

Report of the 2016 Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensing

PREPARED BY LEGISLATIVE STAFF OF THE MINNESOTA SENATE AND
MINNESOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IN COOPERATION WITH THE
LEGISLATIVE COORDINATING COMMISSION

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LEGISLATIVE CHARGE

LAWS 2016, CHAPTER 189, ARTICLE 24

Sec. 24. LEGISLATIVE STUDY GROUP ON EDUCATOR LICENSURE

(a) A 12-member legislative study group on teacher licensure is created to review the 2016 report prepared by the Office of the Legislative Auditor on the Minnesota teacher licensure program and submit a written report by February 1, 2017, to the legislature recommending how to restructure Minnesota's teacher licensure system by consolidating all teacher licensure activities into a single state entity to ensure transparency and consistency or, at a minimum, clarify existing teacher licensure responsibilities to provide transparency and consistency. In developing its recommendations, the study group must consider the tiered licensure system recommended in the legislative auditor's report, among other recommendations. The study group must identify and include in its report any statutory changes needed to implement the study group recommendations.

(b) The legislative study group on educator licensure includes:

(1) six duly elected and currently serving members of the House of Representatives, three appointed by the Speaker of the House and three appointed by the House Minority Leader, and one of whom must be the current chair of the House of Representative's Education Innovation Policy Committee; and

(2) six duly elected and currently serving Senators, three appointed by the Senate Majority Leader and three appointed by the Senate Minority Leader, one of whom must be the current chair of the Senate Education Committee.

Only duly elected and currently serving members of the House of Representatives or Senate may be study group members.

(c) The appointments must be made by June 1, 2016, and expire February 2, 2017. If a vacancy occurs, the leader of the caucus in the House of Representatives or Senate to which the vacating study group member belonged must fill the vacancy. The chair of the House Education Innovation Policy Committee shall convene the first meeting of the study group. The study group shall elect a chair or co-chairs from among the members at the first meeting. The study group must meet periodically. The Legislative Coordinating Commission shall provide technical and administrative assistance upon request.

(d) In reviewing the legislative auditor's report and developing its recommendations, the study group must consult with interested and affected stakeholders, including representatives of the Board of Teaching, Minnesota Department of Education, Education Minnesota, MinnCAN, Minnesota Business Partnership, Minnesota Rural Education Association, Association of Metropolitan School Districts, Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, College of Education and Human Development at the University of Minnesota, Minnesota State

Colleges and Universities, Minnesota Private College Council, Minnesota School Boards Association, Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association, Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals, Minnesota Association of School Administrators, the Board of School Administrators, Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans, Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage, Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs, Minnesota Association of Educators, and Minnesota Teach For America, among other stakeholders.

(e) The study group expires February 2, 2017, unless extended by law.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective the day following final enactment.

OVERVIEW

Pursuant to Laws 2016, Chapter 189, Article 24, Section 24, a 12 member legislative study group was created to review the 2016 report issued by the Office of the Legislative Auditor on the Minnesota teacher licensure program. The study group was directed to submit a written report by February 1st, 2017 to the legislature recommending how to restructure Minnesota's teacher licensure system.

MEMBERSHIP

The Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensing included six duly elected members of the Minnesota House of Representatives, three appointed by the Speaker of the House and three appointed by the House Minority Leader. Speaker Kurt Daudt appointed Representatives Sondra Erickson, Jenifer Loon, and Drew Christensen. Minority Leader Thissen appointed Representatives Carlos Mariani, Jim Davnie, and Barb Yarusso.

The legislative study group also included six duly elected members of the Minnesota Senate, three appointed by the Majority Leader and three appointed by the Minority Leader. Majority Leader Tom Bakk appointed Senators Chuck Wiger, Greg Clausen, and Kevin Dahle. Minority Leader David Hann appointed Senators Eric Pratt, Karin Housley, and Gary Dahms.

Of the 12 total members of the study group, Representative Erickson and Senator Wiger co-chaired monthly proceedings of the Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensing, often referred to by its acronym "LSGEL." Meetings of the study group were coordinated by the Legislative Coordinating Commission.

MEETINGS

The first LSGEL meeting was called for by Representative Sondra Erickson and met on Tuesday, June 28th, 2016 at 1:00PM. The LSGEL also met on the following dates:

1:00PM Thursday, July 21st, 2016 (Senator Chuck Wiger presided)

1:00PM Tuesday, August 23rd, 2016 (Representative Sondra Erickson presided)

9:00AM Thursday, September 29th, 2016 (Senator Chuck Wiger presided)

1:00PM Thursday, October 25th, 2016 (Representative Sondra Erickson presided)

1:00PM Tuesday, December 20th, 2016 (Representative Sondra Erickson presided)

*Note: The LSGEL was originally scheduled to meet on Wednesday, November 16th but the meeting was later cancelled

The final meeting of the LSGEL was held on December 20th, 2016. At that meeting, recommendations were adopted that described a broad framework in which further legislative action could be pursued. Minutes from all LSGEL meetings are found in the following pages.

