



Career and Technical Educator Licensing Task Force

Fiscal Year 2017

Report to the Legislature

**As required by Minnesota Statutes,
chapter 189, article 24, section 23, subdivision 2**

COMMISSIONER:

Brenda Cassellius, Ed. D.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

**Paula Palmer, Director
Career and College Success
651-582-8737**

**Michelle Kamenov, Supervisor
Career Development and Career
Technical Education
651-582-8434**

Cost of Report Preparation

The total cost for the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to prepare this report was approximately \$22,420.02. Most of these costs involved staff time in analyzing data from surveys and preparing the written report. Incidental costs include paper, copying and other office supplies.

Estimated costs are provided in accordance with Minnesota Statutes 2015, section 3.197, which requires that at the beginning of a report to the Legislature, the cost of preparing the report must be provided.

Legislative Charge

The 2016 legislature directed the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to convene a Career and Technical Educator Licensing Advisory Task Force to review the current status of Career and Technical Education (CTE) educator licenses, provide recommendations on changes if deemed necessary, and provide recommendations for methods to increase access for districts to licensed CTE educators.

The Career and Technical Educator Licensing Advisory Task Force must review the current status of career and technical educator licenses and provide recommendations on changes, if any are deemed necessary, to the license requirements and methods to increase access for school districts to licensed career and technical educators. The task force must report its findings and recommendations, with draft legislation if needed to implement the recommendations, to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over kindergarten through grade 12 education and higher education by January 15, 2017.

The Career and Technical Educator Licensing Advisory Task Force consists of the following members, appointed by the commissioner of education, unless otherwise specified:

- (1) One person who is a member of the Board of Teaching;
- (2) One person representing colleges and universities offering a board-approved teacher preparation program;
- (3) One person representing science, technology, engineering, and math programs, such as Project Lead the Way,
- (4) One person designated by the Board of the Minnesota Association for Career and Technical Administrators;
- (5) One person designated by the Board of the Minnesota Association for Career and Technical Education;
- (6) Three people who are secondary school administrators, including superintendents, principals, and assistant principals; and
- (7) Two people who are members of other interested groups, as determined by the commissioner of education.

The commissioner and designating authorities must make their initial appointments and designations by July 1, 2016. The commissioner and designating authorities, to the extent practicable, should make appointments balanced as to gender and reflecting the ethnic diversity of the state population.

Task Force Membership and Activities

The Career and Technical Education Licensing Advisory Task Force met for a total of five times beginning in August of 2016. The task force membership included:

- Loy Woelber, representing the Board of Teaching;
- Jeralyn Jargo, representing colleges and universities offering board-approved teacher preparation programs;
- Jim Davnie, representing science, technology, engineering and math programs;
- Jessica Lipa, representing the Minnesota Association for Career and Technical Administrators
- Callon Siebenahler, representing the Minnesota Association for Career and Technical Education
- Stephen Jones, representing secondary administrators (superintendent)
- Tonya Sconiers, representing secondary administrators (principal)
- Natalie Rasmussen, representing secondary administrators (assistant principal)
- Troy Haugen, representing other interested groups (Perkins consortium leader)
- Brad Greiman, representing other interested groups (University of Minnesota – Agriculture Education)

Co-Chairs Troy Haugen and Stephen Jones were chosen by the task force group to plan and facilitate each of the monthly meetings. They also contributed to writing of the final report. The group used the meeting times to analyze:

- Board of Teaching and MDE Educator Licensing division roles and responsibilities;
- Minnesota teacher shortage areas and special permissions;
- other state models and best practices for teacher preparation and CTE licensure;
- Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensing draft proposals for teacher tiered licensure;
- teacher mentorship models; and
- testimonies from current CTE teachers, Education Minnesota representatives.

Introduction

A 2016 study conducted by the Learning Policy Institute indicates that there has been a 35 percent reduction in undergraduate and post-baccalaureate teacher preparation enrollments nationwide, which equates to approximately 240,000 fewer professionals entering the k-12 teaching profession in 2014 as compared to 2009 (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016). Compounding that issue in Minnesota for CTE, only eight institutions of higher education offer any Board of Teaching-approved teacher preparation programs. In the existing environment, four of the twelve current CTE licenses have no preparation pathway to obtain those licenses whatsoever. Additionally, many of the current CTE teacher preparation programs are not entirely accessible to all Minnesota teachers due to the nature of the traditional seat-based delivery and the vast geographical limitations. These factors have created a large chasm in career and technical education programs between district's desire and ability to expand CTE opportunities and the teacher capacity available to hire appropriately licensed teachers to lead those programs.

