Preparation Program Reviewer Guidance

Why be a preparation program reviewer?

Support the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) in meeting three of its four goals:

(1) Grow Minnesota’s educator workforce by expanding high-quality teacher preparation, including new and innovative models.
(2) Strengthen Minnesota’s educator workforce by maintaining high-quality standards and elevating the education profession.
(3) Increase the racial and ethnic diversity of the educator workforce throughout all regions of Minnesota.

PELSB believes that standards are the foundation of high-quality teacher preparation programs. Also, PELSB seeks to approve programs that both meet standards and attract diverse teacher candidates. PELSB needs reviewers to verify that programs are meeting standards, so that it can approve programs that can increase teacher diversity and expand the types of high-quality preparation available.

Many reviewers also find that reviewing is a helpful professional development opportunity. Being a reviewer supports understanding of program design and provides exposure to different ways of meeting standards. Upon request, PELSB can provide reviewer with clock hours for teacher licensure renewal.

Reviewers also receive a stipend for their work. Primary reviewers receive $300 for completing a half-day reviewer training. Additionally, PELSB pays $300 for a first program review and $150 for a revised program review.
What is the big picture of the initial program review process?

When a RIPA gets submitted, Board staff review the application to ensure that it has required field experience hours, student teaching weeks, teacher educator qualifications, etc. If the requirements are not clearly met, staff will work with the preparation provider to ensure documentation is clear or to request a variance, if needed. Content reviewers do not need to review these requirements.

Once assigned a review, the expectation will be that content experts complete the review within one month. At the end of one month, though, there may be clarification questions as referenced above under the “what if you need more information” section below, which does extend the timeline.

If there are standards that are found to be “not met,” the preparation provider may make changes and resubmit for a second review. Only “not met” and “met with weakness” standards will be reviewed again – unless changes were made to previously “met” standards.

Programs with content reviewer findings of “not met” standards, “met with weakness” standards, and/or discretionary variance requests will be reviewed again by the Program Review Panel and Teacher Preparation Committee.

Under current rule, alternative programs are also reviewed by the Program Review Panel and teacher Preparation Committee.

The Board must act to either approve or deny programs. Once a program is approved, a provider may begin recruiting and enrolling candidates.

What is the role of content experts in the review process?

To ensure that there are learning opportunities and assessments aligned to standards, the Board depends on content experts to verify that the following are true to find that a standard is “met”:

- **INTENT**: The learning activities and assessments align with the intent of the full standard.
- **FULL STANDARD**: All aspects of a standard are addressed.
- **BREADTH/DEPTH**: The breadth and depth of standards are met.
• **VALIDATION IN DOCUMENTATION:** The syllabi or uploaded documents provide evidence that the standard is met corresponding to what is reported.

**What does this review work look like?**

For each review, there are two reviewers (a primary and secondary reviewer). The reviewers may do the work side-by-side or each do their work independently and come together to discuss findings (and see where more information may be necessary). At the conclusion of this work, reviewers will complete a findings form with the agreed upon findings and return it to Michelle Sandler.

**Findings**

- **MET:** Under current rule, reviewers use the categories of “met” if all criteria are addressed (intent, full standard, breadth/depth, validation in documentation).
- **MET WITH WEAKNESS:** Under current rule, a standard may be “met with weakness” in current rule if there is a reporting error. For example, the matrix indicates that the standard is met in one course or assignment, but you find evidence that it is met in another course or assignment. A standard may also be “met with weakness” if there is a very old syllabus or textbook used for a new program.
- **NOT MET:** A standard is “not met” if any of the criteria is NOT true (intent, full standard, breadth/depth, validation in documentation).

**What if reviewers need more information than what is provided in the syllabus?**

Reach out to Michelle Sandler if a standard could be met by what is provided, but it is not clear. For example, if reviewers need specific textbook or chapter titles or need a more detailed description of a learning opportunity or assessment to determine if it is “met,” it may reach out to staff to seek this information from preparation providers. The intent of this step is for clarification, not changes.

**How is a second review different from a first review?**

The first and second review have the same requirements for a “met” standard. The main differences between a first and second review are:

- There is a new secondary reviewer.
- Only standards previously found to be “not met” and “met with weakness” are reviewed (unless there were changes to previously “met” standards).
What steps need to be taken prior to becoming a program reviewer?

1. Complete the Reviewer Application and submit to michelle.sandler@state.mn.us.
2. Go to https://mn.gov/mmb/accounting/swift/vendor-resources/ to obtain a “vendor ID number”, which is the state’s method of paying individuals who do contract work for the state. Note that both state and non-state employees need a vendor number. For state employees, when you are online to register, you will see a comments field and you should enter Lori Rosenthal as the contact for PESLB in this field. This is because central payroll will see you as a state employee and question why you need a vendor number; the reasoning is that you are performing work outside of your core business hours.
3. Email lori.rosenthal@state.mn.us with your vendor ID, home address, email address, phone number, and work address. Let her know that you will be reviewing programs.
4. When Lori Rosenthal sends you an Annual Plan Agreement, sign and return it to Lori.
5. Set up an EDIAM account. If you have an EDIAM account that you do not currently use for EPPAS, send the username or email address associated with the account to Michelle Sandler. If you do not have an EDIAM account or only have an EDIAM account that is already used for EPPAS (entry, verifier, PRP role), you must create a new EDIAM account. View step-by-step instructions on how to create a new EDIAM User Account. Once you have an account that you will be using for your reviewer purposes, send the username or email associated with the account to Michelle Sandler.
6. If you are a primary reviewer, you will work with Michelle Sandler to schedule and complete a half-day, paid reviewer training session.