

Manual of Policies and Procedures

Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators
Educator Quality Division

Revised 3/2024



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POLICY C1

VSBE Meetings

- A. Frequency
 - 1. The Standards Board shall meet regularly during each academic year. The meeting schedule shall be publicly announced in August for the ensuing year.
- B. Robert's Rules of Order
 - 1. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the conduct of Standards Board meetings.
 - 2. A parliamentarian may be appointed by the chair.
- C. Quorum
 - 1. A quorum for the Board will consist of seven members and shall be necessary for any official action of the board.
 - 2. Concurrence of seven Board members present at a Standards Board meeting shall be necessary and sufficient for Board action.
 - 3. A quorum for standing committees will consist of three members.
- D. Attendance
 - 1. There will be an attempt to vary meeting days to minimize impact on teacher/administrator schedules.
 - 2. The business of VSBE occurs at meetings. The chair will review the standing of members who miss meetings and take action where warranted.
- E. Board Meeting Attendees
 - 1. The chairperson of the Board may recognize visitors, guests, and other interested parties to speak and to assist the Board and its standing committees.
 - 2. The public shall be given a reasonable opportunity to express its opinion on matters considered by the Standards Board during the meeting as long as order is maintained. Public comment shall be subject to reasonable rules established by the chair.
 - 3. A qualified representative of the Agency of Education will be available at board meetings and committee meetings.
 - 4. Legal counsel will be present at meetings of the Standards Board to the extent necessary and possible.
- F. Orientation of New Members
 - 1. Orientation of new members will be by the chairperson or designee.
- G. Board Agendas
 - 1. Board meeting agenda items may be placed on the agenda at the request of:
 - a) Board members
 - b) representatives of the Agency of Education
 - c) individuals with recommendations from a duly constituted organization

2. Agendas will be determined by the chair in consultation with the Executive Committee and the Director of Educator Quality.
 3. All agenda item requests must be submitted to the chairperson through the Agency of Education.
 4. An item must be placed on the agenda if so, requested by a vote of the Board.
- H. Minutes
1. Meetings will be recorded electronically to aid in the writing of minutes.
 2. Motions and recommendations will be indented, single-spaced, and printed in boldface to distinguish them.
 3. In addition to the requirements of the open meeting law for the recording of minutes, the minutes shall highlight the substance of the discussion of important issues.
- I. Submission of Information to the Board
1. Until final approval by the Standards Board, all documents identified as representing the work of the Board shall be dated, marked draft, and, if appropriate, note the author.
 2. All documents submitted to the Standards Board by its committees or staff shall indicate date and authorship.
- J. Board Packets
1. Agendas, minutes and all other appropriate materials should be sent to the members of the Standards Board at least one week prior to board meetings and posted to the VSBPE web page
- K. Individual Board member(s) or committees of the Board may be permitted to act on behalf of the Standards Board only if so, authorized by vote of the Board and such vote is duly recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Adopted: 10/30/92; Revised: 4/13/2015; 11/28/17

POLICY C2

VSBE Committees

A. Permanent Standing Committees

1. Licensing Committee

- a) The majority of this Committee will be teachers
- b) The principal duties of this Committee are to:
 - (1) Oversee the operation of the Local and Regional Standards Boards and the relicensing process.
 - (2) Ensure that all those holding an Educator license have a mechanism to seek approval for relicensure.
 - (3) Adoption of endorsement standards according to which individuals may obtain a license or have one renewed or reinstated.

2. Program Approval Committee

- a) The principal duties of this Committee are to:
 - (l) Oversee the Program Approval Process for educator preparation programs. The process shall include assigning appropriate members to review teams, and assisting the Standards Board in reviewing of the findings of the review teams.

Process: Annually, after consultation with board members, the chair will make appointments to the standing committees.

Process: The chairs of the standing committees will be elected annually by the members of each standing committee.

B. Ad-hoc Committees

1. The chairperson may appoint ad-hoc committees to address any related issues not assigned to the standing committees.

C. Executive Committee

1. The Executive Committee will be composed of chair, vice chair, secretary, past chair if applicable, and chairs or representatives of standing committees.
2. The Executive Committee will assist the Chair in the formation of meeting agendas.
3. The Executive Committee may address issues that need attention before the next Standards Board meeting.

Adopted: 10/30/92; Revised: 12/18/08; Revised: 9/16/2017; Revised 10/23/2019

POLICY C3

Proposals to the VSBPE

Proposals to the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators will be considered in the following manner.

A. **Initiation of Proposal:** A proposal on any issue pertinent to the charge of the Standards Board may be brought by any member or committee of the VSBPE, the Secretary of Education or designees, the State Board of Education or a duly constituted organization concerned with educational matters.

Proposals shall be in writing and submitted to the Board Chair either directly or through the Licensing Office. The proposal shall specify the issue, the desired action, and the rationale for the proposed action.

B. **Referral of Proposals:** The Board Chair will receive all proposals and, in consultation with the Executive Committee, determine whether the proposal is within the scope of the Board's responsibilities and to which committee, if any, it will be referred. An effort shall be made to ascertain what other groups may be working on the same issue.

The Board Chair may refer a proposal to the appropriate standing committee, establish an ad-hoc committee to research the proposal, or refer it to the full board. Proposals shall be referred in as timely a manner as possible.

At a regular meeting, the Board Chair will inform the VSBPE of all proposals received and to which committee, if any, they have been referred.

C. **Committee Action:** A committee to which a proposal has been referred will research the issue and recommend an action to the Standards Board. The committee shall adhere to all pertinent requirements of the "open meeting law".

The Agency of Education shall be consulted for clarification and information regarding legal, educational and administrative ramifications of the proposal.

Efforts will be made to seek various points of view regarding the proposal including the view of those most affected by the proposal. These efforts may include public meetings.

As a result of its efforts, the committee will make a recommendation to the Standards Board regarding action on the proposal. The recommendation should be consistent with current regulations and adopted policies or specify any necessary changes to current regulations or policy.

The committee will also make a recommendation to the Standards Board as to whether the recommendation merits a public hearing. In the event a public hearing is held, the committee shall reconsider its recommendation in light of testimony received and report its recommendation to the Standards Board.

D. Standards Board Action: The Standards Board will act on committee recommendations at the next or later meeting. The Board may accept, reject for stated reasons, or revise the recommendations.

In the event a proposal is referred to the Standards Board as a whole, the Board will follow the same procedures indicated in paragraph C when addressing a proposal.

A proposal adopted by the Standards Board should be consistent with current regulations and adopted policies or specify any necessary changes to current regulation or policy.

E. Public Hearing: If a public hearing is deemed necessary by the Standards Board, a hearing will be scheduled by the Board Chair and public notice shall be given in accordance with law. In addition, organizations determined to have an interest in the proposal will be notified. A public hearing may, but need not be, scheduled in conjunction with a regular VSPBE meeting. The public meeting may be conducted with the full Board or a portion of the Board present or by the Board Chair or designee acting alone. The public hearing will be conducted according to the following procedures:

- all hearings shall be open to the public
- those wishing to testify must sign in
- witnesses may testify orally and/or submit testimony in writing
- unless otherwise permitted by the Board Chair or designee, each witness shall be permitted up to five minutes to testify
- testimony shall be recorded
- a summary of the testimony shall be prepared for the Standards Board

F. Rule Change: If the adopted proposal requires an amendment to the Standard Board Rules, the proposal will be forwarded in writing to the Agency of Education. The Agency will follow the procedures of Chapter 25 Title 3 in regards to rule making and to Title 16 VSA sec. 1695

Adopted: 10/30/92; Revised: 3/12/08; 4/13/2015; 5/13/2017

POLICY C4

Action Plan and Relationship to the State Board of Education

The Chair of the Standards Board or designees will represent the Standards Board at appropriate State Board of Education meetings.

The Standards Board shall develop an annual Action Plan. The Action Plan will include new issues for study and ongoing work to be completed by the Professional Standards Board. The annual Action Plan will be reviewed and posted each year.

Adopted: 10/30/92; Revised: 12/18/08; 5/13/15

POLICY C6

Adoption of Policies

The Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE) shall adopt policies in the following manner:

1. A policy may be proposed by any member or committee of VSBPE, the Secretary of Education or his or her designee, the State Board of Education, or a duly constituted organization concerned with educational matters. Such proposals shall be accepted and referred by the Chair of the VSBPE to an appropriate committee for review and recommendation. A policy proposed by any other individual or organization may be accepted and referred by the Chair of the VSBPE as set forth above.
2. Upon recommendation of the appropriate committee, discussion of the proposed policy by the VSBPE shall take place at least one meeting prior to adoption of said policy. The committee recommendation and VSBPE discussion may occur at the same meeting. Notice of said discussion and adoption will be included on the VSBPE meeting agenda. The notice will include the title, the file code and a brief statement of the substance of the proposed policy and will indicate that public discussion of the proposed policy will be permitted.

In extraordinary circumstances that require the immediate adopting of a proposed policy, said proposed policy may be adopted without following the procedures set forth above. The said policy will remain in effect only if it is ratified at the next meeting of the VSBPE following its adoption.

Adopted: 01/18/93; Revised: 5/13/15

POLICY D2

Approval of Plans of Operation for Local and Regional Standards Boards

A plan of operation for a local standards board in each supervisory union/school district/independent board will be developed by the VSBPE (Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators). A plan of operation for a regional standards board to serve administrators will be developed by the VSBPE also. Regions will usually be formed along the lines of the established superintendent regions.

- 1) Appendix B of the plan will be submitted to the standards board consultant at the Agency of Education for review.
- 2) Upon successful review of a plan's Appendix B, the plan will be granted approval by the Agency's L/RSB consultant.
- 3) If an Appendix B does not meet the approval, it will be returned for revision to local districts or regions and will be re-submitted to the standards board consultant for review.

