Minnesota
PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR
LICENSING AND STANDARDS BOARD

Licensure Compliance Report

> *The mission of the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board is to ensure that all Minnesota students have high quality educators in their schools.*

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Definitions

Administrator License: In Minnesota there are four administrative licenses: superintendent, principal, special education director, and community education director. Administrative licenses fall under the authority of the Board of School Administrators (BOSA) but are processed by the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB).

Assignment: For the purposes of this report, an individual required to hold a PELSB-issued license when providing instruction or related service support and or acting as an administrator in a Minnesota public school district.

Assignment Code: The number given to each assignment, found in the Assignment Licensure table published online at mn.gov/pelsb/districts/star

Assignment (LB): Designated as the LB file in STARWES, each person holding a PELSB-issued license and providing instruction, related service support, or who is a licensed administrator effective October 1 of the reporting year will have a record in this file. A person may have an assignment record even if they are not on the reporting district's payroll.

District: For purposes of this report, the term district includes public school districts, charter schools, and other educational organizations that are required to fill open assignments with licensed teachers.

Employment (LA): Designated as the LA file in STARWES, each person holding a PELSB-issued license who was on that district's payroll anytime between October 1 of the previous year and October 1 of the reporting year will have a record in this file.

Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System (MARSS): An individual student record system that serves as the Minnesota Department of Education's primary reporting system for student data. Districts required to report to MARSS must also submit to STAR.

Minnesota Common Course Catalog (MCCC): A course classification and data collection system intended to provide uniform information about courses that are taught by Minnesota teachers and completed by Minnesota students. Falls under the purview of the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE).

Non-Licensed (NA): Designated as the NA file in STARWES, each person on the reporting district's payroll not required to hold a PELSB-issued license will have a record in this file.

Out-of-Field Permission (OFP): An Out-of-Field Permission allows a teacher, who holds a Tier 2, Tier 3, or Tier 4 license, to teach in an assignment outside the scope or field of the license held.

Related Services Professional: An educator or provider who holds a license issued by PELSB consistent with Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.06, subdivision 2, and who meets the requirements for a license issued pursuant to parts 8710.6000 to 8710.6400. Includes speech language pathologist, school counselor, school nurse, school psychologist, and school social worker.

Snapshot Date: Used to document the status of licensed and non-licensed staff on a particular date, October 1 of each year. Since some districts have variable schedules, a district may use the first week of October to provide the most accurate reflection of a person's assignment. The Snapshot Date is not the System Close Date, or when a district's submission is due.

Staff Automated Report (STAR): Annual report of licensed and non-licensed staff employed by public school districts.

Staff Automated Report Web Edit System (STARWES): Districts submit required STAR data through an Education Identity & Access Management (EDIAM) user account.

System Close Date, or Due Date: The date that STARWES closes for collection. STARWES is open for a minimum of seven (7) weeks.

System Open Date: The date that STARWES opens for collection. This date is on, or a few business days prior to October 1 each year.

Teacher: Means a classroom teacher or other similar professional employee required by law to hold a license from the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board.

Unduplicated Headcount: An unduplicated number of individuals. Headcount totals never include individuals reported with a zero (0) file folder number.

Violation Rate: Referring to licensure compliance, this rate is calculated as total violations divided by total headcount of persons holding an assignment requiring a PELSB-issued license on the October 1 snapshot date.

Workforce Data: For the purposes of this report, workforce data is understood to be someone required to hold a PELSB-issued license reported with an assignment in a district's STAR submission.

Acronyms

Data & Compliance Specialist (DCS)

FTE: Full-Time Equivalent/Equivalency

MDE: Minnesota Department of Education

MNIT: Minnesota IT Services

PELSB: Minnesota Professional Educators Licensing and Standards Board

STAR: Staff Automated Report

STARWES: Staff Automated Report Web Edit System

TOCAIT: Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers

Introduction

All Minnesota districts required to submit to the Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System (MARSS) are also required to submit information about licensed and non-licensed staff. This annual submission is known as the Staff Automated Report (STAR).

Each year PELSB surveys Minnesota's school districts, charter schools, and other educational organizations, collectively called "districts," to ensure each teacher holds the appropriate license for the teaching assignment they work in. If an educator holds the appropriate license for their teaching assignment, they are deemed to be in compliance with state law. Licensure compliance is an essential part of the state's work to ensure all of Minnesota's students have high quality educators in their schools. For the 2024-2025 school year, the 535 districts collectively achieved a 99.67% compliance rate with licensure requirements. This accomplishment is reflective of their daily commitment to serving Minnesota's students.

