quorum of the Board must be present for any votes. Said quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the total membership of the Board.
  - D. Reports, recommendations, and supplemental materials will be provided to the Board members in advance of the meetings. The Board shall not be expected to take official action on reports or recommendations without sufficient time for discussion and preparation. As a general practice, the Board will take official action no earlier than one meeting after hearing a report.

## Elections

- I. The Board shall annually elect two officers: Chair and Vice-Chair.
- II. The Board shall annually elect an Executive Committee which will be composed of the officers elected and two additional members.
- III. The Board shall follow the timeline below:
  1. During the Board's regularly scheduled May meeting each year, members will hold a public discussion about nominations for the Chair, Vice Chair, and Executive Committee positions. The Operations Committee will then accept nominations for Board officers and Executive Committee.
  2. The Operations Committee will present a slate of candidates for consideration at the June meeting. These individuals, in addition to any individuals nominated up until the time of balloting, will serve as the slate of candidates.
  3. Elections shall take place at the June meeting of the Board.

4. Officers shall be elected for a term of one year and shall assume office in July following the June election.
5. The term of office shall be from July 1 through June 30.
6. Officers may succeed themselves in office.
7. Elections shall be by written ballot unless otherwise determined by the Board. The votes of each member shall be announced following the written ballot. In accordance with [Minn. Stat. § 13D.01, Subp. 4](#), the results of elections must be published in Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board minutes.

IV. The following procedures will be used during June elections:

1. The Operations Committee will present the slate of candidates for the positions of:
  - a. Chair
  - b. Vice-Chair
  - c. Two additional members for the Executive Committee
2. An opportunity for additional nominations will be provided at the meeting.
3. An opportunity will be provided for each candidate to address the Board prior to the ballot.
4. Balloting will be done in accordance with III (7) above. Board members will first vote for the position of Chair. Members will then vote for the position of Vice-Chair. The third vote will be for the two remaining positions on the Executive Committee.
5. Staff will announce the results and the new members will assume their new duties on July 1.

*Note: All candidates for the Chair and Vice-Chair positions will automatically be included on the list of candidates for the Executive Committee, pending the individual candidate's preference. As candidates are selected for the Chair and Vice-Chair positions, their names will be withdrawn from the list of candidates for the Executive Committee.*

## **Administration**

- I. The Executive Director of the Board shall be the chief administrative officer for the Board and serve as ex officio non-voting member.<sup>6</sup> The Executive Director shall maintain the records of the Board, account for all fees received by the Board, supervise and direct employees servicing the Board, and perform other services as directed by the Board.
- II. The Department of Administration must provide administrative support in accordance with [Minn. Stat. § 16B.371](#). The commissioner of administration must assess the Board for services it provides under this section.

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<sup>6</sup> Minn. Stat. 07, subd. 4a.

## Committees of the Board

- I. The Board shall have the following standing committees: Executive, Legislative, Licensure, Teacher Preparation, Discipline, Operations, and Increase Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers.
- II. At the June Board meeting, committee appointments will be discussed, with the exception of the Executive Committee, and Board members will identify areas of interest and expertise. Committee appointments shall be made by the chair in July each year and shall run from the time of appointment until the time of new appointments the following year.
- III. Committee members will select the committee chair at their first meeting.
- IV. Committee meetings shall be called at a time and place to be determined by the committee chair, when applicable, and in consultation with the Board Chair. A notice of time, place, and agenda is prepared and distributed by the Executive Director in consultation with the committee chair. If a committee does not have a designated chair, meeting times and places shall be determined through consultation with committee members and Board staff. All committee meetings will be noticed to the public in accordance with open meeting laws of Minnesota, [Minn. Stat. § 13D.04](#).
- V. Committee chairs shall report to the Board at regular monthly meetings as appropriate.
- VI. Each committee shall review its committee membership structure and duties at least annually and prepare recommendations for the Operations Committee about potential changes to the Board's Bylaws.
- VII. Meetings of the standing committees shall be intended for discussion of major issues related to the task assigned to the committee. It shall be the responsibility of each committee to attend to the specific task assigned by the Board.
- VIII. The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board staff is to provide assistance at committee meetings. Staff attending committee meetings are responsible for summarizing committee meetings, if requested by the committee. Staff shall also draft language to reflect the general consensus of discussions as needed during standing committee meetings for reactions from the committee.
- IX. The purpose, structure, and duties of the standing committees shall be as follows:
  - A. Executive Committee
    1. The Board shall annually elect an Executive Committee which will be composed of the officers elected and additional two additional members.
    2. The duties shall be as follows:
      - a. To serve as a steering committee for conducting Board business and setting meeting agendas.
      - b. To serve as an advisory committee to the Executive Director of the Board in the implementation of Board policies.
      - c. To consult with staff and the Legislative Committee in the preparation of the