STAKEHOLDERS

Noted in further detail in the minutes from LSGEL hearings, these stakeholders provided input on their preferences for a future governance structure and a tiered licensure system:

- Erin Doan, Executive Director, Minnesota Board of Teaching
- Alex Luizzi, Teacher Education Specialist, Minnesota Board of Teaching
- Jim Barnhill, Board Member, Minnesota Board of Teaching
- Jim Grabowska, Board Member, Minnesota Board of Teaching
- Hue Nguyen, Assistant Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Education
- Nels Onstad, Director of Education Licensing, Minnesota Department of Education
- Adosh Unni, Director of Government Relations, Minnesota Department of Education
- Janet Mohr, Executive Director, Board of School Administrators
- Mary Mackbee, Chair, Minnesota Board of School Administrators
- Deb Henton, Board Member, Minnesota Board of School Administrators
- Louise Sundin, Board Member, Minnesota Board of School Administrators
- Valerie Dosland, Board of School Administrators
- Gary Amoroso, Executive Director, Minnesota Association of School Administrators
- Denise Dittrich, Minnesota School Boards Association
- Doreen Frost, Executive Director, Board of Architecture, Engineering, Land Surveying, Landscape Architecture, Geoscience and Interior Design
- Joshua Crosson, MinnCAN & Education Allies

- David Aron, Attorney, Education Minnesota
- Kathi Micheletti, Education Minnesota
- Sara Ford, Education Minnesota
- Roger Aronson, Elementary School Principals' Association
- Ryan Stromberg, HR Director, Spring Lake Park Public Schools
- Jim Bartholomew, Minnesota Business Partnership
- Mary Russell, Teach for America
- Eugene Piccolo, Minnesota Association of Charter Schools
- John Miller, Center for School Change
- Eli Kramer, Executive Director, Hiawatha Academies
- Cyndy Christ, Legislative & Policy Liaison, Minnesota Association of College for Teacher Education
- Dr. Elizabeth Finsness, Director, Office of Field & International Experience, Minnesota State University, Mankato
- Troy Haugen, CTE Licensure Task Force
- Daniel Smith, Retired Educator
- Rick Heller

RECOMMENDATIONS

Below are recommendations that were adopted at the December 20th meeting of the Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensing. All recommendations were adopted with nearly unanimous approval.

Governance:

“The Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensing supports consolidating all teacher-licensure activities into a single entity to provide accountability and a “one-stop shop” that will assume complete responsibility for determining individual eligibility, processing applications, and issuing/revoking licenses. Communications with candidates for licensure, particularly denial letters, must explicitly state requirements for completion.”

- There was general consensus from both study group members and stakeholders to move toward consolidating teacher-licensure activities into a single entity, consistent with recommendations from the Office of the Legislative Auditor

“The Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensing, subject to future review for effectiveness and efficiency, supports the existing structure of the Board of School Administrators (BOSA), which is independent of teacher licensing. BOSA would continue to enter into agreements with other parties, as necessary, regarding licensing matters.”

- At the beginning of the course of the study group’s proceedings, there was discussion of rolling the Board of School Administrators into the Board of Teaching and renaming it accordingly to reflect serving both licensing functions for teachers and administrators
- However, there was consensus to leave the Board of School Administrators as is, with the caveat that their standalone status may be reviewed in the future

Tiered Licensure:

“The Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensing supports adoption of a tiered licensure framework in statute that ensures high standards, understandability, consistency, transparency, and identifies several accessible and affordable pathways for candidates at various stages of education and careers.”

- There was general consensus from both study group members and stakeholders to move towards implementing a tiered licensure system in Minnesota

“The Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensing supports incorporating the unique and valuable skill-sets of CTE (career and technical education) instructors within the tiered licensure framework, including recognition of industry-related professional credentials and verifiable work experiences.”

- A topic of great interest during LSGEL testimony, the study group recognizes the value of incorporating the skill-sets of CTE and alternatively certified instructors within future tiered licensure systems
- While the study group met, there was a parallel CTE work group tasked with looking at ways to bolster those programs

“The Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensing supports the adoption of technical and clarifying recommendations from the Office of the Revisor of Statutes, in cooperation with House and Senate nonpartisan staff, to provide increased comprehension of teacher licensure provisions in statutes and rules.”