The recommended plans of operation will be approved for a period of **five (5) years**. Each local/regional standards board will monitor the plan implementation during the first two (2) years of the plan's operation and at the end of the third year, the local/regional standards board will identify in its annual report to the Standards Board for Professional Educators, areas of concern or problems that exists in the plan of operation which will be reported back to the VSBPE for consideration of changes to the plan. Any proposed changes to Appendix B of the plan must be first submitted to the L/RSB consultant at the VT AOE for approval.

Amendments to plans of operation are subject to approval by the VSBPE.

Adopted: 10/30/92; Revised: 12/18/08; 12/19/14; 3/9/2022

POLICY D3

License Renewal/Reinstatement/Retired Educator Application for Educators on Sabbatical or Leave of Absence

Educators who are on sabbatical or formal leave of absence from a school district or supervisory union/district shall be considered to be employees of that district or supervisory union/district for the purposes of applying for a **Retired Educator/renewing/reinstating** an educator license. Therefore, employees on sabbatical or formal leave of absence shall work through the appropriate local or regional standards to receive a recommendation for relicensure.

Adopted: 5/4/96; Reviewed 11/21/14; Revised: 3/09/2022

POLICY D4

Policy Regarding Consolidation of Supervisory Unions/School Districts: Impact on Local & Regional Standards Boards

The Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE) wishes to establish a policy for Local/Regional Standards Boards (L/RSB) as supervisory unions/school districts consolidate into one new supervisory union.

Regional Standards Boards:

- 1) Practicing administrators will continue to be served by the same RSB as in their previous supervisory union if all administrators are served by the same RSB.
- 2) When administrators from the new supervisory union are served by different RSBs, then the RSB that serves the majority of administrators will now serve all administrators from the new supervisory union.

Local Standards Boards:

- 1) The former LSBs from the two old supervisory unions will become defunct as of the effective date of the new supervisory union.
- 2) One new LSB will be formed to serve all practicing educators of the new supervisory union under a new plan of operations from the effective date of the new supervisory union.
- 3) Members from the former LSBs will serve for at least a period of one year or the rest of their term (if they should so desire) for transition purposes and continuity.
- 4) Consolidating LSBs should meet in the year leading up to the effective date of the new supervisory union to ensure a smooth transition for all concerned.

Adopted: 4/24/13; Reviewed 11/21/14; 3/09/2022

POLICY E1

Policy on Financial Grants To Local and Regional Standards Boards

It is the policy of the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators to authorize some financial assistance in addition to the supervisory unions' responsibility for the support of local and regional standards boards.

Formula for disseminating grant allowances will be calculated each year based on funding availability according to a method determined by the VSBPE and subject to the following conditions:

- 1) Financial resources available
- 2) LSBs/RSBs have an approved plan of operation
- 3) LSBs/RSBs apply for the grant by completing a grant application by deadline assigned
- 4) LSBs/RSBs have completed the annual report required by the VSBPE
- 5) LSBs/RSBs send representation to all trainings held by the VSBPE and the Licensing Office.
- 6) LSBs/RSBs meet any other conditions that may be established.

❖ **Note: Grants awards will only be distributed when fiscal agent responsible for the Grant completes all processes/documentation required by the AOE Finance Office in the mandatory timeframe.**

Adopted: 10/30/92; Revised: 1/15/04; 12/19/14; 6/16/16; Revised 10/23/2019; Revised: 3/9/22

POLICY F1

Policy on Licensure of Individuals Who Have Completed Their Academic Preparation Outside of The United States

Individuals, who have completed their academic preparation outside of the United States, must have their academic background equated into American educational terms.

In order to determine eligibility for Vermont licensure the Licensing and Professional Standards Office will:

1. Require a minimum of a bachelor's degree where specified in the regulations, or require the applicant, if determined by the licensing office, to use a recognized credential service to translate his or her transcripts and determine that the applicant possesses a minimum of the equivalent of a U.S. bachelor's degree.
2. Require coursework in education of students with disabilities if it was not included in the applicant's preparation.
3. Require the applicant to demonstrate general knowledge of American history and culture.

There is no citizenship requirement.

Adopted: 10/30/92; Revised: 5/22/06; Revised: 10/26/2017 & Adopted: 11/28/2017

POLICY F2

Policy on Recency of Study

Updated knowledge and skills for Initial licensure (including reciprocity for lifetime licenses and expired reciprocal licenses from another NASDTEC jurisdiction), Reinstatement, and Adding Endorsements through Transcript Review:

An applicant shall meet the following requirements for updated knowledge and skills when there is a time lapse of ten (10) or more years between the time of the courses taken for the license or endorsement, when granted an out-of-state lifetime license, and application for licensure or additional endorsement. An applicant applying with an expired out of state license, recency of study must be shown regardless of when the out of state license was expired. Recency of study will not be required for an applicant applying with an out of state lifetime license that is over 10 years old but has employment as a licensed teacher within the last 5 years:

Six (6) credits/ 90 hours of professional learning in the endorsement area within the last five (5) years are required.

Two (2) credits/30 hours of the six (6) credits/90 hours must align with the content and knowledge standards of the endorsement.

Activities that qualify can be found in SB/H2 – Activities that Qualify for Professional Learning Credit.

Adopted: 3/12/08

Revised: 2/11/15; Reviewed 3/28/18; Revised 3/12/19; 9/8/21; 11/22; 9/14/23; 10/19/23

Policy F3

Assessments Considered as Demonstration of Basic Competency

The Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators recognizes meeting cut scores on any of the following assessments as demonstration of basic competency required for education licensure. Cut scores for specific assessments are reviewed annually and published online at www.education.vermont.gov.

- A. Praxis Core
- B. SAT
- C. ACT
- D. GRE
- E. ASVAB

POLICY G1

Procedures for Hearing Endorsement Proposals

I. Purpose of Endorsements

All applicants for initial license as an educator are expected to demonstrate that they meet the *Core Teaching Standards*¹. An endorsement builds on these *Core Teaching Standards* and represents the unique content knowledge and skills required for teaching specific subject matter, or otherwise practicing a particular aspect of the educational process. The ultimate purpose for endorsements is to provide students with highly effective educators who can deliver the education necessary for students to achieve or exceed state standards. Endorsements also influence the hiring process and staffing for schools and shape educator preparation programs.

The VSBPE seeks to achieve a balance in the number and the specificity of endorsements in order to serve the primary purpose of furthering student learning while providing an effective licensure system for Vermont educators, schools, and higher education preparation programs. To that end the following procedures apply.

II. Initiation of Proposal

A proposal to add, revise, or eliminate an endorsement(s) may be initiated by a member or committee of the VSBPE or by any duly constituted organization concerned with educational matters. Proposals shall be submitted in writing to the Chair of the VSBPE. Upon receipt of the proposal, the VSBPE will consider the following:

- a. How the proposal specifies a knowledge base unique to this endorsement that will serve to improve student learning;
- b. if the unique knowledge and skills cannot sufficiently be addressed through another endorsement or through the hiring process;
- c. how the specified knowledge and skills for this particular field of practice builds on the *Core Teaching Standards* required of all fields;
- d. how the proposal aligns with “*Vermont State Board of Education adopted Standards.*”
- e. how the proposal is based on current research and best practices and that differing philosophies were explored;
- f. the impact this proposal might have on local schools and on higher education institutions that have educator preparation programs.

Furthermore, the VSBPE will establish a prioritized list of endorsements to revise with the goal of reviewing all endorsements in a five-year period.

Applicants for School Psychologist, School Social Worker, School Nurse, Associate School Nurse, Junior ROTC Instructor, and Work Based Learning Coordinator, endorsements need not meet the Core Teaching Standards according to Rule 5235 of the Rules Governing the Licensing of Educators and the Preparation of Educational Professionals.

III. Referral of Proposal

The Chair of the VSBPE shall, in consultation with the Executive Committee, refer a proposal to an appropriate committee of the Board.

At a regular meeting, the Chair will inform the VSBPE of all proposals received and the committee to which they have been referred.

IV. Committee Action

The Agency of Education will be consulted for clarification and information regarding legal, educational and administrative ramifications of the proposal.

The committee shall ensure that new or revised endorsements serve the purpose of endorsements and address the listed criteria for what endorsements should do. The purpose and criteria are stated in sections I and III.

The committee shall make a recommendation to the VSBPE as to whether or not the proposal merits a public meeting or public hearing.

V. Public Involvement

The VSBPE will seek a broad-spectrum of points of view regarding the proposal and review the results of those efforts including documentation that constituencies affected by the proposal were invited to comment. The VSBPE will consider public feedback prior to adopting a final revision.

Adopted: 10/30/92; Revised: 6/3/99; 4/24/13, 10/23/19

POLICY G2

Policy on Modern/Classical Language(s) - Native Speakers

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to establish the testing and degree requirements of native speakers seeking to attain the initial Level I license with the Modern and Classical Language endorsement and when seeking to add the Modern and Classical Language endorsement.

Native speakers seeking the initial Level I license with the Modern and Classical Languages endorsement and those seeking to add the Modern and Classical Languages endorsement who seek exception from the requirement of a major in a modern or classical language, or the equivalent in undergraduate and/or graduate coursework must document proficiency in the target language. The documentation shall be an evaluation score of Advanced-Mid level or higher on the ACTFL assessment.

Adopted: 9/8/94; Reviewed: 3/20/15, 10/11/19

Policy G3 - Endorsements

Policy on Sunsetting Endorsements

The Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE) occasionally determines that an existing endorsement is no longer relevant or needed and wishes to establish a policy that will not impact educators currently endorsed in that particular endorsement.

With any proposed rule change, the Vermont formal (ICAR) rule making process establishes a public comment period regarding the sunsetting of a current endorsement. Included in the rule revision is the VSBPE recommended date for sunsetting of the endorsement.