biennial budget request and accompanying rationale.

- d. To monitor Board expenditures and to take note of Board needs that should be reflected in the next budget request.
- e. On a yearly basis, the Executive Committee will initiate a performance review of the Executive Director in alignment with required state performance reviews and compensation increase schedules using performance standards and performance indicators; the serving Vice-Chair when the performance review is initiated will facilitate the review, provide results in a closed session to the Board, followed by acceptance of the report in the public meeting.

B. Legislative Committee

1. The Chair shall appoint three members to serve as Legislative Committee members.
2. The duties shall be as follows:
  - a. To keep the Board informed of legislation, existing and proposed, which affects or may affect the Board.
  - b. To develop strategies for implementation of legislative initiatives.
  - c. To offer testimony to appropriate committees of the legislature regarding proposed legislation pertaining to the Board.
  - d. To assist the Chair and Executive Director in necessary contacts with the governor and/or staff, with legislators and legislative staff, and with other stakeholders.
  - e. To propose legislative action and positions to the full Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board.
  - f. During the legislative session, the Executive Director will provide members with ongoing summaries and updates of legislative activity, historical context and Board input, and recommend possible responses, positions, and alternatives for consideration.

C. Licensure Committee

1. The Chair shall appoint three members to serve as Licensure Committee members.
2. The duties shall be as follows:
  - a. Review all licensure applications with possible denial or issuance of a license other than the license an applicant desired. The applications will be brought by the Internal Licensing Group of Board staff. This includes flagged Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3, Tier 4, and Out-of-Field permission applications, discretionary variances, any application requiring justification reviewed by the Board, Innovative Program Permission applications including verification of innovative program delivery model applications, and any other applications as needed.
  - b. Upon receipt of an application, make decision to issue or deny the license,



permission, or discretionary variance.

- c. If a license is denied, the Committee must inform the applicant the reason for the denial (i.e., identify each licensure requirement the applicant failed to meet) and inform the individual of the process for seeking review of the denial and the appeals process, including applicable deadlines.
- d. Represent the Licensure Committee recommendation before the Board following an appeal to the Office of Administrative Hearings.
- e. Work with the Licensure Committee support staff of the Board for all contested case hearings.
- f. Approve professional certifications for career pathways and Career and Technical Education licensure.

D. Teacher Preparation Committee

1. The Board member serving as the teacher from a teacher preparation program will be a member of this committee. The Chair shall appoint two additional members to serve as Teacher Preparation Committee members.
2. The duties shall be as follows:
  - a. Review unit review team recommendations submitted to the Board upon the completion of a unit site visit and make recommendations to the Board regarding whether to adopt the review team's recommendation for unit approval or to take a different action.
  - b. Review Unit Reports on Continuous Improvement that have been flagged by staff and determine whether any issues should be brought to the Board for further action.
  - c. Review interim reports submitted to the Board as part of unit approval process and make recommendations to the Board regarding whether Board action should be taken.
  - d. Review discretionary variances submitted to the Board regarding unit standards and unit approval and make recommendations to the Board regarding whether the discretionary variance should be approved or denied, and if approved, whether certain conditions should be established.
  - e. Review Program Review Panel (PRP) recommendations for program approval and make recommendation to the Board regarding whether to adopt the PRP's recommendation or take a different action.
  - f. Review discretionary variances submitted to the Board regarding program standards and program approval and make recommendations to the Board regarding whether the discretionary variance should be approved or denied, and if approved, whether certain conditions should be established.
  - g. Support Teacher Education Specialists in the evaluation of internal practices and procedures.