- A key recommendation from the OLA’s report on teacher licensure was that the legislature should clarify Minnesota statutes regarding teacher-licensure activities which alludes to the purpose of this recommendation

MEETING MINUTES

Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensure Minutes

*Tuesday, June 28, 2016 1:00 p.m.
Room 200 ~ State Office Building*

Members Present:

Representative Drew Christensen	Senator Greg Clausen
Representative Jim Davnie	Senator Kevin Dahle
Representative Sondra Erickson	Senator Gary Dahms
Representative Jenifer Loon	Senator Karin Housley
Representative Carlos Mariani	Senator Eric Pratt
Representative Barb Yarusso	Senator Charles Wiger

Call to Order by Rep. Sondra Erickson at 1:04 p.m.

Election of Co-chairs – Rep. Mariani moved to elect Rep. Sondra Erickson and Sen. Charles Wiger as Co-chairs of the Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensure. **Motion prevails.**

Expectations of the Study Group – Meetings shall take place monthly. Location and gavel will alternate between the House and Senate each meeting.

Judy Randall from the Office of the Legislative Auditor presented the Office of the Legislative Auditor Report related to the Minnesota Teacher Licensure, recommending a re-design of the current system.

Lisa Larson of House Research presented information regarding the Career and Technical Education Task Force.

Kevin Behr from the Office of the Revisor presented a Categorical Summary of Statutory References to Teacher Licensure.

Tiered-licensure was briefly discussed. Further discussion will take place in the future.

Rep. Erickson adjourned the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensure Minutes

*Thursday, July 21, 2016 1:00 p.m.
Room 1200 ~ Minnesota Senate Building*

Members Present:

Co-Chair: Senator Charles Wiger
Co-chair: Representative Sondra Erickson
Representative Drew Christensen
Senator Greg Clausen
Senator Kevin Dahle
Representative Jenifer Loon
Senator Eric Pratt
Representative Barb Yarusso

Members Excused:

Senator Gary Dahms
Representative Jim Davnie
Senator Karin Housley
Representative Carlos Mariani

Call to Order by Senator Wiger at 1:00 p.m.

Motion to approve Minutes of June 28th Meeting made by Senator Pratt. **Motion prevails.**

Minnesota Department of Education, represented by Hue Nguyen, Assistant Commissioner, and Nels Onstad, Director of Education Licensing made a presentation.

Board of School Administrators' board members appeared and testified. Members appearing included: Mary Mackbee, Board Chair
Deb Henton, Board Member, and
Louise Sundin, Board Member

Erin Doan, Executive Director & Alex Luizzi, Teacher Education Specialist represented the Minnesota Board of Teaching with a presentation and documents related to their position on teacher licensure, including recommendations on how to restructure teacher licensure.

Doreen Frost, Executive Director of the Board of Architecture, Engineering, Land Surveying, Landscape Architecture, Geoscience and Interior Design (AELSLAGID) appeared before the Study Group to answer questions related to a tiered licensure system.

A draft meeting calendar for the balance of 2016 was presented. It is hoped that not all meetings on the schedule may be necessary.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:21 p.m.

Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensure Minutes

*Tuesday, August 23, 2016 1:00 p.m.
Basement Hearing Room – State Office Building*

Members Present:

Co-chair: Representative Sondra Erickson
Co-Chair: Senator Charles Wiger
Representative Drew Christensen
Senator Greg Clausen
Senator Kevin Dahle
Senator Gary Dahms
Representative Jim Davnie
Senator Karin Housley
Representative Jenifer Loon
Senator Eric Pratt
Representative Barb Yarusso

Members Excused:

Representative Carlos Mariani

Call to Order by Rep. Erickson at 1:00 p.m.

Motion to approve Minutes of the July 21st Meeting made by Sen. Dahms. **Motion prevails.**

Stakeholders that provided testimony:

- Joshua Crosson ~ MinnCAN
- David Aron, Attorney ~ Education Minnesota
- Gary Amoroso, Executive Director ~ Minnesota Association of School Administrators
- Ryan Stromberg, HR Director ~ Spring Lake Park Public Schools
- Jim Bartholomew ~ Minnesota Business Partnership
- Mary Russell ~ Teach for America
- Eugene Piccolo ~ Minnesota Association of Charter Schools
- John Miller ~ Center for School Change
- Cyndy Crist, Legislative & Policy Liaison ~ Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
- Dr. Elizabeth Finsness, Director, Office of Field & International Experience ~ Minnesota State University, Mankato
- Eli Kramer, Executive Director ~ Hiawatha Academies

Hue Nguyen, Assistant Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education provided an update on governance models and a presentation on the CTE Task Force.

