

Licensure Guidance

With ETS and Pearson suspending all licensure testing (March 2020), there are a number of teachers who will not be able to meet the June 30, 2020 deadline to pass all licensure exams for the purpose of converting the Initial Professional License (IPL) to a Continuing Professional License (CPL). Additionally, many candidates who are currently in the final semester of their preparation programs (EPP) will not be able to pass licensure exams before applying for an IPL.

NCDPI recommends the following options (the first option is the preferred option):

Licensure:

1. Licensees converting to Continuing Professional License (CPL)
 - a. Extend all licenses with a June 30, 2020 expiration date to June 30, 2021. Licensees would not convert to a CPL but maintain their Initial Professional License (IPL) until they pass the tests by the June 30, 2021 deadline.
Note: This option would require legislative action. (4/9/2020)
 - b. Teachers who do not meet the testing requirements by the June 30, 2020, could apply to the SBE for a limited license which would allow up to three years to pass the required licensure exams. This option would require the licensee to remain in the LEA that requested the limited license until the licensee passes the exam(s).
Note: This option does not require legislative action but would require substantial work on the part of LEAs and DPI staff.
2. EPP completers - EPP program completers may be issued a license without passing the required licensure exams. EPPs, however, have the option not to recommend these candidates for licensure if they choose.
 - a. The SBE can continue its current practice of directly licensing candidates who have completed all requirements except passing the required licensure exams. While this is a viable option, it too has substantial impact on EPP staff, DPI staff, LEA staff, and the SBE.
Note: the number of teachers for whom direct licensure is required will dramatically increase due to the unavailability of testing.
 - b. The EPPs could be required to recommend all licensure candidates who have completed all requirements except testing. This option would require legislative action (SBE does not authority to require EPPs to recommend).
Note: Such a recommendation to the General Assembly would not be received well from our EPP partners.

Educator Preparation:

State statute requires EPP candidates to complete 16 weeks of student teaching in order to qualify for an IPL. The March 16, 2020, school closure resulted in most candidates not being able to complete the required number of weeks and will not be eligible for licensure. Additionally, EPPs are concerned that the suspension of testing by ETS will affect students applying to the EPP for the fall. State statute

requires students to pass PRAXIS Core as a requirement for admission (or waive by meeting a prescribed SAT score).

1. Student Teaching

- a. EPPs may recommend candidates for licensure who have not fulfilled the requirements for student teaching if they began student teaching prior to March 16, 2020.

Note: This option would require legislative action. Additionally, the EPPs may express concern that these candidates are not adequately prepared and will potentially damage their accountability measure.

- b. EPPs may recommend candidates for licensure who have not fulfilled the requirements for student teaching if they began student teaching prior to March 16, 2020. EPPs would continue to work with the teachers and their mentors until they satisfy the 16-week requirement.

Note: EPPs may not have the resources to accomplish this in conjunction with their responsibilities for preparing the next year's cohort of candidates.

2. PRAXIS Core

- a. EPPs may admit candidates to their program without having passed, or waived, the required PRAXIS Core requirements. Candidates must pass the PRAXIS Core by the end of their first year of coursework with the EPPs. Candidates who have not passed the PRAXIS Core, may not continue enrollment in the EPP.

Note: Technically, this issue is the responsibility of EPPs, and not the State Board of Education. Insofar as the SBE is committed to ensuring a continuous pipeline of well qualified teachers in North Carolina, it may be prudent to work with EPP leadership to endorse the EPP's recommendation to the General Assembly. NCDPI has scheduled a meeting with EPP leadership on April 9, 2020 to understand their approach to the issue.

- b. The requirement to pass the PRAXIS Core is waived for admission to an EPP for the 2020-21 academic year.

Note: This option would require legislative action. (4/9/2020)

The State Board of Education should be aware that legislative staff has contacted NCDPI staff and requested data related to the issues listed above, as well as other licensure-related issues. At the time of this report, NCDPI is not aware of what, if any, the General Assembly might take regarding these matters or when any proposed legislation might be forthcoming.