Legislative Mandate

Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 122A.18, subdivision 11 requires that the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) shall collect data on educators' employment and assignments from all public-school districts. The report may include data on educators' demographics and licensure.

Data Sources, Methods, Limitations

STAR data was submitted via the Staff Automated Report Web Edit System (STARWES) by 535 districts in Minnesota. STARWES opened for collection on October 1, 2024, and closed on December 6, 2024. The snapshot date was October 1. There were five districts, two traditional and three charter schools, that did not submit a completed report. In comparing the numbers from the previous year, PELSB estimates this accounts for approximately 2,000 fewer reported staff.

All data submitted into STARWES is self-reported by districts. There is no control comparison.

As part of the STAR process, districts must determine which assignment code most accurately describes the instruction being provided. For the purposes of STAR, assignment codes are purposefully broader than course titles to accommodate local control. Whereas a district might report having offered students 04102 Early U.S. History when they report for the Minnesota Common Course Catalog (MCCC), in STAR the person who taught such a class would be reported with the assignment 150800 History. The subjective nature of determining assignment codes can lead to differences in interpretation that must be resolved during the data clean up phase of STAR.[1]

The sheer volume of data entry required on behalf of both districts' staff and PELSB's Data & Compliance Specialist (DCS) means that human error cannot be eliminated when completing STAR activities.

Assignments reported with a zero (0) file folder number are *not* included in this data.

24-25 STAR Timeline

10/01/2024: STARWES opens for collection.

12/06/2024: STARWES closes for collection with 535 districts having submitted data.

12/07/2024-03/07/2025: PELSB's Data & Compliance Specialist works with districts to clear as many as possible of the 2,181 assignments in violation (1,175 headcount).

03/08/2025: Manual overrides completed.

03/10/2025: Finalized data turned over to MNIT. As of this date, 429 assignments remained in violation (247 headcount).

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[1] For example, one district's STAR submission contained multiple violations for assignment code 050199 Secondary Reading. None of the licensed educators with this assignment held the required K-12 Reading license. A consultation with the district's STAR Coordinator revealed that *students* were completing an online literacy program. The Secondary Reading assignment was reflective of what students were learning and not the actual instruction being provided by the licensed educators in the classrooms. Upon receipt of this information, the LCS was able to clear these violations after correcting these assignments to that of 990330 Facilitator/ Monitor Online Curriculum.

Minnesota's Educator Workforce

In school year 2024-2025, 535 districts in Minnesota reported a total of 159,889 assignments held by 74,996 educators. Table 1 contains data as it appeared in the database as of March 10, 2025. A critical caveat to this data, there were five districts (two traditional and three charter schools) that did not submit a completed report. In comparing the numbers from the previous year, PELSB estimates this accounts for approximately 2,000 fewer reported staff. *Each headcount is unduplicated; however, an individual may be included in more than one licensure category type.*

Table 1. 2024-2025 Educator Workforce Data

Licensure Category Type	Number of Assignments	Full-Time Equivalency (FTE)	Unduplicated Headcount	Percentage of Total Unduplicated Headcount
All Teachers	147,968	63,180.18	65,232	86.98%
Related Service Providers	8,075	6,381.17	6,668	8.89%
Administrators	3,846	3,331.18	3,389	4.52%
TOTAL	**159,889**	**72,892.53**	**74,996**	**100%**

Approximately 2,000 fewer staff were reported due to five districts not completing a STAR submission. As a result, we estimate that the total unduplicated headcount in Table 1 would be in line with, or slightly higher than, the previous three years of data had those districts reported. The "Staff Automated Report Summary: Statewide Yearly Comparison" on PELSB's data dashboard provides comparative data from previous school years.

Assignments for teachers can be broken down into two subgroups: instructional and non-instructional (Table 2). Overall, all teachers hold 93% of reported assignments.

Table 2. 2024-2025 Instructional Compared to Non-Instructional Teaching Assignments

Type of Teaching Assignment	Number of Assignments	Total FTE	Unduplicated Headcount
Teachers: Instructional assignments	131,427	57,139.95	61,244
Teachers: Non-Instructional assignments	16,541	6,040.23	14,397
TOTAL ALL TEACHERS	**147,968**	**63,180.18**	**65,232**

White educators outnumber Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers (TOCAIT) in holding assignments in all three licensure categories (Table 3).

