



Minnesota Teacher Licensure

Update to 2016 Evaluation Report

February 2018

Problems Identified

- **Duplicative Governance Structure.** Minnesota's governance structure for licensing teachers was confusing. Both the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and the Minnesota Board of Teaching had licensing responsibilities, which resulted in decreased accountability and transparency for licensing decisions.
- **Unclear and Unequal Licensure Requirements.** Neither MDE nor the Board of Teaching provided teacher candidates with clear information about the requirements for each type of teaching license issued in Minnesota. Additionally, candidates trained in Minnesota were required to meet higher licensure standards than applicants trained in other states.
- **Unclear Laws.** Minnesota statutes used undefined and duplicative terms to identify different types of teacher licenses. Additionally, statutes and rules did not use the same names for the same types of teacher licenses. Because teacher-licensure laws changed regularly, were poorly defined, and conflicted, it was difficult for Board of Teaching members, MDE licensing specialists, and teacher candidates to understand Minnesota's teacher-licensure requirements.

Changes Implemented

- **Licensure Responsibility Consolidated.** The 2017 Legislature established the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board, and consolidated all teacher-licensure responsibilities in this new board. This change, in line with OLA's recommendation to consolidate licensure responsibilities in one entity, will increase accountability and improve transparency regarding the licensing process.
- **Tiered Licensing Established.** In line with OLA's recommendations, the 2017 Legislature established a tiered-licensure structure. This new licensing structure will provide transparency and ensure a consistent teacher-licensure structure.
- **Laws Clarified.** The 2017 Legislature overhauled Minnesota's teacher licensure laws, clarifying definitions and simplifying terms.

Action Needed

- **Monitor Implementation.** The changes to Minnesota's teacher licensure structure are effective July 1, 2018. The Legislature should monitor the work of the new Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board and ensure the state's new licensing structure is implemented as intended.