For any educator who holds the proposed sunsetting endorsement they may **retain, renew, reinstate, and apply for a Retired Educator License** pursuant to the Rules for those processes at the time (Rule 5430).

Additional Guidelines for Sunsetting Endorsements:

- Notification will be posted (AOE website, Weekly Field Memos, VSBPE Rules) of the date when an endorsement will sunset/end.
- Notification will be posted regarding when Initial, Transcript Review, and Peer Review applications for the sunsetting endorsement will no longer be accepted.
- Educators currently in the process of adding the sunsetting endorsement (prior to the announcement for no longer accepting applications to add the sunsetting endorsement) will be allowed to finish the application process according to the Rules and requirements specific to the process at the time of the acceptance of the application and timelines associated with each process.

Adopted: 3/29/17; Reviewed: 3/09/2022

POLICY G4

Teaching Experience for Administrative Endorsements

Per rule, educators are required to have three years of licensed ***PK-12*** teaching experience to be eligible to apply for principal, curriculum director, or superintendent endorsements. It shall be the policy of this board that educators who have three or more years of unlicensed teaching experience as defined in rule in an approved or recognized Vermont school or commensurate school in another state are eligible to apply for an administrative license upon ***successful demonstration of competency*** with the Vermont Core Teaching Standards.

This policy is not applicable to the Director of Special Education endorsement.

Adopted: 3/9/2022

POLICY G5

Alternative Demonstration of Academic Competence

If an educator does not meet the 3.0 overall GPA as required by rule, s/he can demonstrate overall academic competence by one of the alternative manners below:

- Completion of postbaccalaureate degree
- GPA of 3.25 or better for junior and senior years or last 60 hours of baccalaureate program
- GPA of 3.25 or better in relevant field of major studies
- Attestation of academic competence by recommending Education Preparation Program

If an educator does not meet the 3.0 GPA in the field of major studies as required by rule, s/he can demonstrate competence in the field of major studies by one of the alternative manners below:

- Where applicable, a Praxis II passing score 10% higher than the defined cut score
- Completion of postbaccalaureate degree in a relevant endorsement area
- Attestation of academic competence by recommending Education Preparation Program

Adopted: 3/9/2022

POLICY G6

Policy on Alternative Route to Middle Grades Licensure

Educators holding a secondary (grades 7-12) content area endorsement in a core academic area (math, social studies, English, science) are eligible for a middle grades endorsement in the same content area if the following conditions are met:

1. A superintendent applies for a provisional middle grades endorsement on behalf of the educator with a secondary content area endorsement.
2. The educator teaches under the provisional license for up to two years at the 5th or 6th grade level in a middle-grades setting.
3. The educator completes coursework aligned with all middle grades general competencies with the exception of Standard 4 Instruction and Assessment.

This policy is in effect for two-years and will be revisited in Spring of 2025.

POLICY H1

Policy on the Use of Professional Learning Credits/Hours In Next Licensure Cycle

Renewal of a Level I and Level II Vermont Professional Educator License is contingent upon satisfactory completion of professional learning during the validity period of the license. In most cases, a license validity period begins on July 1 of the calendar year it is issued and ends on June 30 of the calendar year it expires.

The VSBPE intends to provide flexibility that will maintain the concept of professional learning within the licensure period and at the same time, support educators who wish to engage in high quality professional learning related to their specific endorsement and the Core Teaching and Leadership Standards for Vermont Educators.

To that end, it is the policy of the VSBPE that an educator may apply professional learning to the next licensure period when the following conditions exist:

- the educator has met all requirements for relicensure and has received a recommendation for license renewal from the appropriate local or regional board,
- the professional learning aligns with the with the educator's endorsement and the Core Teaching and Leadership Standards for Vermont Educators and meets requirements of VSBPE Policy H2 – ***Activities that Qualify for Professional Learning Credit,***
- the professional learning takes place after January 1 of the calendar year in which the educator's license expires,
- approvals clearly indicate the licensure period to which the professional learning applies.

Adopted: 12/03/98; Revised: 12/19/14; 3/09/2022

POLICY H2

Activities That Qualify For Professional Learning Credit/Hours

The following activities meet state professional learning requirements for relicensure or reinstatement of a lapsed license and shall be verified by L/RSBs and the Licensing Office when the activities meet the requirements below and when all required documentation has been submitted. In some cases, there are restrictions on the total number of required credits/hours that may be earned through particular categories of activities. (Other activities may be acceptable upon consultation with the L/RSB and the Licensing Office.)

- 1) In order to be approved, professional learning activities submitted for license/endorsement renewal/reinstatement shall:
 - a) result in new learning
 - b) relate directly to the knowledge and performance standards (***specific to the endorsement area being renewed, reinstated, or applying for a Retired ED License***) and/or to the *Core Teaching Standards for Vermont Educators* and/or *Core Leadership Standards for Vermont Educators*,
- 2) Professional learning credit/hours may be awarded for activities that are paid or unpaid and required by the school/district or self-selected.
- 3) A credit is a unit of measure assigned by a local or regional standards board, or the Licensing Office, to professional learning activities other than academic credit bearing courses that meet standards for relicensure/reinstatement. Fifteen (15) clock hours of professional learning is equivalent to one (1) relicensure credit. Credit applies equally toward relicensure/reinstatement requirements.
- 4) The minimum contact time required for relicensure credit to be accrued is one (1) hour.
- 5) Preapproval of professional learning activities is suggested but not required.
- 6) Level I renewals require three credits (45 hours) of professional learning in the endorsement area. One of the three credits (15 hours) must align with the knowledge and performance standards of the endorsement.

Educators wishing to reinstate a lapsed Level I which has lapsed 10 or more years must show recency of study (VSBPE Policy F2) unless the educator holds a valid Vermont Level II/Retired Educator License. Recency of Study: Document six credits (90 hours) of professional learning in the endorsement area. Two of the six credits (30 hours) must align with the knowledge and performance standards of the endorsement. All professional learning must be accrued in the five (5) years immediately preceding the reinstatement application.

Level II five (5) year renewals require six credits (90 hours) of professional learning in the endorsement area. Two of the six credits (30 hours) must align with the knowledge and performance standards of the endorsement.

Reinstating a lapsed seven (7) year Level II License, an educator would need to document 135 hours of new professional learning in the endorsement area. Three of the nine credits (45 hours) must align with the knowledge and

performance standards of the endorsements. All professional learning must be accrued in the seven (7) years immediately preceding the reinstatement application.

- 7) Credits earned by an educator during a licensure cycle may be used if applicable to address professional learning requirements to renew multiple endorsements and also both Level I and Level II licenses.
- 8) All documentation must be on official organization stationery, include educator's name, activity content, hours and dates associated with the activity.

1. **Academic Courses (graduate, undergraduate) for credit/grade**

Documentation shall include:

- Official transcript or grade report (*Grade of B or better*)

Limitations:

- Relicensure credits granted will equal the academic credits indicated on the transcript or grade report
- No limit on number of required credits that may be earned in this manner

2. **Academic Courses (graduate, undergraduate) audit**

Documentation shall include

- Letter on college/university letterhead signed by the professor/instructor presenting the course.

Letter to include:

1. Name of Course
2. Dates of Course
3. Hours of attendance for educator
4. Documentation from the educator on the work/assignments completed including professional reading completed during the participation in the course audit

Limitations:

- A course audit may not exceed 45 hours per licensure cycle.
- An educator may only audit one course per licensure cycle.

3. **Workshops/Seminars/Professional Conferences Sponsored by Credible and Recognizable Organizations** (e.g., Vermont-NEA, ASCD, school districts, VASS, NSTA, AOE, NBTS, etc.)

Documentation shall include:

- Verification of participation, program content, contact hours, and dates
- E.g., organization certificate of completion, letter on official letterhead of the organization signed by the presenter/instructor

Limitations:

- No limit on number of required hours that may be earned in this manner

4. Designing, Developing and Teaching Courses or Workshops – developed for educators or for a college/university in the presenter’s endorsement area or educational pedagogy).

Documentation shall include:

- Course or workshop syllabus
- Verification by institution or organization on official stationery that course/workshop was held and dates

Limitations:

- Limited to initial offering or complete redesign of course/workshop
- Limited to 45 hours per endorsement

5. Applied Experience in Content Area of Endorsement Through Employment in a Related Non-Educational Setting or Internship, or Through Related Educational Travel or Volunteer Service

Documentation shall include:

- Description of job/position, educational travel, or volunteer service
- Employer or sponsor verification of experience or service on official stationery, including number of hours or weeks including dates of participation
- Documentation of the travel (may include journal, tickets, museum stubs, itinerary, etc.)