Out of pure necessity, districts in Minnesota are currently operating in a system that is relying increasingly on the use of special permission licenses. Special permission licenses (personnel variances, waivers, temporary limited licenses, non-licensed community experts, and non-renewable licenses) are intended to be a temporary accommodation for districts as they continue to work towards employing fully-licensed instructors. Inherently, the temporary nature of special permission licenses ultimately create unintended consequences for school districts and teachers, including creating a lack job security for those license holders as administrative rule around special permissions require districts to re-post and special permission license holder to re-apply for those positions annually¹. Additionally, two CTE programs (cosmetology and law enforcement) do not have a current license in Minnesota, so the only option for teachers in those programs is the non-licensed community expert special permission. With the lack of CTE teacher preparation programs available, the overall shortage of a CTE teacher pool, and relative limited flexibility in current licensure structure, it is impossible to move away from perpetual use of special permissions in CTE. In the 2016-2017 report to the U.S. Department of Education on Minnesota teacher shortage areas, the following percentages of FTE in each license was reported as using a special permission to obtain licensure:

- Agricultural Education – 20.9%
- Communication Technology Careers – 21.9%
- Construction Careers – 49.9%
- Manufacturing Careers – 38.5%
- Medical Careers – 53.8%

¹ Minnesota Administrative Rule 8710 under Requirements and Procedures define requirements for specific special permission licenses, which are generally granted for only one year. If a candidate needs additional years, depending on the permission, either the candidate or district must re-apply for the special permission, oftentimes requiring the advertisement of the position state-wide.

In aggregate, in these five CTE licensure areas, one-third of teachers in our classrooms are allowed to teach only because of the special permission system. The cycle of shortages is perpetuated with program shortages, continued then by the very limited number of students entering traditional teacher preparation programs, the lack of those preparation programs in CTE, and the anticipated attrition of current CTE teacher workforce. We are now in the midst of a crisis that requires significant consideration and potentially radical thinking on how to grow, license, retain, and recruit CTE teachers.

Complexity of CTE

Inconsistency and Unclear Statute and Role of the Board of Teaching

In the March 2016 Office of Legislative Auditors evaluation report on Minnesota Teacher Licensure, the OLA reported, “The constantly changing, poorly defined, and conflicting teacher-licensure laws make it difficult for Board of Teaching board members, Minnesota Department of Education licensing specialists, and teacher candidates to understand Minnesota’s teacher-license requirements” (Office of the Legislative Auditor, 2016). Additionally, per Minnesota Statute 122A.09, 122A.20, and 122A.25, the Board of Teaching’s scope of work includes (1) developing the teacher’s code of ethics; (2) adopting rules to license public school teachers; (3) adopting rules for approving teacher-preparation programs; (4) reviewing and approving requests for special permissions; and (5) suspending, revoking, or denying a license based on qualifying grounds. In general, other professional licenses granted by state authorities, the professional standards are not determined by legislation, but by their respective professional standards boards. The perceived dichotomy that exists between the legislature and Board of Teaching on defining certain aspects of licensure has contributed to a system that, as the OLA report suggests, “is broken and needs significant changes” (Office of the Legislative Auditor, 2016). For the reasons set forth, the task force recognizes that CTE licensure is even more complex and problematic than other licensure areas.

Attrition

Since 2005, the nationwide attrition rate for teachers has generally run approximately 8 percent per annum (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016). However, in CTE, the issue of attrition is not simply one of retirement-only. CTE teachers, by their nature, have technical skills and abilities that are highly in-demand in the public sector, and oftentimes the wages and benefits for those non-teaching positions far exceed those of traditional teaching contracts. In general, no other teaching discipline experiences the level of competition for employees with high skills like CTE.

Increased Requirements for CTE Teachers

In Minnesota, most traditional teaching licenses have four components teacher candidates need to complete to obtain licensure; a baccalaureate degree, successful mastery of the Standards of Effective Practice (Minnesota Administrative Rule 8710.2000), successful completion of identified content standards for the licensure area, and any required assessments. The requirements to obtain a CTE license include the technical skill components to meet the standard subject area licensure requirement *and* additional requirements including successful mastery of the Core Skills for Teachers of Career and Technical Education standards (Minnesota Administrative Rule 8710.8000).