E. Discipline Committee

1. The Chair shall appoint three teacher members to serve as Discipline Committee members.
2. The duties shall be as follows:
  - a. For licensed teachers:
    - i. Review complaints and results of investigations alleging or implying a violation of a statute or rule which the Board is empowered to enforce.
    - ii. Make recommendations regarding whether to pursue a discipline against an individual's teaching license(s).
    - iii. Work with the Board's Teacher Ethics Specialist on contested case hearings, as needed.
  - b. For license applicants:
    - i. Review applications for possible issuance or denial based on statute and rule which the Board is empowered to enforce.
    - ii. Make decisions to issue or deny a license.
    - iii. Work with the Board's Teacher Ethics Specialist on contested case hearings, as needed.

F. Operations Committee

1. The Board Parliamentarian and the Board Chair will be members of this committee. The Chair shall appoint the other member of the committee.
2. The duties shall be as follows:
  - a. Meet at least once annually to review the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board Bylaws and report suggestions for change to the full Board.
  - b. Support the election process for Board officers and Executive Committee members.
  - c. Identify stakeholder representation on the Standards and Rules Committee.

G. Increase Educators of Color and Indigenous Educators Committee

1. The Chair shall appoint four members to serve as Increase Educators of Color and Indigenous Educators Committee members.
2. The duties shall be as follows:
  - a. Host regular meetings that facilitate stakeholder input on the obstacles and opportunities related to increasing educator diversity in Minnesota.
  - b. Help develop Board definitions and statements related to culturally responsive pedagogy, teacher diversity, and educational equity.
  - c. Research and recommend policies and strategies to the Board that would

help increase the number of educators of color and Indigenous educators in Minnesota, including possible changes to state law and/or rules.

- d. Build partnerships with other state agencies and organizations to collective work towards the Board goal of increasing educators of color and Indigenous educators.
- e. Upon request, review Cultural Competency Trainings offered to Minnesota's educators.

X. The Board shall have one standing advisory committee, called the Standards and Rules Advisory Committee.

A. Membership will be determined by the Operations Committee based on representation of constituent groups. The Executive Director or designee will function as the chair of the committee.

B. The Standards and Rules Advisory Committee shall provide:

- 1. Ongoing feedback on Board initiatives to ensure that Board policy considerations and actions reflect the perspectives of multiple stakeholder organizations.
- 2. Input and recommendations on specific policy issues as requested by the Board, including ongoing monitoring of Board-adopted licensure tests.
- 3. A forum for identifying additional issues for consideration by the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board.

C. The structure of the Standards and Rules Advisory Committee shall follow the guidelines below:

- 1. The agenda should set prior to a Standards and Rules Advisory Committee meeting by the Executive Director in consultation with the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board, Executive Committee, and the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board Staff.
- 2. The Standards and Rules Advisory Committee will hold a minimum of four meetings annually.
- 3. The Executive Director or their designee should facilitate the meeting.
- 4. The Standards and Rules Advisory Committee may form an ad hoc committee to do work when necessary.
- 5. A Board member or designee attending the Standards and Rules Advisory Committee meeting will present a report to the full Board at the next monthly meeting.

XI. The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board shall establish subcommittees as needed.

A. In establishing a subcommittee, the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board shall state the charge or purpose of the committee, objectives, proposed timeline, and membership of the committee, including Board facilitator.

- B. The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board shall receive regular updates on the work of a subcommittee prior to receiving recommendations for action.
- C. The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board reserves the right to modify or not act on any recommendations brought forward by a subcommittee.
- D. Subcommittees will be reviewed every January.