Limitations:

- Limited to 45 hours per endorsement

6. Local School/District Initiatives or Action Research/Reform Projects

Documentation shall include:

- Brief description of goals and outcome of initiative/ research/reform project
- Verification by project/initiative convener on official stationery of
 - participant's role
 - number of contact hours and dates

Limitations:

- Limited to 45 hours per endorsement

7. State/National Education Activities or Reform Projects/Committees

Documentation shall include:

- Brief description of goals and outcome of activity/project
- Verification by project/activity convener on official stationery of
 - participant's role
 - number of contact hours and dates

Limitations:

- Limited to 45 hours per endorsement

8. Institution of Higher Education Reform Activities – Partnerships with K-12 Schools

Documentation shall include:

- Brief description of goals and outcome of activity/project
- Verification by project/activity convener on official stationery of
 - participant's role
 - number of contact hours and dates

Limitations:

- Limited to 45 hours per endorsement

9. Educational Research and Publication

Documentation shall include:

- Verification of research and publication by recognizable and credible organization, or verification of acceptance of the thesis by an academic advisor in the case of degree-related research on official stationery and dates

Limitations:

- Limited to 45 hours per endorsement

10. National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) Certification

Documentation shall include:

- Verification completion of any or all components through NBPTS or VTNBCT Coordinator or a copy of the National Board Certificate earned

Limitations:

- A NBTC may be substituted for each comparable endorsement for renewal only once unless the educator completes the certificate renewal process
- In lieu of NBTC, 45 hours per component submitted to NB for each comparable endorsement

11. Industry credentials (e.g., Emergency Medical Technician) or Commercial Driver's License (CDL) add-ons

Documentation shall include:

- Official documentation of passage of the examination or receipt of the first CDL

Limitations:

- Limited to 45 hours per endorsement
- Limited to first issuance of credential or CDL

12. Peace Corps/AmeriCorps Experience

Documentation shall include:

- Verification by the organization director (or equivalent) of participant's role on official stationery and number of months of participation and dates

Limitations:

- Limited to 45 hours per endorsement

13. School-Business/Industry or School-Community Partnership Initiatives

Documentation shall include:

- Brief description of goals and outcome of activity/project
- Verification by project organizer on official stationery of
 - participant's role
 - number of contact hours and dates

Limitation:

- Limited to 45 hours per endorsement

14. Participation in a Mentoring Program as a Mentor or Mentee

Documentation shall include:

- Brief description and impact from mentoring program
- Verification on official stationery by mentor of participant's role accompanied by number of hours and dates
- Verification by the school principal of assignment to this role of mentor, number of mentees mentored, and total number of mentoring training and contact hours involved on official stationery including dates

Limitation:

- Maximum of 45 hours may be awarded for participation in a Mentoring Program as a Mentor or Mentee of Education Professionals

Adopted: 6/03/99; Revised: 10/19/11; 1/14/15; 6/16/16; 1/9/2018; 9/20/2018;
Revised 10/23/2019; Revised: 3/9/2022

POLICY H4

Policy on Improving Consistency for Educator Relicensure

It is the policy of the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators to provide guidance to Local/Regional Standards Boards as all Boards strive toward consistency with regards to educator relicensure.

The VSBPE will require the following:

Forms:

- All Boards shall use forms for relicensure that are supplied by the Licensing Office.

Training:

- The Licensing Office shall continue annual L/RSB trainings/conferences to update Boards on relicensing changes/issues/procedures as circumstances permit. In addition to attending an annual training, a remote training/meeting with each L/RSB is required for all Boards. Boards attending annual and remote trainings shall be eligible to receive a grant allocation pending availability of funds.
- The Local/Regional Standards Board Consultant shall attempt to visit each Board at least once in a two-year period.

Adopted: 3/11/10; Revised 1/14/15; 3/09/2022

POLICY N1

Policy on Low Performing Programs

1) PROGRAM COMPLETERS' ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

- a) Program Completers' licensure portfolios meet all performance standards.
- b) The majority of program completers (>80%) in the cohort meets state passing scores on the Praxis Core.
- c) The majority of program completers (>60%) in the cohort meets state passing scores on any required Praxis II tests as applicable.
- d) All candidates for licensure as secondary teachers have a major or equivalent in their endorsement area.
- e) All program completers have an overall average of B or better in the major of their endorsement area or equivalent, and in student teaching.

2) PROGRAM'S STATE APPROVAL STATUS

- a) The program shows progress towards meeting the Results-Oriented Program Approval (ROPA) Standards and the goals of its ROPA Seven Year Plan at the time of its full-program review.
- b) Program has addressed the concerns and stipulations as indicated in the Visiting Team Report in the Two-Year Report following a full-program review.

The necessary data for this assessment is generated by the state's Title II Institutional Reports (e.g., program completer test scores) or as part of the Results-Oriented Program Approval process.

According to the Vermont plan for this effort, the Agency of Education, in collaboration with the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE), identifies any program that does not meet the criteria. Such a program is identified as "at risk." The Agency will work with "at risk" institutions to develop a Technical Assistance Plan that specifies goals and action steps for improvement of the "at risk" program. The Agency will provide support to assist the program in meeting its goals.

The VSBPE will monitor the progress of the institution and program and determine on an annual basis whether to continue the program's "at risk" designation. The maximum number of years a program can be designated "at risk" is three years. After three years the VSBPE will designate the program as "low performing" and withdraw state approval.

Adopted: 12/16/09, Revised 3/30/18

POLICY N2

Policy on Consequences for Non-Compliant Approved Educator Preparation/Alternate Route Programs

In the event that an approved Educator Preparation Program or Alternate Route Program does not submit the required documentation (Annual Report, Two-Year Report, Seven-Year Plan, Institutional Portfolio) by the date it is due, the VSBPE or the Office on behalf of the VSBPE will send a formal letter notifying the Institution/Program of the missed deadline and that the Institution/Program's approval status will be changed effective immediately. Status change guidelines:

If the Institution/Program had Full Approval the status will drop to Conditional Approval. A program that drops to Conditional Approval will need to meet conditions established by the Board in order to regain Full Approval.

If the Institution/Program had Conditional Approval, the Board will review the situation and determine at their next regularly scheduled meeting whether to revoke that approval.

Adopted: 11/29/18

POLICY N3

Policy on Follow-Up Visits for Teacher Education Programs Which Have Been Granted Limited or Conditional Approval

It is the policy of the Professional Standards Board that follow-up visits by the Board are required to all colleges and universities or alternate programs when the ROPA approval was conditional or limited because of areas of needed improvement. Exceptions may be granted by the Board after recommendation by its Program Approval Committee. Requests for such exceptions may originate with the Program Approval Committee or the institution.

Adopted: 10/30/92, Revised 3/30/18

POLICY N4

Policy on the Approval of Alternate Route Programs

Licensing rule 5332 gives the VSBPE the authority to approve alternate route programs. All alternate routes to licensure are therefore required to seek program approval through the Results Oriented Program Approval (ROPA) process. Such a requirement assures quality programs that meet Vermont's rigorous program approval standards and that address the needs specific to Vermont schools. Additionally, organizations creating an alternate route program are expected to use the VSBPE's ***Recommendations for Alternate Route Programs*** in the design of a program.

Adopted: 1/22/08, Revised 3/30/18

POLICY N5

Policy on the Selection and Training of ROPA Review Team Members

It is the policy of the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (hereinafter “Standards Board”) to attract the most qualified individuals to serve on Results Oriented Program Approval (ROPA) review teams for educator preparation and alternate route programs. At the same time, it is essential to the operations and credibility of the ROPA process that a visiting team be independent and impartial and that its recommendations be made solely on the merits of the institution visited. Public confidence in the integrity of the Standards Board and the ROPA process may be lessened whenever a conflict, or perceived conflict, exists between private interests of a visiting team member and his or her official responsibilities.

Review Team Selection Procedures

- A. When a visiting team is to be selected, the ROPA Consultant shall develop a proposed list of individuals to serve on the visiting team. The ROPA Consultant shall contact each person on the list and, in addition to inquiring as to the willingness of each person to serve, shall determine whether any actual or perceived conflicts of interest might interfere with the person’s service on a visiting team.

- B. The ROPA Consultant and the VSBPE work to create review teams that are balanced in terms of expertise, content knowledge, and instructional level. The size of the team depends on the number of licensing areas to be evaluated and is comprised of specialists in the endorsement area(s) being sought. The team will include:
 - A Chair who will be a member of the professional teacher education community from out-of-state*
 - One member of the VSBPE
 - One member of the professional teacher education community from Vermont
 - One-Three members at large, preferably including an active teacher or administrator in the endorsement area.

1. The number of team members may be modified at the discretion of the VSBPE. An individual team member may fit multiple criteria; e.g., a review team member could be both a VSBPE member and an active administrator, fulfilling two separate commitments. There is a minimum of three Review Team members for all visits.

*For full program reviews the Chair must be a: *member of the professional teacher-education community from out-of-state whose travel expenses for visits and training will be directly paid by the site under review OR member of the professional teacher-*

education community from Vermont with visiting experience on a regional or national accrediting body whose travel expenses for visits and training will be directly paid by the AOE.

C. Upon the Office's satisfaction that the team contains persons who are qualified to serve and would not present any actual or perceived conflict of interest, the institution to be visited shall be notified of the names of proposed visiting team members. The institution will respond in writing that they either

1. Accept the team as suggested or
2. May request in writing that one or more members be removed from the team and a substitution be made either because of a lack of qualifications, conflict of interest, perceived conflict of interest, or concerns regarding the overall makeup of the team. The underlying reasons for the request shall be included in the written request.

a) Upon receipt of such request, the ROPA Consultant shall notify the prospective ROPA member or members identified by the institution of the request for removal from the team and of the underlying reasons therefore.

b) The ROPA Consultant will submit a revised visitation team to the institution. If, after two revised submissions, consensus between the Office and the institution is not achieved, the matter will be presented to the Standards Board for adjudication.

D. The Office shall present the final visitation team to the Program Approval Committee of the Standards Board for review and approval. The Program Approval Committee will then submit the team proposal to the full Board for approval.

II. Training of the Review Team

All team members will be trained on the ROPA Standards, the specific endorsement requirements, and the ROPA process for reviewing programs in advance of the on-site visit.

Adopted: 3/21/94; Revised: 12/18/08; 5/13/15, 3/30/18

POLICY N6

Policy on the Use of Results of Program Approval Visits

If an institution uses the results of its program approval visit in its publications, it must include program approval status and must ensure that all material presented is accurate, current and balanced.

Adopted: 2/9/95

POLICY N7

Policy and Procedures on Implementing Recommendations For Licensure through Approved Programs

As a matter of policy, the Standards Board for Professional Educators is committed to a successful transition for a student completing an approved program to becoming a licensed educator.

The recommending institution and the Licensing Office of the Agency of Education are partners in this transition and every effort should be made to ensure accurate, consistent, and efficient procedures for implementing a final recommendation for licensure and issuing a license.