Additionally, once teachers are licensed, the nature of CTE programs require additional programmatic work at the school, district, local community and state levels, including strong business and industry contact, advisors in Career and Technical Student Organizations and active advisory boards. In order for districts to obtain program approval from the Minnesota Department of Education (a requirement to capture CTE Revenue and Federal Carl D. Perkins support), appropriately licensed teachers are required to evaluate their program on six components defined in Minnesota Administrative Rule 3710.1000. Those six components include:

- (1) Community Involvement; which includes requirements for advisory committee that includes business and industry representation.
- (2) Personnel; which requires appropriate CTE license and implies industry certification and extensive and ongoing professional development in CTE content areas.
- (3) Program Administration, including fiscal responsibility.
- (4) Program Assessment; which includes the collection and reporting of CTE student and program-level data, the follow up of CTE program participants after graduation, and documenting community input on program improvement.
- (5) Program Design; which includes the continuum of career development, curriculum alignment, dual-credit enrollment opportunities, and student leadership organizations.
- (6) Resources; which includes a specific resource inventories specific to the CTE program, records financial records, and maintenance records of CTE-specific equipment.

Uniquely, CTE licensure requires an additional set of skills, abilities, responsibilities and collaborations that no other secondary teaching assignment does. Career and technical educators are unique in that they require to not only teach courses, but have the additional requirement of staying current with technical advances and running high-quality programs.

The True Value of "Any Baccalaureate" Degree

All Minnesota teaching licenses, as defined in Administrative Rule, require a baccalaureate degree. Teachers that enter the field and have obtained licensure on a traditional trajectory have typically obtained an education-type baccalaureate degree (music education, mathematics education, etc.). However, in no place does statute or rule define the type of baccalaureate degree a teacher candidate must successfully obtain. Simply put, the baccalaureate degree can be in any subject area, whether it is germane to education or not. Arguably, the fact that "any baccalaureate degree will do" requirement exists is a fundamentally flawed ideal that assumes that there is some inherent teaching and learning value in the purchase of a sequence of courses that may or may not be germane to the actual content, discipline or curriculum the teacher is teaching. In CTE this issue is compounded by the nature of technical content; there are not baccalaureate degrees that even relate to most technical careers and occupations. Both the Higher Learning Commission, the governing body for accreditation of institutions of higher education in Minnesota, as well as the Colleges and Universities of Minnesota State account for CTE content instructors at the postsecondary level that does not always require a

baccalaureate degree². For example, to teach welding at one of Minnesota state's two-year colleges, a faculty member must have a diploma in welding, four full-time years of verified paid work experience in welding, of which one year has to be within five years preceding the date of credential. The requirement of field experience in the postsecondary setting is much more congruent and valued not only with business and industry expectation, but is a perfect marriage to the true and inherent, rigorous standards and intent of career and technical education.

The Business Model of Teacher Preparation

Since 2010, seven CTE teacher preparation programs at Minnesota colleges and universities have either been suspended or permanently closed leaving either zero or incredibly limited pathways towards licensure for teachers in the state. These suspensions and closures have been for a variety of reasons, but fundamentally it is an issue of pure economics. Like many academic programs, the number of students entering programs has been declining, which has, in turn, had a negative economic impact for our institutions of higher education. Even financial subsidies from a variety of sources are not economically feasible to sustain programs long-term. In CTE, many of the industry-specific skills required of teachers do not necessarily fit within the vision and mission of the traditional university setting, however, those skills are already being taught with high quality in many of our regionally accredited two-year institutions, and often at a lower cost to the student. Unfortunately, there currently is not the ability to leverage the two systems to assist in accommodating the needs of our future teacher workforce in CTE.

Alternative Teacher Preparation Providers

The ability of school districts and other nonprofit entities to apply for unit approval from the Board of Teaching to provide teacher preparation program has been in statute since 2011³, however, to date no eligible institutions have successfully navigated through the process to become a provider. The legislature has financially supported a number of programs and institutions to build alternative-type teacher preparation programs, however each one is fundamentally based in the postsecondary credit system. Eligible alternative teacher preparation provider institutions have not had the ability to reap those benefits, and, in turn likely do not have the internal capacity to devote to the process of obtaining unit approval.

The ultimate benefit of having a cadre of alternative regional providers that is not based in the purchase of academic credit and has increased flexibility over the higher education system would be tremendous for CTE teacher pipeline, particularly as it relates to non-traditional teacher preparation students.

Invest in Infrastructure

The Board of Teaching (BoT) and the Educator Licensing division of MDE are responsible for approximately 120,000 teaching and other related service professional licenses in Minnesota.

² The Colleges and Universities of Minnesota State Policy [3.32 on College Faculty Credentialing](https://www.mnscu.edu/board/policy/332.html) (<https://www.mnscu.edu/board/policy/332.html>).

