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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board  
**From:** Erin Doan, Director of Educator Preparation and Pathways  
**Date:** June 18, 2026  
**Subject:** Teacher Preparation Accreditation – REPORT

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### Background

Minnesota has traditionally required a state approval system for teacher preparation programs, supplemented by optional national accreditation. Every provider that prepares teachers for Minnesota licensure must first meet state requirements for units and programs as established by PELSB in Minnesota Rule.

### The Minnesota Approval Process (Mandatory)

Minnesota requires educator preparation providers (colleges, universities, and alternative providers) to obtain:

Unit Approval – Approval of the institution’s overall educator preparation system, governance, assessment, partnerships, and continuous improvement processes.

Program Approval – Approval of each individual licensure program (e.g., Elementary Education, Special Education, Secondary Mathematics).

PELSB reviews evidence that providers meet Minnesota’s educator preparation standards, conducts reviews and site visits, monitors performance data, and oversees ongoing compliance and improvement. Approved providers must continue to demonstrate effectiveness and provide evidence that they are meeting required standards.

### National Accreditation (Optional)

Minnesota allows providers to use approved national accreditation as evidence for portions of the state approval process. The primary national accreditors are:

- Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)
- Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP)

National accreditation is not required for all Minnesota providers, but many institutions pursue it to demonstrate quality through peer review outside of MN and to align with national standards. The result is a shared accountability system involving PELSB, preparation providers, PK–12 partners, candidates, and national accrediting organizations.

Providers in our communities are facing numerous legislative changes, budgetary constraints, increasing administrative loads, and turnover in faculty or staff that have managed accreditation duties over time. To provide high quality teacher preparation, they are looking to PELSB for ongoing training, consistency of expectations, clear direction on teacher quality indicators, and technical support. PELSB must seek solutions that support the profession with a shift from traditional compliance-based systems to those that build authentic continuous improvement.

## Request

Over the course of the last year, the Board has begun discussions regarding needed updates to unit and program rules. Underlying the assumptions within Minnesota's tiered accountability system are several decisions that impact administrative responsibilities for both providers and PELSB staff (e.g. role of national accreditation, teacher quality indicators, performance assessments, clinical models). As we seek to streamline these expectations to ensure both teacher quality and sustainability over the next decade, it is important that we explore each of these topics in more depth.

The June 26<sup>th</sup> presentation will introduce members to Minnesota's tiered accountability structure, to national accreditation and to some of the reasons that the Board may choose to consider policy change for upcoming rulemaking.

## Options

This is a report. No action is needed.