In 1995, after consultation with representation from educator preparation institutions and the Licensing Office, the procedures of the recommending institution and the Licensing Office were delineated.

Procedures for the recommending institution will include:

- having a shared decision-making process, with institutional appeal procedures, which will result in a licensure recommendation;
- having one person, other than the registrar, be responsible for affixing the recommendation for licensure stamp to the transcript. The person is the "final checker."
- maintaining clear records on issues of licensure and keeping those records in one location;
- providing to the Office an annual list of all recommendations for licensure.

Recommended procedures for the Licensing Office will include:

- maintaining an online application process
- processing applications when all information, including transcripts, is complete;
- only accepting transcripts that have the official recommendation stamp. The wording on the official stamp shall be the same at each institution.
- setting up a file for each individual recommended for licensure;
- checking criminal records, oath, child support and tax forms;
- issuing the license to the educator;
- reviewing a sampling of applications for accuracy, including but not limited to, program of preparation, student teaching, degrees conferred.

Adopted: 6/1/95, Revised 3/30/18, 4/8/19

POLICY N8

Policy on Interpretation of the Major in the Liberal Arts or Sciences

Licensing regulations require that, with a few specified exceptions, all candidates for licensure shall hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution and shall have successfully completed a major, or its equivalent, in the liberal arts or sciences, or in the content area of the endorsement sought. The equivalent of a major is defined in the VSBPE Rules as "at least thirty (30) credit hours in the specified major field from accredited/approved institution(s), at least nine (9) of which shall be advanced undergraduate courses or higher." An interdisciplinary major is defined as "a planned program of study, approved by the institution, which includes courses in no more than three disciplines in the liberal arts or sciences and at least eighteen (18) hours in one of those disciplines."

It shall be the policy of the Standards Board to interpret these regulations as follows:

I. All baccalaureate candidates for licensure, unless otherwise exempted by regulation, shall document a major in the liberal arts or sciences by:

- a. A major listed on their transcript; or
- b. Thirty credit hours that fulfill the definition of the equivalent of a major or interdisciplinary major as defined above.

II. All post-baccalaureate and master's candidates for licensure, unless otherwise exempted by regulation, shall document a major in the liberal arts or sciences by:

- a. A major listed on their transcript; or
- b. Thirty credit hours that fulfill the definition of the equivalent of a major or interdisciplinary major as defined above; or
- c. Documentation and evaluation of equivalent learning experiences.
- d. A combination of "b" and "c".

III. Evaluation and documentation of the major or the equivalent of a major is the responsibility of the recommending institution or process. Each institution with an approved program, the Peer Review process, or any other alternate processes for becoming licensed specified in section 5300 of the licensing regulations shall define its own process for students to document, and for the institution or process to evaluate, the major in the liberal arts or sciences, coursework equivalent to the major in the liberal arts or sciences as defined above, or equivalent learning experiences. Each institution shall document its process in its Institutional Portfolio for program approval.

Adopted: 5/3/96; Revised: 12/18/08

POLICY N9

Policy on Alternative to Student Teaching In Approved Programs

The Standards Board for Professional Educators believes that a supervised, concentrated field experience in an appropriate setting is a necessary component in the development of competent educators. The majority of individuals seeking licensure through an approved Vermont Educator Preparation Program complete a traditional student teaching experience. A candidate, seeking licensure through an approved program, who has had extensive teaching experience that may have been in a setting other than a regular public-school classroom may apply all or part of that experience as an alternative to student teaching. The alternative experience is evidenced by the following criteria:

1. Verification of the equivalent of thirteen (13) consecutive weeks of teaching experience in an educational setting.
2. Supervision by a qualified person (i.e., a certified educator or a professional, who carries a credential or license appropriate to the occupation, in the field). The qualifications are determined by a resume review.
3. Documentation of sustained supervised experience in the knowledge and performance standards as well as any additional requirements in the endorsement area or field.
4. Documentation of sustained supervised experience at the instructional level for which licensure is sought.

Responsibility for determining an alternative experience rests with the institution.

Adopted 6/4/96; Revised 4/12/06, 3/30/18

POLICY N10

Policy on Student Teacher Placement With A Non-Vermont Licensed Cooperating Teacher

In order to place student teachers with non-Vermont licensed cooperating teachers, educator preparation programs must have a written policy, approved by the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE), for these placements. This policy will be reviewed as part of the ROPA process.

Each educator preparation program will submit policies and procedures ensuring the quality of these placements consistent with Rules Governing the Licensing of Educators and the Preparation of Educational Professionals including the Core Teaching and Leadership Standards for Vermont Educators as well as any additional requirements for the endorsement area(s).

Data concerning these placements will be maintained by each program and included in the Institutional Portfolio for review.

Alternate routes to licensure are also subject to this policy.

Adopted: 7/15/99; Revised: 4/12/06, 3/30/18

POLICY N11

Policy on Splitting the Student Teaching Placement

The Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators believes that a supervised, concentrated student teaching experience in an appropriate setting is a necessary component in the development of competent beginning educators. Rules Governing the Licensure of Educators and the Preparation of Educational Professionals define student teaching as "a minimum of thirteen (13) consecutive weeks of supervised, concentrated field experience required for initial licensure, including an internship, or other concentrated field experience however named, in which the student shall gradually assume the full professional roles and responsibilities of the initial endorsement area sought (section 5150)."

It is generally understood and common practice that the full student teaching internship is ideally with the same cooperating teacher for the thirteen weeks. However, there are situations in which this may not be considered best practice, or even possible.

From time to time, secondary candidates may need to be placed in more than one classroom setting to experience a full range of 7-12th grade students, different content areas within a licensure area (i.e., geometry and algebra, U.S. history and government, etc.), and a range of students. Such placements are permissible as long as candidates complete the required thirteen weeks of teaching with the same group or groups of students from the inception of their student teaching. That is, candidates may divide their day between different cooperating teachers. The thirteen-week requirement cannot be met by placing student teachers in one classroom for six weeks and then transitioning them to a second setting.

This flexibility may also be extended to middle and elementary student teaching placements. For a middle grades placement, the student teacher would stay with the content-area teacher throughout the day. In an elementary school where multiple teachers specialize in different content areas, it is possible to have multiple cooperating teachers as long as the student teacher spends the full thirteen weeks with the same cohort of students.

Approved programs that determine it is appropriate to divide the student teaching experience among different placements must have a written policy regarding the institution's rationale with supporting documentation. Documentation should detail how candidates will meet the intention of the student teaching requirement through the split placements. Such placements and the supporting documentation should be submitted as part of the full-program ROPA review process.

POLICY N11

Programs must document that their candidates seeking multiple endorsements or a multi-level endorsement are meeting all the knowledge and performance standards and additional requirements, if any, for the licensure recommendation. This may mean that one or more practica are required in addition to student teaching.

Adopted: 3/15/05; Revised: 2/14/08, 3/30/18, 4/8/19, 2/8/24

POLICY N13

Policy for Requests for Approval of New Programs

To request a review of a new educator preparation program, an institution or alternate route must follow these steps and timelines:

1. A letter from the president to request the visit must be received at least six months before the program review visit is conducted. Accompanying this request should be a Design Document detailing the proposed program. Included in the Design Document should be data and accompanying information indicating a demand for the program. Additionally, programs should provide documentation of progress existing programs have made toward addressing the concerns of the visiting team(s). Pay special attention to programs under conditional approval.
2. Upon receipt of the request, The VSBPE will consider the Design Document and seek clarification from the institution, as needed, before approving a visit.
3. The visit date will be established by the Office in cooperation with the institution. The Review Team will be determined by the ROPA Consultant and approved by the institution. The team will then be approved by the VSBPE.
4. At least two months prior to the scheduled visit, the Institutional Portfolio should be sent to the AOE. The AOE and the Review Team reviews the Institutional Portfolio and makes one of the following recommendations to the VSBPE for a determination:
 - Not enough information was provided for the visit to take place
 - More information is needed prior to the visit
 - Visit is ready to take place
5. Visit is conducted.

*Please note: New programs can only be provisionally approved for one to two years or denied approval by the Review Team. New programs cannot receive full approval until the end of a two-year period.

Adopted: 10/14/99; Revised: 12/18/08, 3/30/18, 11/29/18

POLICY N14

Policy on Academic Competence for Student Teaching

Statement of Purpose.

This policy is to provide guidance to approved educator preparation programs on the application of Vermont State Board of Education Rule 5924.2(a), establishing academic standards for candidates for student teaching. The VSBPE interprets Rule 5924.2(a) as follows:

Policy.

An approved teacher preparation program is not required to use a particular minimum grade-point average (e.g., 3.0 on a 4-point scale) when determining whether a student has attained the B average required to begin student teaching. However, an approved program must apply the same grade-point standard to student teaching candidates as is applied by the program's host institution to determine other academic honors, such as its Dean's List or Honor Roll.

For example, a student with a 2.8 grade-point average will qualify for student teaching if a 2.8 grade-point is treated by his or her institution as a B average for all other purposes. Accordingly, if an institution equates the attainment of a 3.0 grade point average with a B average, a student must have achieved a 3.0 average at that institution before entering student teaching.

In accordance with Rule 5924.2(a), a student who has not attained academic competence as attested by an overall B average, and a B average in the field of major studies as defined by the institution, prior to beginning student teaching may be placed in a student teaching position on written assurance of intellectual competence by the institution's academic dean.

Adopted: 7/31/01; Revised: 4/12/06, 3/30/18

POLICY N15

Policy on Program Approval for Various Educator Preparation Delivery Models and Recommendations for Licensure or Additional Endorsements

Vermont institutions and alternate routes to licensure offer a variety of delivery models for the preparation of educators within their programs. These may include the following:

- Undergraduate- Designed for candidates in a bachelor's degree program who are seeking a recommendation for initial licensure.
- Post-baccalaureate- Designed for candidates who have an undergraduate or graduate degree and seek only to complete a program's licensure requirements and seek initial licensure. Candidates may go on to complete a master's degree, but this is not a requirement for licensure recommendation.
- Master's- Designed for candidates who have an undergraduate degree and are seeking a recommendation for either an initial license or a second endorsement in conjunction with a master's degree.
- Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS)- An individualized program designed for candidates who hold a master's degree and are completing requirements for an additional endorsement.

