

## Leadership Group on School Staffing Challenges

### *Executive Summary of Preliminary Licensing Recommendations*

The Leadership Group on School Staffing Challenges, representing school administrators, school boards, teachers, educator preparation programs, and others, has developed the following consensus recommendations for improving educator licensing policy and expanding Wisconsin's workforce. These recommendations are focused on:

- Enhancing opportunities for licensed educators to match their skills and interests with available jobs;
- Streamlining the licensing system to make it nimble enough to meet district workforce needs;
- Maintaining the high quality of a statewide licensing system and educator preparation programs; and
- Maintaining the quality of our educator workforce, while creating more opportunities for all students.

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#### Fewer Licenses, More Flexibility

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**Proposal: Consolidate developmental licenses from five to two: PK-9 for early childhood, elementary, and middle school; and PK-12 for all subject licenses and special education.** Teachers would be prepared with an emphasis in early childhood, elementary, or middle school development, but would be licensed to teach PK-9. All seeking a subject license would be trained to teach PK-12. Special education teachers could specialize in an age range or a specific disability, but they could teach any grade and continue to work with children as they age.

**Proposal: Consolidate multiple related subject area licenses into single subject licenses.** Candidates would be prepared and licensed with a broadfield license (similar to the current math license) in areas like science, social studies, music, and English Language Arts. Teachers could specialize in a specific area of choice, but would be allowed to teach in any area of the broadfield.

**Proposal: Create universal licensure for certain pupil service and non-teaching employees that are substantially similar to licenses offered by other agencies.** Individuals licensed by agencies like the Department of Safety and Professional Services and where preparation is substantially similar would be eligible to be licensed by the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to work in schools without completing additional requirements.

**Proposal: Simplify and consolidate multiple pathways to licensure.** The state would consolidate the patchwork of licenses in new identifiable "tiers" to create simplicity and transparency. New tiers would consolidate permits (Tier 0); support prospective educators who are pursuing but have not yet completed full licensure (Tier 1); and encourage greater use of retired educators in part-time or short-term roles (Tier 5).

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#### Effective Collaboration to Address Shortages and Other Workforce Needs

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**Proposal: Expand ability for school districts to hire teaching interns.** New internship opportunities would be created for students still in a preparation program and not yet fully licensed, especially in shortage areas. Specifically, interns could receive a Tier 1 license allowing them to serve as teachers of record; work full time; serve for a full year; be paid for work; and be hired at different points in the year.

**Proposal: Convene education leaders semi-annually to pool resources and develop common solutions to workforce issues.** DPI would convene leaders from PK-12, higher education, and workforce development to review educator workforce data, identify workforce shortages, and respond with workforce development strategies, such as "fast track" credentialing in areas of identified need.

**Proposal: Compile a clearinghouse of innovative and "fast track" credentialing programs that exist for credentialing educators in shortage areas.** A clearinghouse would allow those interested to find all available programs to quickly prepare and credential teachers in shortage areas in one spot.

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#### Ease Licensing Process for Educators Trained in another State

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**Proposal: Grant automatic license reciprocity to out-of-state candidates that pass the edTPA.** Nationwide, there are 722 educator preparation programs in 38 states and the District of Columbia that use the edTPA, a test that measures readiness to teach. Passage of this test should serve as readiness to teach in Wisconsin.

**Proposal: Consider license reciprocity for military spouses.** Military spouses face unique challenges in navigating different state licensing systems. Automatic/expedited credentialing for these individuals should be explored.

**Provide educators prepared out of state the opportunity to receive a Tier 1 License.** Educators prepared out of state that haven't passed the edTPA or don't have a year of teaching experience could be granted a Tier 1 license with stipulations. After a year of successful teaching experience in Wisconsin, these educators could become eligible for full Wisconsin licensure.

**Reduce Testing Burden on Prospective Teachers**

**Proposal: Allow students to demonstrate competency in a subject through either a 3.0/4.0 GPA or higher or by successfully passing a content test.** Candidates could demonstrate competency either through GPA or a content exam. Content exams would continue to be required for alternative route programs or adding on a license.

**Proposal: Allow prospective educators required to take the Foundations of Reading Test (FoRT) to acquire a Tier 1 license before passage.** Providing qualified candidates the opportunity to teach on a provisional basis would give them time to pass this exam, which would still be required for full licensure as an Initial Educator (Tier 2).

**Proposal: Allow prospective educators required to take the FoRT but who haven't yet passed the exam to acquire a Tier 1 license, and allow those educators the option of demonstrating competency in an alternative way.** As an alternative to the option above, candidates could receive a Tier 1 license and demonstrate their proficiency in teaching reading either through passage of the test or by providing multiple measures of improved student performance in reading as a condition for endorsement as a Tier 2 Initial Educator.

**Expand Opportunities for Licensed Teachers to Take on New Challenges**

**Proposal: Create a new pathway for experienced, licensed educators to teach and acquire licensure in additional subjects or developmental levels under the supervision of the school district.** The school district would be responsible for ensuring the candidate receives support needed to acquire new content or pedagogical knowledge and skills, including through possible partnerships and/or validation through educator preparation programs. After two years in the new content/development area, the candidate could be licensed for the new area within the district. After three years and with partnership with educator preparation programs for additional validation encouraged, the school district could endorse the candidate for full licensure in the new content/developmental area, which would then be transferable across the state.