Table 3. 2024-2025 Educator Workforce Headcount by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	All Teachers	Related Service Provider	Administrator
American Indian/Alaskan Native	208	25	18
Asian	1,524	148	70
Black	1,152	113	161
Hawai'ian Native/Pacific Islander	16	1	0
Hispanic	1,431	107	69
Multiracial	570	60	56
Unknown	3,651	418	74
White	56,680	5,796	2,941
Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers (TOCAIT) Unduplicated Headcount	4,901	454	374
TOTAL UNDUPLICATED HEADCOUNT	**65,232**	**6,668**	**3,389**

Minnesota has set attainment goals for increasing the percentage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers (TOCAIT). By 2040, the percentage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers should more closely reflect the state's increasingly diverse student population.[2] In 2024-2025, students of color and American Indian Students (SOCAIS) comprised 39.78% of all public-school enrollments in Minnesota.[3] In that same year, teachers of color and American Indian teachers comprised 7.51% of the teacher workforce (Table 4).

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[2] Increasing Percentage of Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers in Minnesota, MINN. STAT. 120B.115 (2024)

[3] Minnesota Report Card

Table 4. 2024-2025 Educator Workforce by Percentage of Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	All Teachers	Related Service Provider	Administrator
White	86.89%	86.92%	86.78%
Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers (TOCAIT)	7.51%	6.81%	11.04%

How is STAR Data Used?

Because STAR is the primary source of data on Minnesota's educator workforce, it is used by both state and federal agencies to identify educational needs, determine funding levels, and assess compliance with applicable laws. Users of STAR data include, but are not limited to PELSB, national associations, the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), and the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE).

PELSB. Critical to several staffing reports prepared for the legislature and the public including the *Licensure Compliance Report* and *Tiered Licensure and Permissions Report*.

American Federation of Teachers and National Education Association. These organizations produce state-by-state comparisons on selected topics like number of classroom teachers and teachers' salaries.

MDE. Populates staffing data for the *Minnesota Report Card*. May also be used to determine funding levels when the legislature appropriates certain monies to be disbursed by MDE.

U.S. Department of Education. Used for determining compliance with Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), for various other reports, and determining eligibility for certain grant monies.

Implications of Incomplete, Inaccurate Data

The implications of a district not submitting STAR information, or reporting inaccurate information, are easy to infer. A district may miss out on special funds appropriated by the legislature. Their staffing data is not available to the public. Federal reports are not complete which may result in being ineligible for certain grant monies.

Reviewing & Correcting Data

The STAR process itself is best understood as a set of activities, undertaken by district staff and PELSB staff, to review and whenever possible, correct data before it becomes available for public use.

Reviewing STAR Data

There are two components of data review and correction. In the first, districts have the primary duty to review and validate data, assisted by PELSB upon request. In the second, PELSB has the primary duty to clear as many violations as possible, consulting districts whenever appropriate.

Districts Validate STAR Data

Once all records are entered, districts run edits in each of the respective STAR sandboxes: Employment (LA), Assignment (LB), and Non-Licensed (NA)[4]. The editing, or validating, process ensures that records meet basic system parameters.[5] This process also detects discrepancies between district-entered data and the information provided by the educator on their license application.[6] A district corrects records and reruns edits until all errors are cleared. Once all three sandboxes are free of validation errors, districts officially submit the three files.

PELSB Clears Violations

Submitted files are subjected to the next level of review, checking reported assignments against an educator's license/s and or permission/s to determine compliance with licensure requirements. Any assignments outside of compliance parameters generate a violation. PELSB's Data & Compliance Specialist (DCS) is responsible for reviewing each licensure violation. The LCS consults the respective districts' STAR Coordinator with the goal of clearing as many violations as possible.[7]

Once all possible violations have been cleared, the LCS finalizes the collection including completing manual overrides of system errors. At this point, PELSB's LCS notifies the state of Minnesota's IT Services (MNIT) that STAR data is now available for public use.

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[4] Records review for non-licensed staff is specific to meeting basic system parameters. Non-licensed data is collected by PELSB and subsequently transferred to the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE).

[5] For instance, if an Employment (LA) record indicates a person works full-time in the district, but there is no corresponding Assignment (LB) record, then a validation error occurs.

[6] For example, if a district enters a birthdate as May 3, 1992, but the educator indicated May 2, 1992, on their license application, a validation error occurs.