In any of the above delivery models, an individualized program may be designed for candidates using the frame of the existing program.

The approval process for all educator preparation programs will include review of each program's system for reviewing entrance and exit requirements. These requirements must include a process for review of applicants' academic credentials, including their demonstration of all general licensure requirements (e.g., academic major in the liberal arts or sciences, or the equivalent), and all endorsement requirements, including knowledge and performance standards and additional requirements, for the endorsement, if any, prior to recommendation. Specifically, when a person is admitted into a preparation program, institutions or alternate routes must complete a comprehensive transcript review to assess the candidate's prior academic work for both breadth and mastery and to determine where the candidate stands in relation to the general licensure and specific endorsement requirements. This may necessitate that the institution create an individual plan of study for a candidate needing coursework beyond the program's requirements prior to recommendation.

Each of the above delivery models will be considered as a separate program at the institution or alternate route; therefore, information on each program must be included in the Institutional Portfolio, Two-Year Reports, and communication with the AOE regarding approved programs.

The Office can only accept recommendations for initial licensure or additional endorsement from candidates who have completed an approved licensure program in its entirety.

Adopted: 11/8/04; Revised: 5/13/08, 3/30/18

POLICY N16

Policy on Recommending Foreign Language Candidates In Alternate, Undergraduate, Post-Baccalaureate, And Graduate Degree Foreign Language Programs

To promote a greater diversity of languages taught in Vermont schools, the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators encourages approved post-baccalaureate, alternate routes, and graduate programs in foreign language to recommend qualified candidates in a wide variety of foreign languages. The Board will approve post-baccalaureate and graduate degree programs for all modern and classical languages because candidates who are entering these preparation programs have already mastered their target language. This approval will be issued only if candidates complete student teaching in the language of the endorsement sought. During Results Oriented Program Approval (ROPA) Review Visits, review teams will carefully assess preparation programs' entry requirements and processes in addition to the candidates' education coursework and field experiences.

The Board recommends that all candidates entering post-baccalaureate, graduate, and alternate route foreign language programs meet state testing requirements in their target language prior to admission in order to demonstrate proficiency.

Undergraduate preparation programs will continue to be approved for specific languages only. This enables program review teams to assess candidates' preparation in their target languages by reviewing undergraduate coursework.

Adopted: 4/30/09

POLICY N17

Policy on National Accreditation Policy on Using National Accreditation for ROPA Approval

The Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE) will consider accepting national accreditation as a substitute for a Results Oriented Program Approval (ROPA) review at the formal request of an institution or alternate route program made no more than two years and no less than one year in advance of a program's regularly scheduled review. This option is for programs that currently have VSBPE approval through the ROPA review process and does not apply to new programs seeking approval.

National accreditation is considered here to mean review and approval by an organization that has national approval as an accreditor specifically for the purpose of educator preparation accreditation.

Approval is contingent upon submission of the national accrediting body's report to the Agency of Education and supporting documentation showing the correlation between the standards used by the national organization and the ROPA standards. The Office will review the documentation submitted to determine if it meets these guidelines. The VSBPE may request an on-site review of Vermont Licensure Portfolios conducted by the VSBPE or the Office. Additionally, all programs must document their compliance with the Rules Governing the Licensing of Educators and the Preparation of Educational Professionals by successfully completing a Rules check with an Agency of Education representative.

Adopted: 2/10/11, Revised 3/30/18, 5/8/19

POLICY N18

Policy on Program Approval Extensions

Rule 5931 notes that, unless otherwise specified by the Standards Board, program approval shall be for seven (7) years, and that this approval shall continue until such time as the Standards Board acts otherwise. The Board may grant an institution or alternate route program's request for an extension to its approval period. A formal request must be submitted a minimum of a year prior to a scheduled review visit and should include a description of the extenuating circumstances, a rationale, and documentation of the program's current self-study status and work plan. The institution or alternate route program's rules check will take place at the time of the regularly scheduled visit.

Adopted: 10/19/11, Revised 3/30/18

POLICY N20

Policy on Closing an Approved Educator Preparation Program

Part A

Letter of Intent to Close

Institutions of higher education and alternate routes to licensure shall notify the Agency of Education (AOE) and the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE) when they have decided to close an approved program by submitting a letter of intent to close. The letter of intent to close must include the name of the program that is being closed, the number of candidates enrolled in the program, and identify an administrator who will be responsible for managing the closing process on behalf of the institution or alternate route to licensure program. The letter must be on the program provider's letterhead and signed by the program provider's Director of Education.

The letter of intent to close must convey that the program provider understands the following:

- once it has submitted a letter of intent to close it will no longer enroll students into the program,
- it must submit a Teach-Out Plan if candidates are enrolled in the program at the time the letter of intent to close is submitted,
- prior to reopening the program, it must be approved through either the ROPA process or a national accreditation process that is approved by the VSBPE, and
- a program provider is obligated to adhere to any Title II HEA reporting responsibilities that may linger after the program has closed.

Part B

Teach-Out Plan

Institutions of higher education and alternate routes to licensure must design and submit a Teach-Out Plan if one or more candidates are enrolled in an approved program prior to its closing. The Teach-Out Plan must include:

- the name of the program that is being closed,
- the number of candidates included in the Plan,
- the name of the program provider's Licensing Officer and an administrator who will be responsible for managing the Plan on behalf of the program provider,
- a timeline for informing candidates of the closing of the program,
- plans to provide candidates with timely and accurate information regarding their opportunities to meet all licensure requirements,
- each candidate's individual plan with a timeline detailing when they are expected to complete all licensure requirements including the Praxis and Level I Licensure Portfolio (evaluated by two faculty members),

- plans to redirect candidates who are not able to complete all licensure requirements within the timeframe, and
- the date the program provider will cease recommending candidates for licensure.

Part C

Acknowledgements

In order to safeguard program providers and the candidates included in a Teach-Out Plan, both must provide signatures confirming the following:

- each candidate reviewed and agreed to their individual plan in collaboration with their program provider, and
- both understand that if a candidate is not able to complete the Plan, all licensure requirements including the Praxis, and the Level 1 Licensure Portfolio (evaluated by two faculty members) within the designated timeframe, then they will not be eligible for a recommendation for licensure from the program provider.

A complete Teach-Out Plan will include all of the above referenced requirements and be submitted to the VSBPE. The VSBPE has the authority to accept or deny a Teach-Out Plan based on its merit. A favorable review of a Teach-Out Plan by the VSBPE enables the AOE to honor recommendations for licensure for candidates who have proceeded through a Plan and completed all licensure requirements as it equates to the completion of an approved program.

Adopted: 11/14/12, Revised 3/30/18

POLICY N21

Policy on Licensure Officers

It is the expectation of both the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE) and the VT Agency of Education (AOE) that institutions and alternate route educator preparation programs have a licensure officer to assure that only qualified educators who have successfully completed an approved program in its entirety are recommended for licensure.

Every institution must identify a licensure officer whose responsibilities consist of reviewing transcripts or the equivalent to confirm that each educator has met all licensure requirements including the endorsement requirements. The licensure officer should be an administrator or faculty member who works closely with each program area (elementary, counseling, administrator, etc.) and delivery model (undergraduate, post- baccalaureate, graduate, alternative routes) at the institution and is knowledgeable of the curriculum of the program(s). Institutions are responsible for confirming that the licensing officer can accurately verify that candidates have completed all requirements for entry to the program, for student teaching, and for a final recommendation on the transcript. Annually, or when deemed necessary by the AOE, the licensure officer must complete a regulation and transcript review training with the VT AOE. In the event that the VT AOE has any questions or concerns regarding a recommendation, the VT AOE will contact the licensing officer.

Adopted: 12/13/13, Revised 3/30/18

POLICY N22

Policy on Administrative Internships

Aspiring educational leaders who complete a high-quality internship will experience leading, facilitating, and making decisions typical of those made by educational leaders within a school environment. Specifically, an “Administrative Internship” will consist of a minimum of 300 hours of supervised, substantive field experience in two or more types of school settings, including employment on a provisional license as an administrator, or other concentrated field experience however named, in which the candidate shall demonstrate competence in the *Core Leadership Standards for Vermont Educators*.

The following guidelines offer additional clarification on the internship requirement for aspiring administrators and those who are supporting an internship experience.

Supervision

Aspiring administrators should be supervised by a qualified, on-site mentor who is licensed in the endorsement area being sought. In the event that a licensed, on-site supervisor is not available in the particular endorsement area being sought, the intern must document supervision by both a licensed on-site administrator and an additional field mentor in the endorsement area. The amount of direct supervision should be sufficient to allow the supervisor and the field mentor, when applicable, to affirm that the intern has demonstrated competence in the Core Leadership Standards for Vermont Educators and in the specific endorsement area (e.g., Director of Special Education).

Time Span

Internships can be flexibly scheduled but must be completed within a two-year period.

Settings

Interns should have opportunities to gain experiences in two or more types of school settings (e.g., elementary, middle, secondary, urban, suburban, rural, central office, and alternative schools) in order to deepen their understanding of the knowledge and leadership skills necessary for leadership in PK-12 schools. Administrators will thus need to identify a central setting where the majority of the internship takes place, and at least one additional setting. Time in the subsequent setting(s) may vary, but at least one will need a minimum of 60 hours. Interns must also work with their supervisor(s) to develop a rationale for each setting.