## **Duties of Officers**

- I. Chair
  - A. Establish the agenda, in consultation with the Board’s Executive Committee and Executive Director, for each meeting of the Board.
  - B. Call meetings of the Board according to the provisions of [Minn. Stat. § 122A.09](#).
  - C. Chair each meeting of the Board and attend public hearings held by the Board.
  - D. Provide ongoing consultation with the Executive Director in preparation for Board meetings, committee meetings, and other Board business.
  - E. Appoint committees and liaisons as needed to conduct Board business.
  - F. Serve as a spokesperson for the Board.
  - G. Consult with the Executive Committee and Executive Director in the preparation of annual and biennial reports as required by statute.
  - H. In emergency situations and in consultation with the Executive Director, the Chair can make decisions and provide an opinion on behalf of the full Board.
- II. Vice-Chair
  - A. Assume the duties of the Chair when necessary.
  - B. Assist the Chair in representing the Board.
  - C. Perform other related Board duties as requested by the Chair.
  - D. Facilitate the annual performance evaluation process for the Executive Director.

## **Duties of Board Members**

- I. Attend all regular and special meetings of the Board.
- II. Follow the Code of Ethics. (Appendix A)
- III. Keep informed of Board goals, initiatives, and activities.
- IV. Review all Board materials received prior to each meeting.
- V. Inform the Chair and Executive Director within one week after accepting a new professional position or change in employment status.
- VI. Serve on Board committees.
- VII. Inform Board staff when planning on attending committee meetings beyond committee

assignments so staff can properly notice meetings to the public.

- VIII. Attend special meetings, legislative and Board hearings, liaison functions, and professional meetings as much as possible.
- IX. Participate in at least two Unit Review site visits per term on the Board, one of which must happen within the first two years of the member's term.
- X. Serve in a liaison role to task forces and ad hoc committees called by the Board as directed by the Chair.
- XI. Perform the following responsibilities when serving as chair of a Board committee or as a liaison to task forces and ad hoc committees called by the Board:
  - A. Attend meetings of the committee or task force, making sure that members understand their charge(s) and that members function in accordance with Board philosophy, intent, and guidelines.
  - B. Keep the Board informed monthly of progress made by the committee or task force.
  - C. Bring to the Board questions and concerns raised at committee or task force meetings.
  - D. Serve as a resource to both the Board and the committee or task force.
- XII. New members:
  - A. New Board members will be assigned a mentor who shall be a Board member with at least one full year of experience on the Board. The mentor will make regular contact with the new member to provide support and answer questions about Board procedures, policies, or agenda items.
  - B. The Executive Director will provide an initial orientation session for new members within the first three months on the Board.
  - C. The Board's legal counsel will provide a legal orientation within the first three months on the Board.

## **Legal Counsel**

The legal and investigative services for the boards shall be provided by employees of the Attorney General assigned to the departments servicing the boards.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Attorney General shall not be precluded by this section from assigning other attorneys to service a board if necessary in order to ensure competent and consistent legal representation. Persons providing legal and investigative services shall to the extent practicable provide the services on a regular basis to the same board or boards.

# Appendix A: Code of Ethics

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to assist each board member in understanding their role as part of the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board and in recognizing the contribution that each member must make to develop an effective and responsible board.

## Policy

Each board member shall follow the code of ethics stated in this policy.

A. As a member of the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board, I will:

1. Attend board meetings and assigned committee meetings, having prepared for discussion of the agenda items.
2. Respect the opinions and views of others (including, but not limited to, other board members, staff, and stakeholders).
3. Vote my conscience after informed discussion, unless I abstain because a conflict of interest exists.
4. Recognize that decisions are made by a majority vote and the outcome should be supported by all board members.
5. Recognize the integrity of previous board members and staff, and appreciate their decisions and work.
6. Inform myself about the proper duties and functions of a board member.
7. Be motivated by a desire to ensure all Minnesota students have high quality educators in their schools.
8. Respect the right of the public to be informed about Board decisions and operations.

B. In performing the proper functions of a board member, I will:

1. Focus my attention on fulfilling the Board's responsibilities of goal setting, policy making, and evaluation.
2. Consider myself a trustee of public education and do my best to protect, conserve, and advance its progress.
3. Work collaboratively with the Executive Director.
4. Delegate the implementation of board decisions to the Executive Director.
5. Work to ensure prudent and accountable use of Board resources.