³ Minnesota Statute 122A.245 established the ability for alternative preparation providers to obtain organizational approval from the Board of Teaching, and set forth baseline criteria for eligible institutions.

Within those 120,000 licenses, there are approximately 300 licensure areas represented.⁴ In CTE alone, there are 110 unique function codes⁵ considered eligible for CTE program approval and CTE revenue. In aggregate, between the two licensing authorities, a total of 19 FTE are employed to complete the entire scope of work of teacher licensing.⁶ Current Board of Teaching rule encompasses approximately sixty different teacher licensure and other related service professional licenses and endorsements. In comparison to the total number of licensure areas held by current professionals, there is a huge discrepancy. Historically speaking, when new licensure standards have been created, new licensure function codes are created to accommodate for the change in standards rather than attempting to work within the current codes to maintain simplicity. The reality becomes, the revision of standards and the accompanying implications with regards to licensure areas is a laborious and very intentional process, for which the capacity of the current infrastructure at both MDE and BoT is already at its maximum. The current scope of work of the licensing authorities can barely be completed with existing resources, let alone the addition of increased roles and responsibilities. Investment in the infrastructure of the licensing system to bolster and enhance current capacity is minimal step towards the proverbial leveling of the playing field.

⁴ Based on the number of unique licensure function codes on current active teacher and other related service professional licenses in the state.

⁵ MDE's "Table C" defines the appropriate licensure function codes eligible for program approval, which is a prerequisite requirement for districts to capture state CTE revenue and programs to have access to consortium Perkins dollars. Function codes are listed as CTE Licenses on Table C.

⁶ According the OLA report, MDE employs one director and 12 staff in Educator Licensing, and the BoT employs one director and five staff.

Recommendations

Preserve rule-making authority of the designated state agency to define minimum qualifications and prerequisites in Administrative Rule. While basic frameworks for licensure, including the framework for a tiered licensure system (if that is determined to be the structure), may be necessary to legislate, specific qualifications or pre-requisites should be determined by education professionals in a non-partisan, unbiased format.

Establish an ongoing Career and Technical Education Work Group. Due to the significant level of complexity of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming, an ongoing work group should be created in statute and allocated operating dollars for which the scope of work may include, but not limited to:

- advising the licensure governance body(ies) in regards to licensure standards, licensure categories, approved licensure provider programs,
- address and advise the Minnesota Department of Education, the system office of the Colleges and Universities of Minnesota State and the University of Minnesota on field issues and pipeline of CTE-licensed teachers,
- research and create regional licensure provider programs that include multiple delivery models,
- assure current and future licensure categories are congruent with current labor market conditions as well as business and industry standards and expectations.

Consider alternative requirements to a baccalaureate degree for Career and Technical Education licenses. Strong consideration needs to be given to the relevant value of a baccalaureate degree in the CTE licensure fields, particularly as defined in Minnesota Administrative Rules 8710.8000 through 8710.8080. A baccalaureate requirement is not congruent with all industry expectations (a premise for which CTE is founded), nor is it consistent with all credentialing requirements (minimum qualifications) for faculty at the postsecondary level. Due to the connection between CTE programs and business/industry expectations, and the potential talent pool for CTE teacher recruits, CTE teacher licensure and programs must consider avenues other than traditional baccalaureate preparation in determining quality teacher preparation. Alternative credentials to a baccalaureate degree may include:

- Recognized industry-related professional credential and verifiable work experience in content-specific field of licensure as a component of mastery of content-specific standards for licensure.
- Consider the Colleges and Universities of Minnesota State's defined credentialing requirements (minimum qualifications) as meeting the criteria of content-specific standards for licensure.

Suggested rule change language could include:

Licensure requirements. A candidate for licensure as a teacher of technical education shall have completed either:

- A. at least a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university and a teacher preparation program approved under chapter 8705 including:
 - 1) the standards of effective practice under part 8710.2000;
 - 2) the core skills for teachers of career and technical education under part 8710.8000; and
 - 3) the standards under subpart 3; or
- B. the successful completion of the following:
 - 1) evidence of proficiency in the standards of effective practice under part 8710.2000 as well as the core skills for career and technical education under part 8710.8000 via portfolio, approved teacher preparation program, or approved teacher preparation program; and
 - 2) evidence of proficiency in the standards under subpart 3 via portfolio, associate degree in content-specific field of licensure, industry-recognized professional credential in content-specific field of licensure, two thousand verifiable hours of work experience within the past five years in content-specific field of licensure or passing score on content-specific field of licensure exam, or
 - 3) the ability to meet the Colleges and Universities of Minnesota State's minimum qualifications for faculty credentialing (as currently specified in Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board Policy 3.32 and Procedure 3.32.1) in content-specific field of licensure.