[7] For example, a person who holds a Special Education: Academic and Behavioral Strategist (SPED: ABS) license is reported with assignment 190202 Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The LCS will inquire if it is possible this person is a member of a Special Education (SPED) Multidisciplinary Team where at least one member holds a valid Special Education: Autism Spectrum Disorder (SPED: ASD) license. If the district affirms the person is a member of a SPED Multidisciplinary Team, then the LCS will correct the Assignment (LB) record to show Mode of Teaching as 'S' for SPED Multidisciplinary Team.

Licensure Compliance Rate

In 2024-2025, a total of 535 public school districts reported 159,889 assignments for 74,996 individuals. The violation rate is calculated as total violations divided by total headcount. This year there was an unduplicated headcount of 247 people in violation resulting in a violation rate of 0.33% (Table 4). Alternatively, in FY25 Minnesota's public-school districts were 99.67% in compliance with licensure requirements.

Table 5. STAR Violation and Compliance Rates Comparison of School Years 2020-21 to 2024-2025

Fiscal Year	Unduplicated Headcount of Licensed Personnel	Unduplicated Headcount in Violation	Violation Rate	Compliance Rate
2025	74,996	247	0.33%	99.67%
2024	75,867	431	0.57%	99.43%
2023	75,412	295	0.39%	99.61%
2022	74,881	409	0.55%	99.45%
2021	74,716	540	0.72%	99.28%

Licensure Compliance as Practice

Overall, STAR is *not* an initial diagnostic tool to "find" violations. Rather, it is a final validation of districts' staffing information, with a limited ability to make corrections, before data is made publicly available. That 535 public school districts collectively achieved a 99.67% compliance rate with licensure requirements reflects their daily commitment to the practice of licensure compliance. This high compliance rate is indicative of districts that have operationalized the practice of licensure compliance ensuring staff hold appropriate license/s or permission/s for their assignments and making accurate determinations about applying assignment codes.

Continuous Improvement Plans for Licensure Compliance

Minnesota's teacher shortage is well-documented. Perhaps less known, but just as impactful, districts in the state experience high yearly turnover in human resources staff. HR staff are frequently responsible for completing STAR-related activities. Taking this fact into consideration, the Data & Compliance Specialist will dedicate time and attention to recreating presentations, trainings, and guidance materials with the express intent of helping districts become more efficient and more accurate when completing the STAR process.

Spotlighting License Lookup as a Primary Tool of Licensure Compliance

PELSB's online License Lookup tool's most essential function is to make searches for educator license status quick and easy. But knowing how to interpret search results can be extremely helpful to district personnel. For instance, the existence of a File Folder Number does *not* mean that a license has been issued. It is an indicator that an application payment has been successfully processed. This is just one example of License Lookup-specific knowledge which will be embedded into STAR-related and license compliance-related presentations and trainings.

Developing Informative, but Concise Planning Tools

In 2024-2025, the most frequently requested support from district personnel came from individuals brand new to STAR-related job duties, looking for help and guidance on where to start with this monumental undertaking. As a result, work has already commenced on creating a guidance document for this audience for this purpose. This publication will include a suggested timeline to incorporate into their STAR-related planning.

Reconstituting STAR-Related Resource Guides

The Assignment Licensure and Licensure Assignment tables will be updated to include clarifying assignment descriptions based on questions submitted from districts, and expanding notes information when possible and helpful.

The *STAR Coding Manual* and *STAR Technical System Manual* will be reconstituted into three individual guidance documents, each focusing on one of the required STAR files: Employment (LA), Assignment (LB), and Non-Licensed (NA). In the current configuration, information about each file is found in both manuals. The intent is to synthesize information into an inclusive topic-specific document.

An Expression of Gratitude

PELSB would like to take the opportunity to express gratitude to all the district personnel tasked with STAR-related responsibilities. In every interaction with PELSB, district personnel demonstrated their commitment to ensuring the students in their districts have high-quality educators. For almost all districts, STAR Coordinator is not a position title; rather, it is an acknowledgment that STAR-related duties are a *portion* of a person's job.

Completing the STAR process takes care and time.

Very often STAR must be completed simultaneously with other significant-sized reports owed to various state agencies, funders, etc. Even when expressing frustration with aspects of STAR, their critical feedback helped illuminate how PELSB can improve to better support districts' needs.

Thank you again to all the district personnel who make STAR possible.