

**DATE**

August 1, 2020

# Today's Standards

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**TOPIC**

A candidate who has completed a board-approved teacher preparation program who applies for a professional license (Tier 3 and Tier 4) after program requirements or standards have changed can be recommend for licensure based on the requirements at time of completion. PELSB will grant a professional license to an applicant who completed an approved program years prior, even if program requirements have since changed.

**OF INTEREST TO**

Certifying officers  
Unit & program leaders

**ACTION**

Please being  
implementing new policy  
immediately

**PURPOSE**

This bulletin provides updated information regarding candidates who seek licensure months or years after completing an approved teacher preparation program.

**EXPIRATION DATE**

No expiration date

**CONTACT**

All questions about this bulletin should be directed to:

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## **BACKGROUND**

With the exception of 2018, the state legislature has made changes to the teacher licensure requirements every year since 2011. Most notably, in 2017 the state legislature established an entirely new licensing structure (tiered licensure). The continual changes to licensure laws and requirements made it challenging for applicants (including out-of-state applicants) to understand licensure requirements. This was especially true for applicants seeking their first license who had years prior completed an approved teacher licensure program in Minnesota.

In consultation with the Minnesota Attorney General's Office, the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) has reevaluated the existing licensing policy that teacher preparation providers can only recommend candidates for licensure who meet current requirements, regardless of when their original program was completed. (i.e., "require the candidate to meet today's standards prior to a recommendation").

## **NEW POLICY**

A candidate who has completed a board-approved teacher preparation program and applies for a license after program requirements or standards have changed can be recommended for licensure based on the requirements at time of completion. PELSB will grant a professional license to an applicant who completed an approved program years prior, even if program requirements have since changed. To be issued a professional license, applicants must meet all other applicable licensure requirements.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

Former candidates will no longer be required to meet new teacher preparation requirements established since the time of program completion. It is the applicant's responsibility to evidence completion of a licensure program. Though, providers should work with former candidates to ensure the work completed aligned with the program requirements at the time of completion.

Providers should continue to encourage candidates who complete a board-approved teacher preparation program to apply for licensure immediately following completion of the approved program.

If a provider cannot verify that a former candidate completed an approved preparation program, the provider is not required to recommend the candidate. PELSB will work with the candidate to discuss other licensure options if there is insufficient evidence of program completion (such as licensure via portfolio or a Tier 2 license).

### **Discontinued programs**

If a provider can verify that a former candidate completed the approved program at the time of completion, the provider can and should recommend that individual for licensure.

## Programs for old licenses

If a former candidate completed a licensure program that has changed in scope or content, the applicant would be eligible for a Tier 3 license restricted to scope and/or content aligned to the completed licensure program (this is a similar process to how out-of-state applicants are licensed when their scope of their existing license or licensure program does not align to the Minnesota licensure scope). A restriction can apply to scope, content, or both.

## Licensure Exams

All applicants for a Tier 3 or Tier 4 license must pass applicable licensure examinations as testing is a licensure requirement set forth in statute.<sup>1</sup>

## edTPA

Candidates who completed a program prior to the implementation of the edTPA are not required to take the assessment to be recommended for licensure.

Note: The edTPA is required if a former candidate is required to complete student teaching.

## Example

An applicant completed an approved elementary education licensure program in 2015. The applicant applies for his or her first license – a Tier 3 license in elementary education – in August 2020. This applicant can be recommended for licensure and is not required, for example, to complete instruction on dyslexia, even though that teacher preparation program requirement is applicable to all candidates enrolling in an elementary education licensure program after June 1, 2020.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Minn. Stat. 122A.183, subdivision 1 (a)(2) (2020).

<sup>2</sup> Minn. Stat. 122A.092, subdivision 5 (c) (2020). This new program requirement was adopted by the legislature in 2019 and given an effective date of June 30, 2020. This requirement is only applicable to the following program types: elementary education, early childhood education, special education, and reading intervention.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Our teacher preparation program no longer has student teaching records available for former candidates. Can we recommend a former candidate for licensure without student teaching records?

No, a teacher preparation program cannot recommend a former candidate without student teaching records.

2. Can Praxis II scores count for individuals who completed preparation programs previously?

Praxis II scores cannot be used towards meeting the licensure examination requirements for a Tier 3 license. However, Praxis II scores can be used as an attempt if you wish to recommend someone as part of a Tier 2 application.

3. Does this change have any impact for candidates who already received a professional license and are enrolling in additional licensure programs? Do additional licensure candidates need to meet “today’s standards”? For example: will those candidates need to meet the dyslexia requirement?

Candidates must meet “today’s standards” at the time they are enrolled in a program. Candidates enrolled in 2020 must meet the 2020 standards.

4. What if there’s a candidate who completed all of the requirements in 2005 but was missing one of the courses required in 2005?

If a candidate did not complete a program previously, the candidate needs to complete all of “today’s standards” (not just the one missing course).