Allow two-year accredited institutions of higher education to have the ability to offer content-related teacher preparation programs for Career and Technical Education licenses. Amend Minnesota Administrative Rule 8705.0200, 8705.0300, and any other rule or statute to expand the definition of eligible postsecondary institutions to include regionally accredited two-year institutions of higher education to obtain unit approval for teacher preparation programs in Minnesota for content-related programs in technical areas.

- Minnesota Administrative Rule 8705.0200.Subpart 7: "Institution" means a regionally accredited associate (as it relates only to Career and Technical Education programs), baccalaureate or post baccalaureate degree-granting college or university.
- Minnesota Administrative Rule 8705.0300: Each Minnesota institution ~~granting baccalaureate degrees, post baccalaureate degrees, or both~~ requesting approval to prepare persons for teacher licensure shall be evaluated for compliance to unit standards according to parts 8705.1000 and 8705.1100 and shall be evaluated for compliance to program standards according to parts 8705.2000 to 8705.2600.

Create incentives for institutions eligible for alternative preparation providers. Minnesota Statute 122A.245 allows a variety of institutions to obtain unit approval and program approval to become approved teacher preparation program providers; however there currently are none that have completed the process. The legislature and governor have shown commitment to increasing opportunities by funding grants (such as the Grow Your Own, Southwest Minnesota State University special education teacher education program and Southwest Minnesota State agriculture education licensure program) as well as directing the Colleges and Universities of Minnesota State to provide increased licensure options. However these continue to have one common thread; they are foundationally based in obtaining proficiency via college or university credit. Providing a financial incentive to alternative eligible institutions to cover the cost borne by obtaining unit approval and program development may entice entities to consider becoming an approved alternative teacher preparation provider, which is more economically feasible for both the provider and the teacher candidate.

Provide adequate, sustainable funding for any resulting change or addition to state-agency scope of practice. Recognize that development of any new teacher preparation models or simple changes in the scope of practice for the MDE and/or BoT require an investment of resources beyond normal fiduciary allocations and allowances. Even simply by leveraging the technical expertise of, and opening up opportunity for two-year institutions to provide content-specific teacher preparation programs comes at an administrative cost to the governance body to whom works with and ultimately approves institutions (currently the BoT). Providing appropriate funding will help to incentivize and provide a more feasible business model for other institutions to develop and sustain CTE teacher preparation programs as a strategy to address the issues identified in the Office of Legislative Auditor's report. To expect these entities to operate an expanded scope of work without commensurate increase in budget will only work to frustrate and exacerbate the problems for which the Office of Legislative Auditor's report identified.

Conclusion

In a joint report by Advance CTE and the Council of State School Officers, a variety of alternative education policies have been recommended, which include baccalaureate equivalency and the use of industry experts in schools. The report states, “Of the 42 states that identified alternative certification as a way to increase access to industry experts in schools, 24 percent stated that this policy was majorly successful and 30 percent stated it was moderately successful” (Advance CTE, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2016).

Having only one traditional pathway towards licensure has not proven to be a sustainable approach to increasing the teacher workforce in Minnesota. Additionally, relying on only high school graduates to enter those traditional pathways towards licensure is also proving to be insufficient. Multiple approaches to licensure, increased opportunities for mastery of required content, leveraging business and industry partnerships, aligning to workforce expectations, and nontraditional thinking on licensure is the only way to meet the needs of the next generation of potential recruits and grow the field in a way that assures quality programs for our future generations.

Frankly put, CTE teachers have the enormous responsibility of directly impacting the future of Minnesota’s economic prosperity. CTE programs and courses lead to training for sixty-five percent of the jobs in the economy of today and the future. The sheer lack of talent pipeline of CTE teachers juxtaposed with the lack of teacher preparation programs, negative perception and lack of understanding of technical careers, and lack of clear and seamless pathway towards licensure from the field has created a crisis for CTE programs across Minnesota. Without changes in licensure that align to the framework for CTE programs, the downward trend of CTE program closure will continue, therefore ultimately negatively impacting students and the current and the future of our state and country.

The crisis status of the challenges we face in CTE calls for expedient and decisive strategy. The Career and Technical Educator Licensing Advisory Task Force believes that the proposed recommendations are integral levers for growing CTE in serving to strengthen our individual, family, local, state and national economic prosperity.

Bibliography

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