Overview of the House Education Policy Bill (HF1591 DE1)

Licensure

- Teacher candidates may submit essentially equivalent ACT or SAT passing scores in lieu of the MTLE.
- Out-of-state license-qualified teachers may submit essentially equivalent ACT or SAT passing scores in lieu of the MTLE.
- A teacher candidate who attains qualifying scores on board-approved college-level skills, pedagogy and content test will be recommended for licensure.
- Before becoming a teacher of record, person with limited term license (not provisional license) must pass MTLE or attain an ACT or SAT passing score.
- Teachers from out of state are permitted to demonstrate qualifications through previous experience who are seeking initial licensure.
- Teacher candidate may submit a portfolio to demonstrate the prerequisite competence.
- Streamline licensure process and set criteria for out of state teachers to be established by January 1, 2016.
- “Nontraditional means” for alternative teacher preparation programs includes a portfolio of previous experiences that are to be used in determining qualifications for program instructors.
- School districts are allowed to hire nonlicensed community experts after trying to obtain a licensed teacher, must notify parents/guardians and inform the Board of Teaching when using such variance.
- Part-time vocational or career and technical education program teachers are exempt from licensure requirements with approval of local employer school board.
- The Board of Teaching must report to the legislature by February 15, 2016, on interstate agreements.
- Fully licensed teachers from another state who are part of the interstate agreements with Minnesota may transfer their certification to receive Minnesota teaching license.
- Teacher and administrator preparation program and performance summary data to be collected and publicly reported by June 1.
- Teaching license will be denied or revoked if teacher is convicted of a sex related crimes.
- Teacher prep programs are encouraged to provide year-long student teaching programs.
- Commissioner is to create a service learning specialist position in the department and is to report to legislature on recommendations on teacher preparation and licensure requirements for service-learning.

Licensure Renewal/Continuing Education

- Teachers renewing their licenses may include suicide prevention training.
- Retired school principals who are short-call substitutes principal or assistant principals are subject to continuing education requirements.
- Commissioner is to create a service learning specialist position in the department and is to report to legislature on recommendations on teacher preparation and licensure requirements for service-learning.
Unrequested Leave of Absence (ULA)

- School boards and exclusive bargaining representative of the teachers must negotiate an ULA plan effective 2017-18 school year.
- As a part of the negotiated plan, teachers must be placed on ULA based on their licensure field, evaluation outcomes and effectiveness categories/rating, and other locally determined criteria such as teacher seniority.
- Both probationary and continuing contract teachers may be included within an effectiveness category/rating.
- School boards are not required to reassign a teacher with more seniority to accommodate the seniority claims of a similarly licensed and effective teachers with less seniority.
- School boards are prohibited from using a teacher’s remuneration to make ULA decisions.
- Principal on an improvement plan is prohibited from using evaluation outcomes and effectiveness categories to place a teacher in ULA.
- School board may negotiate an ULA for probationary teachers as an alternative to a probationary teacher’s at-will employment status.
- Teachers holding provisional license are precluded from exercising seniority unless teachers is a vocational education teacher and a vocational education license in required for the teaching position.
- In cases of district consolidation, most effective teachers with the greatest seniority is assigned to the district receiving the most students and alternately assigns the remaining teaches from most to lease effective with most to least seniority.

Teacher Development

- School boards may develop and implement mentoring program for teachers new to the profession or district and other teachers that supports existing teacher development and evaluation and peer review process.
- Teacher-to-teacher mentoring is amended to the list of staff development activities and allows a stipend for teacher mentor from the staff development revenue.
- Board of Teaching is to report to legislature by February 1, 2017 on teacher preparation programs focused on project-based learning proposal.
- School administrators are prohibited from placing students in consecutive school years with a teacher with the lowest evaluation rating in previous school year unless no other teacher in the school teaches that grade or subject area.