Documentation

Interns are expected to work with teachers throughout the internship to address curriculum, instructional best practices, and assessment; with staff and parents to promote student success and improve schools; with faculty and community members to

implement an improvement initiative and evaluate its effectiveness; with administrative colleagues to consider decisions affecting student learning; and with students to experience the day-to-day duties of an administrator that are aligned with the *Core Leadership Standards for Vermont Educators*.

Applicants for initial administrative endorsements must document their internship experiences by downloading and completing the **Administrative Internship Documentation Worksheet** in collaboration with their supervisor(s).

Adopted: 2/10/14

POLICY N23

Policy on School Counselor Internships

In addition to the internship requirements listed in regulation 5924.5, the following guidelines apply to school counselor internships as supervised by approved preparation programs in Vermont.

The supervision and evaluation of school counselors by the counseling preparation program's faculty shall comply with national supervision standards set by the Council for Accreditation and Related Programs (CACREP) or VSBPE policy on supervision in conjunction with the following additional requirements:

The counseling preparation program's supervisors shall supervise the counseling intern at least once every 10 teaching days, either in the form of site visits to the cooperating school or through an on-campus supervision seminar.

The cooperating on-site supervisor shall be a licensed school counselor with a minimum of two years professional experience as a school counselor.

The cooperating on-site supervisor shall provide 1 hour of confidential, one-on-one supervision per week.

Successful completion of a counseling internship will require a minimum of 600 service hours – with a minimum of 200 direct service hours and 400 indirect service hours.

Adopted: 04/13/15

POLICY P1

Policy Regarding Issuance of a Retired Educator License for: Licensed Level II Vermont Educators for Service as Educators in Private Schools

The Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE) wishes to establish equity for all licensed Level II educators for their service as educators regardless of the educational entity where they were employed. In keeping with this philosophy, the VSBPE wishes to formulate guidelines for Level II educators currently unable to apply for the Vermont Retired Educator License due to the fact that their employers never provided a retirement option during their service as an educator. These guidelines will mirror Rule 5424 - Retired Educator License from *Rules Governing the Licensing of Educators and the Preparation of Educational Professionals*.

Guidelines for Level II Educators Not Receiving a Retirement Allowance:

- Have a minimum of fifteen (15) years as a licensed educator
- Withdrawn from active service
- Completed 45 hours of professional learning hours within the three years preceding the application of the Retired Educator License
- Hold a valid Level II License at the time of the application and only those Level II endorsements may be moved to a Retired Educator License
- Provide statement/documentation that a retirement allowance was not offered by their employer/school

Guidelines for Renewal of a Retired Educator License for Level II Educators Not Receiving a Retirement Allowance:

- Provide statement/documentation that the educator has not exceeded the current earning cap set by the Vermont State Teachers Retirement System (VSTRS) for service as an educator
- Adhere to any other requirements in Rule 5424

Adopted: 4/24/13; Revised: 12/19/14; Revised: 10/23/19; Reviewed: 3/09/2022

POLICY P2

Policy on Conditional Emergency License for Lapsed Retired Educators

An applicant who is a retired educator whose Vermont Educator license lapsed between five (5) to ten (10) years ago can be granted an emergency license in conjunction with Rule 5360 B in the requested endorsement area.

Currently, VSBPE has Rule 5360 B in effect since August 21, 2018. This new policy extends that lapsed license time from five (5) to ten (10) years with the understanding that the candidate has no intention of reinstating the endorsement.

It is the understanding of the candidate that the emergency license is conditional and would not be extended a second year. If the educator wished to continue in the position, then the next step would be a Provisional License, as long as the application was within the parameters of the requirements for a Provisional License.

This policy allows the "Office" to ability to grant these requests. This policy will be revisited after two years.

Approved: 10/19/2023

Adopted: 11/29/2023

POLICY Q1

Waivers

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures to allow for school districts, supervisory unions/supervisory districts, CTE centers and the AOE to proceed with daily operations and statutory obligations by:

1. Allowing for the AOE to grant waivers ***without a VSBPE hearing that*** allows for application of provisional, emergency or apprenticeship licenses as follows:

In the absence of	Requests can be made by
Superintendent of Schools	SU/SD Board Chairperson Acting Superintendent
Director of Independent School	Board Chairperson
CTE Director	Superintendent of Schools

2. Provide a process for submission of Waiver Requests to the Vermont Standards Board of Professional Educators which will be reviewed annually and details
 - a. The required format of waiver submissions
 - b. Guidelines to allow for public disclosure in adherence with open meeting laws

In the unlikely event that a request of the VSBPE must be made and there is no “authorized” party to make the request the Secretary of Education or their designee can make the request. *Making the request does not imply agreement with said request.*

Adopted: 5/13/2015

Policy Q3 – Temporary Licenses

Policy on Special Education Endorsements - Provisional Licenses

The Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE) in order to be in compliance with Federal policy regarding Special Education will not grant an additional one-year Provisional License for any Special Educator endorsement.

Adopted: 3/29/17; Revised: 10/23/2019

Policy Q4—Temporary Licenses

Temporary Policy on Special Education Endorsements Qualification for Provisional License

In response to staffing shortages exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, for the 2021/22 academic year, applicants for a Provisional License with a special endorsement shall possess a baccalaureate degree and meet at least one of the following criteria:

- a) possess any valid professional Educator license from Vermont or from another state;
- b) possess any expired professional Vermont Educator license or any expired professional Educator license from another state, provided the license expired no fewer than two (2) years and no longer than ten (10) years ago;
- c) have a major or the equivalent in the content area of the provisional endorsement sought;
- d) have successfully completed Praxis II licensure content assessment for special education (Test number 5354) with a passing score of at least 151.
 - a. Educators qualifying through criteria d) must have been admitted to a pathway to special education licensure.
 - b. Educators qualifying through criteria d) must have a mentor participating in the Vermont Agency of Education mentor training program.

This policy automatically expires on 30 May 2022 unless reaffirmed by the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators on or before the date of expiration.

Appendix A

Guidelines for Developing Successful Educator Mentoring Programs

Approved by the VSBPE February 15, 2005

Mentoring is an essential component of the preparation and induction of new educators, and of the continuum of professional preparation, development, and leadership. Research shows that when done well, mentoring improves new teacher and thereby student performance, reduces educator turnover, and improves school climate.

These guidelines are intended to assist supervisory unions, school districts, and other entities in the design of effective mentoring programs for new educators. The components are organized in order of priority when initiating a mentoring program.

Mentoring

Mentoring is a structured program that pairs a mentor with an educator who is either new to the profession or new to the school, in order to provide training, orientation, assistance and support.

Mentors are experienced educators who have demonstrated high quality instructional practice and who are trained in mentoring to provide consistent individual guidance and support.

Components of Successful Mentoring Programs

Effective mentoring programs for new educators include the following five components:

- 1. A Structured Process That Is Focused on a Model of Practice Designed to Improve Student Learning***

A Research-Based Model or Definition of Effective Practice: Effective mentoring programs are based upon a specific model or definition of effective educational practice that informs the objectives and substance of both the mentoring program and the supervision and evaluation system within the school and district. The model or definition is thoroughly understood by the mentors and drives the content and structure of mentoring activities.

Program and Individual Goals: Mentoring programs include both program and individual goals. Program goals specify the desired outcomes of the mentoring program at the school and/or district level and identify the means of evaluating the effectiveness of the program in relation to those goals. Program goals must be communicated to all members of the school community. Individual goals are developed by the new teacher in collaboration with their mentors, within the framework of the model or definition of effective practice, the *5 Standards for Vermont Educators*, and the school or district's Action Plan.

2. *Defined Criteria and Procedures for Selection of Mentors and Placement of New Educators*

There must be clear criteria and procedures for selecting mentors and for matching mentors and new educators. Important considerations include physical proximity and congruity of content and/or instructional level. In addition, there must be a process for on-going assessment of the relationship and of the mentor's skills.

3. *Initial and On-Going, Research-Based Training for Mentors*

There must be initial and on-going, research-based training for mentors in essential skill areas. These include adult learning theory, evidence-based observational skills, action research, and coaching skills.

4. *Complete Separation of the Mentoring and Performance Evaluation Processes*

The mentoring process must be clearly separated from the performance evaluation process. The mentor must not be involved in any way in evaluating the new educator for employment purposes.

5. *Adequate Time for the Mentoring Relationship to be Successful*

Duration: The mentoring relationship for a Level I educator should last a minimum of two years, with the most intense contact occurring during the first year. The intensity and content of the partnership will vary somewhat depending on whether the mentee is new to education (defined as having three or fewer years of experience) or is an experienced educator teaching in a new endorsement area.

Intensity: There must be consistent, dedicated time for each mentor/mentee pair to meet (not to take the place of individual or team planning time). At least weekly meeting time is recommended in the first year of the mentorship for the mentor and new teacher to jointly plan instruction and problem-solve difficult issues that have arisen in the classroom. In addition, at least monthly release time (a minimum of 3 hours/month) is recommended for mentor and new teacher to conduct structured observations of each other's practice.

To ensure successful implementation of these guidelines, it is recommended that mentoring programs provide a means for recognition and/or compensation for the mentor's training and work (e.g., stipends, relicensure or academic credit, public acknowledgement)

For further information on mentoring programs, please consult *The Vermont Field Guide to Educator Mentoring* (Spring 2003, The Teacher Quality Enhancement Program).