C. To maintain relations with other members of the Board, I will:

1. Respect the rights of others to have and express opinions.
2. Recognize that authority rests with the board– not with the individual members of the Board except as authorized by law.
3. Make no disparaging remarks, in or out of board meetings, about other members of the board or their opinions.
4. Keep an open mind about how I will vote on any proposition until the Board has met and fully discussed the issue.
5. Make decisions by voting in board meetings after all sides of debatable questions have been presented.
6. Maintain a professional level of courtesy, respect, and objectivity in all Board activities.

D. In working with the Board’s Executive Director and staff, I will:

1. Hold the Executive Director responsible for the administration of the Board and conduct an evaluation of the Executive Director annually.
2. Give the Executive Director authority commensurate with his or her responsibilities.
3. Assure that the Board will be administered by the best professional personnel available.
4. Participate in board action after considering the recommendation of the Executive Director and only after the Executive Director has furnished adequate information supporting the recommendation.
5. Insist the Executive Director keep the Board adequately informed at all times.
6. Offer the Executive Director counsel and advice.
7. Refer all complaints to the proper administrative officer or insist that they be presented in writing to the whole board for proper referral according to the chain of command.
8. Respect the work and opinions of staff and support the employment of those best qualified to serve as staff.
9. Present any personal criticisms of staff to the Executive Director.
10. Provide support for the Executive Director and staff so they may perform their proper functions on a professional level.
11. Inform Board staff when planning on attending committee meetings and board events beyond committee assignments so staff can properly notice meetings to the public.
12. Inform the Chair and Executive Director within one week after accepting a new professional position or change in employment status.

E. In fulfilling my legal obligations as a board member, I will:

1. Comply with all federal, state, and local laws relating to my work as a board member.
2. Comply with all policies as adopted by the Board.
3. Avoid conflicts of interest and refrain from using my board position for personal gain.
4. Take no private action that will compromise the Board.
5. Maintain the confidentiality of information that is protected by law.
6. Comply with applicable professional code of ethics, such as the Minnesota Code of Ethics for Teachers or the Minnesota Code of Ethics for School Administrators.



# Appendix B: Per Diems and Reimbursements Policy

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure statement is to establish the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board policy with respect to activities for which Board members will be reimbursed for time spent by Board members on Board business as authorized by Minnesota Statutes, Sections [15.0575](#); [122A.07, subd. 5](#); and [214.09, subd. 3](#).

## Substitute Teacher Reimbursement

The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board may reimburse local school districts for the costs of substitute teachers employed when regular teachers are providing professional assistance to the state by serving on the board or on a committee or task force appointed by the board and charged to make recommendations concerning standards for teacher licensure in this state.

Board member per diem payments and school district substitute teacher reimbursements for Board members may be paid as follows:

- Attending Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board meetings
- Attending Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board Committee meetings as a member of the committee or at the request of the Board chair
- Representing the Board as a member of a task force or advisory committee
- Attending a meeting or conference on behalf of the Board and at the request of the Board chair
- Presentation at a legislative hearing on behalf of the Board and at the request of the Board chair

It is the responsibility of the individual Board member to request per diem payment or school district substitute teacher reimbursement in accordance with this policy using the form provided by the Board office. Reimbursement requests must follow current IRS requirements in order to be paid. Substitute teacher reimbursement may be either for a half day or a full day. Board members may request Per Diem or Substitute Reimbursement, but not both.

## Mileage Reimbursement

A Board member may be reimbursed for mileage at the current Federal IRS reimbursement rate on the most direct route according to Transportation Department records. A Google map may be requested from the Dept. of Administration as support.

## **Meal Reimbursement**

Board members may be reimbursed for the cost of meals including tax and a reasonable gratuity based on annual per diem allocations set by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA). Breakfast reimbursement may be claimed only if the Board member is in travel status overnight or departs from home for the meeting before 6:00 A.M. Dinner reimbursement may be claimed only if the Board member is in travel status overnight or is required to remain in travel status until after 7:00 P.M.

## **Lodging Reimbursement**

Board members may be reimbursed for the cost of lodging for the purpose of attending Board meetings or other Board functions based on annual per diem allocations set by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA). With the exception of lodging to attend monthly Board meetings, lodging expenses must have prior approval from the Board chair.