

Proposed Rule Revisions for Educator Preparation and Accountability (REPA)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Why we need to revise current licensing regulations

- Research indicates that teachers are the primary influence on students' academic achievement, but our current policies don't ensure that we're putting the best qualified teachers in the classroom. In the coming years, as experienced teachers retire, Indiana faces a critical teacher shortage, especially in vital subjects like math and science.
 - The National Council on Teacher Quality gave Indiana a „D“ for its policies effecting teacher quality. Indiana ranks low in our ability to identify and retain effective teachers as well as our ability to weed out the worst teachers.
 - Of all the new teaching certifications in 2008-09, 7% were Math and 6% were Science certifications.
 - Within 5 years, 25% of mathematics teachers, 25% of science teachers, and 36% of Career and Tech teachers will be eligible to retire. Within 10 years retirement projections are 36%, 36%, and 52% respectively.
- Current regulations waste teachers' time and money, but are not effective in the goal of making them better teachers.
 - Currently, the Indiana Administrative Code contains references to several prior licensing systems that place contrasting and ineffective requirements on license holders.
 - Too many requirements for initial licensure and for license renewal are not connected to student achievement or educators' ability to teach.
 - Existing rules handcuff principals and administrators and limit opportunities to make staffing and professional-development decisions that will improve student achievement.
- Revising our licensing rules will help put Indiana in a top position to receive federal Race to the Top grant money.
 - *“States, for example, that limit alternative routes to certification for teachers and principals, or cap the number of charter schools, will be at a competitive disadvantage. And states that explicitly prohibit linking data on achievement or student growth to principal and teacher evaluations will be ineligible for reform dollars until they change their laws.” -- U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, July 24, 2009*

The goals of changes in licensing regulations

- Increase teachers' content knowledge and instructional skill.
- Increase student achievement to meet state goals.

- 90 percent of students will pass both math and language arts portions of the ISTEP exam.
- 25 percent of students will pass advanced coursework (such as advanced placement classes) with high scores.
- 90 percent of students will graduate high school.
- Increase administrators' flexibility to make innovative changes to improve student achievement.
- Clean up the bureaucratic red tape that slows down teacher and administrator efforts to relicense and improve instructional quality.
- Update regulations and remove redundancies and outdated provisions.

Updated Proposed Licensing Changes (Updated Thursday, Sept. 3, 2009)

- **Requires Emphasis on Content-Knowledge.** Proposed changes would revise the licensing requirements to emphasize teachers' content knowledge.
 - **Elementary teachers** (Pre-K to 6) must earn a baccalaureate degree consisting of an education major with a content-area minor OR a content-area major with an education minor.
 - Education major must include no more than 30 credit hours in pedagogy.
 - Education minor must include no more than 15 credit hours in pedagogy.
 - **Secondary teachers** (grades 5 to 12) must either receive:
 - A baccalaureate degree consisting of any applicable content-area major — as well as a minor in education; or
 - Certification by an education preparation that has been approved by the Advisory Board of the Division of Professional Standards.
 - Advisory board must approve a minor from an institution of higher learning.
- **Opens Door to Non-Traditional Administrators.** Proposed changes would allow school boards to hire superintendents outside of the traditional education system.
 - A school's governing body must apply for a waiver with the Department of Education. This waiver must also gain approval from the Advisory Board of the Division of Professional Standards.
 - Candidates for superintendent would be required to have at least a master's degree and pass the school leader's licensure test.
 - Candidates for building level administrator required to hold proficient practitioner license and pass the school leader exam.
 - If granted, these temporary administrator licenses would only be valid within the employing school district.
- **Requires Testing of Every Teacher.** Proposed changes would require all teaching candidates to pass certain tests to demonstrate competence in content-area knowledge and pedagogy (including the PRAXIS II exams).
 - No more testing waivers would be granted to **any** teachers or teaching candidates.

- PRAXIS I tests would no longer be required. Instead, teaching applicants would be required to demonstrate basic skills before being admitted to schools of education.
- **Changes Novice-Teacher Programs.** Proposed changes would eliminate portfolio and mentor program for new teachers. Mentor programs would become a local option. Related changes would:
 - Create a simplified Beginning Teacher Residency Program, in which a building-level administrator will be responsible for assessing a new teacher's effectiveness and developing a plan for professional improvement.
 - Eliminate NCATE measurement as the only requirement for school-of-education accreditation.
- **Changes License Renewal for Current Teachers.** Proposed changes would eliminate tuition-based course requirements for teachers to renew their licenses. Related changes:
 - Allow in-service credits and professional development programs approved by a building-level administrator to be used for renewal. This could save teachers as much as \$1400 every five years in tuition costs.
 - Only activities and courses directly related to student achievement will count toward renewal.
 - Remove NCATE and INTASC focus on professional growth. (No research shows NCATE and INTASC standard leads to better teachers.)
- **Simplifies Licensing Process for Out-of-State Teachers & Career Changers.** Proposed changes would reduce licensing barriers for out-of-state teachers and other highly knowledgeable adults looking to enter the teaching profession. Related changes:
 - **Out-of-State Candidates:** Eliminate transcript analysis by higher education institutions. Requires these applicants to have three years of expertise in good standing to receive a proficient practitioner license. Otherwise, they will receive an initial practitioner license.
 - **Changing Professions:** A teaching candidate with a baccalaureate degree may obtain an Education minor and pass a content-knowledge test for licensure.
- **Gives Local Administrators Greater Role in Professional Development Decisions.** To target teacher development to the school level, proposed changes would allow a building-level administrator (like a principal) to determine what type of training teachers need most to improve student achievement and renew teachers licenses.
- **Reduces Teacher Licensing Categories.** Proposed changes would reduce the five school settings to three settings for licensure: Pre-K to 6, 5 to 12 and Pre-K to 12.
 - Eliminate outdated content areas. Example: bilingual/bicultural education (duplication).
 - Eliminate "reciprocal" license category.
- **Eases Restrictions on License Suspensions/Revocations.** Proposed changes would allow IDOE to accept license surrenders for suspensions/revocations and remove

limitations on considerations of immorality, misconduct in office, incompetency or willful neglect of duty.

When and how will educators be subject to these changes?

- New rules would go into effect July 1, 2010.
- Current teachers will convert their licenses to coincide with these new rules upon renewal. The only exception will be for a LIFE license issued under a prior licensing system.
- New rules will be grandfathered so that students in schools of education graduating prior to 2011 will not be affected by licensing changes.