Guidelines for Developing Successful Educator Mentoring Programs

Approved by the VSBPE February 15, 2005

COMPONENT	EXPLORATION	TRANSITION	FULL IMPLEMENTATION
<p>Structured Process for Developing a Mentoring Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Investigate research-based models for mentoring <input type="checkbox"/> Consider definition of effective teaching practices <input type="checkbox"/> Identify possible desired outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt model for mentoring based on information gathered in investigation <input type="checkbox"/> Create or adopt working definition of effective teaching practices <input type="checkbox"/> Develop program goals that specify desired outcomes at district level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Model for mentoring is thoroughly understood by mentors and all other members of school community <input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring model aligns with supervision/evaluation systems <input type="checkbox"/> Definition is thoroughly understood by mentors <input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring aligns with supervision/evaluation systems and effective teaching practices <input type="checkbox"/> Create mentoring activities based on model/definition <input type="checkbox"/> Identify means of evaluating effectiveness of program in relation to program goals

COMPONENT	EXPLORATION	TRANSITION	FULL IMPLEMENTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> Communicate program goals to all members of school community <input type="checkbox"/> Develop mentee goals with mentor within model/definition

Page references refer to *The Vermont Field Guide to Educator Mentoring – First Edition*

COMPONENT	EXPLORATION	TRANSITION	FULL IMPLEMENTATION
Defined Criteria and Selection Process for Mentors and Their Assignments	<input type="checkbox"/> Identify possible criteria for selection of mentors	<input type="checkbox"/> Establish criteria for selection of mentors <input type="checkbox"/> Develop procedures for selection of mentors and their assignments	<input type="checkbox"/> Establish and implement procedures for matching mentors with mentees <input type="checkbox"/> Establish process for evaluating on-going relationship between mentor and mentee
Research Based Training and Support	<input type="checkbox"/> Identify effective practices for mentor training <input type="checkbox"/> Identify resources needed to support initial and on-going training of mentors	<input type="checkbox"/> Choose or develop appropriate training for your district <input type="checkbox"/> Provide initial training for mentors in essential skill areas	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide on-going training for existing mentors <input type="checkbox"/> Provide opportunities for collegial support among mentors <input type="checkbox"/> Provide initial training for additional mentors to expand district pool
Separation of Mentoring and Evaluation		<input type="checkbox"/> Differentiate between mentoring program and performance evaluation system	<input type="checkbox"/> Communicate clear and deliberate separation of mentoring program and performance evaluation system

COMPONENT	EXPLORATION	TRANSITION	FULL IMPLEMENTATION
Intensity of Mentoring Relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Determine resources needed to provide appropriate mentoring support <input type="checkbox"/> Consider differentiated levels of intensity according to individual needs <input type="checkbox"/> Develop strategies for providing time for mentor/mentee observations and consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Establish appropriate mentoring program <input type="checkbox"/> Establish procedure for determining appropriate level of intensity of individual mentoring program <input type="checkbox"/> Pilot strategies for providing time for mentor/mentee observations and consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provide for consistent mentor/mentee relationship <input type="checkbox"/> Provide level of intensity of mentoring appropriate to mentee's identified needs <input type="checkbox"/> Provide released time for structured observations <input type="checkbox"/> Provide consistent, dedicated time for mentor/mentee consultation

Appendix B

Recommendations for Alternate Route Programs

Approved by the VSBPE on June 23, 2006

Preface

Today's educators are no longer prepared solely through four-year programs run by the education departments of institutions of higher education. Alternative or non-traditional preparation programs now offer candidates the opportunity to enter the teaching profession through a wide-variety of paths. In January of 2006, the Commissioner of Education, Richard Cate, directed the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE) to develop recommendations for an alternate route to licensure for the State Board of Education to consider, a directive that emerged from one of the focused strategies noted in the Vermont Agency of Education's Strategic Plan. The route, Cate posed, should transition teaching candidates into the classroom sooner than existing Vermont preparation programs currently do. Interested candidates, in this way, could earn a salary while working towards their license in collaboration with an institution of higher education. The VSBPE was also given the following criteria to consider when making their report: candidates should possess a BA, but it need not be specific to the education field; prior to entering a classroom, candidates should receive intensive instruction in pedagogy; candidates will complete additional coursework at an institution of higher education while teaching; and mentors will support candidates in the classroom.

With these criteria in mind, the VSBPE examined eight existing alternative route programs across the country in conjunction with the available research on quality alternatives in teacher preparation. Having reviewed the research, the Board chose to carefully analyze three specific alternate route programs: Connecticut's ARC, New York's Bank Street Internship Certificate Credential, and North Carolina's NC TEACH. The VSBPE then used the experiences of these highly regarded programs and the research of experts to guide its own formulation of what a quality alternate route program in Vermont should look like. The document that follows is not intended to describe a specific alternate route. Instead, the Board hopes that its recommendations will be used as a starting point for the creation of an alternate high-quality teacher preparation program.

Introduction

Institutions of higher education across Vermont currently offer high-caliber traditional and alternative teacher preparation programs at all levels. Examples of the alternative routes that Vermont offers include the following: post-baccalaureate, transcript analysis, and Peer Review. As these alternate programs are approved teacher preparation

programs, Vermont does not designate them “alternative programs,” though another state may so label a similar program. Vermont’s Peer Review process is currently considered Vermont’s only alternate route to licensure, though it too will undergo the program approval process this fall. Candidates seeking entry into the teaching profession clearly have many options.

The VSPBE is well aware, however, of the growing problem of teacher shortages and the issues surrounding educator quality across the country. While shortages are not widespread in Vermont, it is clear that there are fewer highly qualified candidates in particular fields and that some schools remain hard-to-staff for a variety of reasons. Mid-career changers entering the profession can certainly benefit our schools with their valuable life experiences and willingness to serve where they are needed. To garner full support for a new route to licensure then, the VSBPE recommends that any alternate program first be designed to address the needs specific to Vermont schools.

The VSBPE also feels strongly that candidates entering the profession through whatever means be held to the same standards. Current applicants for a Vermont professional educator license must meet the general requirements detailed in sections 5231 through 5240 of the Vermont regulations. Although candidates in alternate programs may not meet these requirements through conventional means, they should be held accountable for them. Such a condition assures that Vermont students are taught by an effective teacher and that schools are served by a committed educator.

Entrance Requirements

It is of critical importance that an alternate teacher preparation program only admits candidates who can successfully learn to teach in an abbreviated time period while working in the classroom. Research shows that the brevity of most alternative programs necessitates that candidates be selected with the “content knowledge, prior experience, skills, and attitudes that would make the expectation of quick entry and on-the-job training realistic.” With this in mind, the VSBPE reasons that the selection process must carefully first evaluate a candidate’s aptitude for teaching and then his or her suitability for the program’s particular structure. The application process might, for instance, include a tool designed to specifically measure the candidate’s attitudes and disposition. The program should also only select candidates who possess: a baccalaureate with a major in the liberal arts and sciences, a 3.0 GPA, passing Praxis I and II scores (as applicable), three letters of recommendation, and sustained experiences working with children or adolescents. This rigorous selection process should further identify talented candidates through an interview process, writing sample, and by reviewing transcripts for the endorsement requirements. Applicants selected with academic deficiencies ought to develop a formal plan to address them as condition for admission.

The ultimate success of the program will, no doubt, depend in large part on the thoroughness of this admissions process. The VSBPE agrees with one Bank Street faculty member who says: “We have a responsibility to children and to the profession.

It's better to take time in the selection process and avoid having to counsel people out of programs later on.”

Professional Knowledge Development

A strong alternative program will assure that its candidates complete an ongoing, demanding sequence of courses or seminars that address the essential knowledge base of teaching. Research shows that effective programs design a solid curriculum that covers classroom basics and pedagogy initially with more challenging information and instruction provided as candidates progress. The VSBPE recommends that prior to becoming the teacher of record candidates have an understanding of the following: child and/or adolescent development, appropriate teaching methods/pedagogy, curriculum planning and assessment, teaching of students with special needs, learning theory, diversity, and classroom management. It is our expectation that additional study while the teacher of record will enable educators to gain the knowledge and skills needed to meet the 16 Principles for Vermont Educators and the competencies and requirements for the endorsements.

Early Field Experience

Candidates must have intensive experiences in the field in their endorsement area before becoming a classroom teacher. These clinical experiences should provide program participants the opportunity to observe and practice pedagogical skills under close monitoring. The VSBPE proposes that a formal evaluation occur at the conclusion of this experience to verify candidate readiness for placement in the classroom. A candidate may be asked to leave the program at this point if it is evident that, despite interventions and mentoring, she or he is unprepared to continue. This performance assessment functions as a kind of quality control for both the students and schools of the district where candidates will be employed.

Supervision and Mentoring

School placements during the “internship year” need to offer teachers rich, sustained support in order for them to flourish. A formal partnership must exist between the alternate program and school districts to guarantee such quality experiences. Additionally, the program should create a strong system of mentoring and supervision for the new teachers in the alternate route. Mentors need to be an integral part of the new program, working in conjunction with the program administrators to facilitate candidates’ development of pedagogical skills in their endorsement area. As program faculty members, mentors will be able to assure continuity, quality on-site coaching, and continual supervision of the candidates as teachers. The VSBPE also desires that mentors use state standards and regulation to guide instruction and assessment of the candidates. Plainly, the alternate program will need to support such mentors through a careful selection process, training, and assessment. In addition to mentors, the program should utilize “candidate evaluators” to provide periodic, formal evaluations of the candidate in order to assure that students are being taught by a competent teacher

of record. Such “candidate evaluators” will also need to regularly communicate with both the mentor and the candidate.

Exit Requirements

The VSBPE expects that all candidates exiting the proposed alternate route program document their knowledge and skills by completing a Level I Teaching Licensure Portfolio. Candidates will also need a recommendation from their “candidate evaluator.” Building supervisors, however, will make the final recommendation allowing candidates to move from an “internship certificate” to a Level I Teaching License.

Additional Recommendations and Concerns

While the VSBPE looks forward to the opportunities a new alternate program presents to Vermont schools, the Board cautions its creators that the first year of operation should serve as a pilot year. Data on the route’s efficacy will need to be collected and analyzed as part of an overall program assessment strategy. The Board also has serious concerns regarding the financial feasibility of the program and its impact on the state of Vermont, school districts and institutions of higher education.