Assessments

- To graduate high school students must demonstrate understanding of required academic standards on reading, writing and math MCAs instead of nationally normed college entrance exams (applicable to students in grade 8 in 2014-15 school year and later).
- Commissioner and MnSCU to identify a minimum score on MCAs in reading, writing and math to be used as a performance measure to demonstrate readiness for a certificate level program, two-year college program and four-year college program.
• Commissioner is required to annually administer computer-adaptive reading and math assessments to students’ grades 3 through 8, instead of 7.
• Explore, Plan and Compass exams are eliminated.
• School districts are required to offer students nationally normed college entrance exams in grade 11 or 12 at no cost.
• When publically reporting test results, student performance data and annual reports, commissioner is to include data on young children and student homelessness and highly mobile students among the demographic factors that correlate to student performance.

Standards

• The commissioner’s review and revision of state’s math standards are postponed to 2020-21.
• Agriculture science or career and technical education credit may fulfill elective science, chemistry or physics credit.
• School districts are to use the world language standard as developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages for language electives.
• Foreign language proficiency certificates and seals modifications by removing the high achievement certificates, changes to the language proficiency that must be demonstrated to receive state bilingual or multilingual seal. MnSCU is required to recognize seals and award academic credit.
• Local literacy plan requirement is expanded to include effectiveness of assessments used, parent involvement, intervention strategies, staff development, and instruction in basic phonology and language decoding. Basic skills revenue may be used for plan implementation.

Concurrent Enrollment/PSEO

• Students in grade 9 and 10 are may enroll in concurrent enrollment world language course that is available to 11 and 12 grade students.
• Students in grade 10 who did not take MCA in grade 8 may use a different assessment in order to take career and technical education PSEO course.
• Restriction is eliminated on postsecondary institutions to advertise the educational, programmatic and financial benefits of its PSEO courses to students in school district with 700 students and more in grades 10, 11 and 12.
• Middle or early college program is clarified that it must provide s clearly defined to a degree or credential for student enrolled in the graduation incentive program.
• All MnSCU institutions are required full credit to a student who completed PSEO course at MnSCU institution.
• MnSCU chancellor to report to K-12 and Higher Education committees on implementing transfer curriculum policy for PSEO students.

Early Childhood Education

• Children receiving Race to the Top – Early Learning scholarships are eligible to receive a state scholarship at the end of the federal grant, until they are in kindergarten.
- Children in foster care or experiencing homelessness or has a parent under 21 who continuing education prioritized for early learning scholarships.
- Programs participating in early learning scholarships are required to maintain attendance records and funds used in a program the child attends consistently.
- Home visiting programs focus on reaching children with high needs and program must include brain development information.

**Special Education**

- Dyslexia is defined as a specific learning disability with characteristic difficulties and identified consequences.
- School boards to provide transportation to child with disability to is not yet enrolled in kindergarten to receive special instruction and services, including placing in early childhood program.
- Changes to local agency coordination of responsibilities between school boards and county.
- School boards to make sure that when paraprofessionals are hired to provide direct support to students with disabilities they have sufficient knowledge and skills and receive annual training to understand each student’s unique and individual needs.
- Third party reimbursement to meet the requirements of having a system of payment policy under state’s Part C policy.
- Commissioner is to identify ways to help special education teachers comply with special education law and strategies to reduce paperwork.
- Appropriation is made for training and technical assistance to reduce district use of seclusion and restraint.

**School Calendar**

- The board of any district may authorize flexible learning year (four-week school calendar) without the approval of the commissioner.

**American Indian Education Act**

- American Indian Education Act updates and makes technical changes.

**Charter Schools**

- Charter school law recodification and modifications in relation to authorizers and contract renewals, formation of school, admission requirements, pupils with disabilities, annual public reporting, and merger and aid payments.

**Repeals**

- Provision in improving graduation rates for students with emotional and behavioral disorders.
- Reporting requirement for the Telecom Equity Aid.
- Annual report on learning and development revenue, including K-6 class sizes.