

Arts Teacher Standards Steering Committee - June 2025

Dance/Theater Options Pros and Cons

Current structure:

1. K-12 Dance & Theater Combination License
2. K-12 Dance License
3. K-12 Theater License

Decision: Unanimous: Option 1, keep this Dance/Theater combo license

Option	Pros	Cons	Questions
OPTION 1 No change Maintain same licensure structure and general content though may include standard revisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Right now nobody is in a program pursuing this license, but if this becomes a viable pathway for a higher ed institution to add theater and dance. There may be smaller institutions where their theater and dance curriculum are already combined under one department head. Often theater and dance are lumped together in higher ed without a compelling reason. At times this may originate with architectural choices. Betsy is on the fence about this one. Not widely used, but if we remove it, then it might never come back. This license is most authentic for musical theater and removing it could have some implications for musical theater. College students don't know they can study dance/theater education because they weren't likely to have it in K-12. This is a systemic issue. Access and equity. Retains flexibility and options by keeping it Continues career option Supports interest in integrating the arts Being at a smaller program - see dance/theater as more accessible pathway (like at Winona State) Puts more arts education on the table for students Students want these arts areas. Wonder about getting caught up on perfect being enemy of the good. Knew a teacher who taught both, though 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very few people have depth in both dance and theater. In Betsy's program - averaging 1 candidate a year pursuing dance and theater. These candidates don't get the combination license, but get dual licensure instead. Often, candidates focus in one area and are required to teach in the other, even in student teaching. Inevitably there are things missing from both dance and theater when combined. Big ask of students to develop pedagogy and disciplinary knowledge in 2 distinct fields. Dance and theater standards feel significantly different. This isn't used much currently since there is no program offering it and would clean up a licensure that is rarely used. Treating dance and theater as equal to other arts area licenses - perhaps continue to underserve with a "lesser" option Hard to combine stand alone license into 2. Current structure demonstrates that. Potential that we draft standards and they aren't used. Again, symmetry of standards and licensure areas MN is only state that offers this. (but maybe this is a pro? Depends on what happens in other states) Effectively no current pathway to this license except for portfolio Headcounts tier 3 or 4 and working: 23 dance & 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the harm that could come to the field if this is removed? Could missing things be addressed through standards revision? Wonder why it didn't take off Why don't we have more theater/dance ed programs in the state? Is there a systemic problem? (teacher training is not cost effective and so getting cut in higher ed. Economic. Gustavus was one of first adopters, but not enough enrolled. Then also faculty qualifications - don't have K-12 experience, or admin experience to ensure that the license program stays in compliance. Becomes uncompensated work. Wave of closures in dance and theater programs in state and nation wide. As well as recent retirements. Tenuousness of tenure also playing in. There has been discussion about doing a consortium. And feedback loop that dance isn't offered, then no teachers, and districts have a hard time finding teachers making it more difficult for programs to lead to viable employment) Could standards help address this? Short answer, yes. The committee

	<p>had a focus in theater. Learned enough dance to fill courses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More employable because could offer courses in both areas? • Provides alternatives • If it isn't broken, then no need to fix it • If keeping this can reduce barriers to more places adding programs, then that is a strong pro. • Considering teacher shortage, any options to have teachers be able to teach dance and theater is helpful right now. • Offers more flexibility for districts 	<p>theater; 16 Dance; 31 Theater</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't have data on dance and theater pathway - for dance and theater teachers, they are in demand across the country. Not all our candidates stay in MN 	<p>will need to consider who this is for. And other mechanisms to ensure that the applicant is showing competency.</p>
<p>OPTION 2</p> <p>Eliminate the Dance & Theater combination license focusing only on review and revision of the Dance standards and the Theater standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logistical - no committee needed to do the work of revising standards for the Dance & Theater combined license • Economical - save minimal time and energy • If this is a problem for PELSB, it might be a pro to condense down to maintain these arts areas • Cleans it up a bit • Could boost enrollment in existing programs if no combination license is available • Deeper subject expertise; teachers trained with the dance/theater combo license have expressed a lack of training in one of the areas • Value of being streamlined between standards and licenses - mostly valuable to those managing systems, including teachers applying. • The combination license may be seen as less rigorous • Anecdotally - people got combo license because that is what the program offered, not because that was the license they wanted. Thus some were underserved as a result. • Board has discussed trying to streamline this - at recent May meeting • This isn't used much currently since there is no program offering it and would clean up a licensure that is rarely used. • Note that many cons for Option 1 are pros for Option 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of a pathway • Forever-ness of it - basically the pros from above • If primarily useful for licensure via portfolio, cutting certain students or certain groups out of becoming a teacher? • Deletes the cross disciplinary • Removes some flexibility • Could close a pathway for someone to become a teacher • Dance and theater are underserved areas. • If programs that formerly offered this want to re-open, if this licensure area is gone, it would be even harder • Note that many pros for Option 1 are cons for Option 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any administrative harm? Or costing PELSB anything? (PELSB loses \$ on portfolio process; Fairly minimal costs, mostly in time, to update standards for portfolio candidates. The primary cost is in writing the standards. • What is the value of simplicity of having 5 arts areas, 5 sets of academic standards, 5 licenses? • Can some of the values of keeping the combo license be achieved through overlapping standards between dance and theater? (currently, sentence structure is the same; but still the content is very separate between dance and theater. Crossover standards don't seem very feasible.)

Note: Only external steering committee members show fist to five (not state agency employees, with the exception of Rebecca), * indicates multiple people identifying the same item

Areas of impact to consider:

- Lack of access to teacher prep programs
- Each arts area
- K-12 Students & communities
- Teacher prep programs/pathways to licensure
- Current teachers
- Districts and schools hiring and scheduling systems
- Course categorization and teacher access

Decision Rationale Conversation - June 3 2025

The committee took a show of hands to vote since this was a much less complex item than other arts area issues considered. The first vote was unanimously in favor of keeping the current Dance & Theater combined license requiring no additional conversation.