
Teacher License Advancement and Renewal

The Background:

In August of 2013 the State Board of Education passed several changes relative to the training and licensing of teachers. The amendments and reforms were passed with a one year delay to allow for consideration other proposals related to particular aspects of the policy, one of which was the advancement and renewal of teacher licenses. The originally approved policy contained language requiring teachers to obtain certain performance scores on both the final evaluation rating score and the TVAAS score. This requirement was met with concern from several constituencies.

At the October 2013 meeting of the State Board of Education, Chairman Fielding Rolston directed the staff to meet with various constituency groups¹ in an effort to produce a consensus recommendation. After a series of meetings the group brought forward a recommendation that was also presented to the Department of Education. The Department also presented State Board staff with a proposal. There are several commonalities between the two proposals: both eliminate TVAAS as a standalone component of teacher licensing, and both create a new license called "Practitioner II" for those who do not meet the performance provisions of the Practitioner License. Likewise, both require a public report of the number and percentage of teachers meeting the statutory definition of "inefficiency" as defined in T.C.A. 49-5-501(6).

The proposal from the various constituency groups eliminates the opportunity for early renewal, shortens the validity period of the license to five years, advances a teacher's license from Practitioner II to Professional after attaining an evaluation score of 3 or higher in any one of the three years of that license, and requires teachers with the professional license to complete annual inservice training in order to renew their license.

The Department of Education's proposal requires those teachers who hold a Practitioner II license to obtain evaluation scores of 3 or higher in at least two of the three years of the license validity period, requires a teacher with a professional license to obtain a final evaluation score of 3 or higher for at least half of the years that the teacher is evaluated. Further, it allows an educator who desires to reactivate their license a year to obtain a qualifying score on any out of date examinations that are required. It also contains an appeal provision so that teachers whose license is either not renewed or advanced based solely on school-wide TVAAS scores are held harmless.

In order to present to the Board a complete proposal package it is necessary to rescind portions of Policy 5.502 relative to the advancement and renewal of teacher licenses

¹ Chairman Rolston specifically referenced Professional Educators of Tennessee, Tennessee Education Association, Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents, and Tennessee School Boards Association

that were approved at the conference call meeting of the State Board of Education in August of 2013. The Board will consider final revisions to the policy at the next meeting of the State Board of Education in April.

The Recommendation:

The SBE staff recommends acceptance of this item on first reading.