Janet L. Mohr, Executive Director Board of School Administrators and Mary Mackbee indicated that they feel the current structure is working well.

Erin Doan, Executive Director & Alex Luizzi, Teacher Education Specialist from the Minnesota Board of Teaching provided an update on governance models and presented a recommendation for draft models for tiered licensure.

A discussion occurred regarding reports and preparation of drafts of proposals for the next meeting on September 29th at 9:00 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensure Minutes

*Thursday, September 29, 2016 9:00 a.m.
Room 1200 – Minnesota Senate Building*

Members Present:

Co-Chair: Senator Charles Wiger
Co-Chair: Representative Sondra Erickson
Representative Drew Christensen
Senator Greg Clausen
Senator Kevin Dahle
Senator Gary Dahms
Representative Jim Davnie
Senator Karin Housley
Representative Jenifer Loon
Senator Eric Pratt
Representative Barb Yarusso

Members Excused:

Representative Carlos Mariani

Call to Order by Sen. Wiger at 9:08 a.m.

Motion to approve Minutes of the August 23rd Meeting made by Rep. Erickson. **Motion prevails.**

Discussion of governance and tiered licensure proposals:

- House GOP – Draft Tiered Licensure
Agency Licensing with Professional Educator Boards
- Senate GOP – Board of Teaching Reforms
- Senate DFL – Senate DFL Proposal on Tiered Licensure Framework
Senate DFL Educator Licensure Governance Proposal

Stakeholders that provided testimony on proposals:

- Jim Barnhill, Board of Teaching
- Roger Aronson, Elementary School Principals’ Association
- Valerie Dosland, Board of School Administrators
- Jim Grabowski, Board of Teaching
- Cyndy Crist, Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
- David Aron, Education Minnesota
- Joshua Crosson, MinnCAN
- Rick Heller

Stakeholders that provided testimony on governance:

- Jim Barnhill, Board of Teaching
- Troy Haugen, CTE Licensure Task Force
- Jim Bartholomew, Minnesota Business Partnership
- Jim Grabowski, Board of Teaching
- Denise Dittrich, Minnesota School Boards Association
- Cyndy Crist, Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
- David Aron, Education Minnesota
- Daniel Smith, Retired Educator
- Rick Heller

The meeting was adjourned at 11:54 a.m.

Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensure Minutes

*Tuesday, October 25, 2016 1:00 p.m.
Room 10 – State Office Building*

Members Present:

Co-Chair: Representative Sondra Erickson
Co-Chair: Senator Charles Wiger
Representative Drew Christensen

Senator Greg Clausen
Senator Kevin Dahle
Senator Gary Dahms
Representative Jim Davnie
Senator Karin Housley
Representative Jenifer Loon
Senator Eric Pratt
Representative Barb Yarusso

Members Excused:

Representative Carlos Mariani

Call to Order by Rep. Erickson at 1:05 p.m.

Motion to approve Minutes of the September 29th meeting made by Rep. Loon. **Motion prevails.**

Governance and tiered licensure proposals presented by:

- Bjorn Arneson – Joint House and Senate DFL Proposal on Tiered Licensure framework
- Tim Strom – Comparison of Tiered Licensure Proposals with House/Senate DFL Modifications

Stakeholders that provided testimony:

- Cyndy Crist, Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
- Kathi Micheletti, Education Minnesota
- Sara Ford, Education Minnesota
- Joshua Crosson, Education Allies
- Ryan Stromberg, Spring Lake Park Public Schools
- Adosh Uni, Minnesota Department of Education
- Erin Doan, Board of Teaching

The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

The next meeting will be held November 16th at 9:00 a.m. in Room 1200 of the Minnesota Senate Building.

Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensure Minutes

*Tuesday, December 20, 2016 1:00 p.m.
Room 200 – State Office Building*

Members Present:

Co-Chair: Representative Sondra Erickson
Co-Chair: Senator Charles Wiger
Representative Drew Christensen
Senator Greg Clausen
Senator Kevin Dahle
Senator Gary Dahms
Representative Jim Davnie
Senator Karin Housley
Representative Jenifer Loon
Senator Eric Pratt
Representative Barb Yarusso

Members Excused:

Representative Carlos Mariani

Called to Order by Rep. Erickson at 1:13 p.m.

Motion to approve Minutes, as amended, of the October 25, 2016 meeting made by Rep. Davnie. **Motion prevails.**

(Note: Following a review of the audio of the October 25 meeting, the minutes as presented were accurate, so there was no need for the proposed amendment to the minutes.)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Governance:

Rep. Loon MOVES that the Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensing supports consolidating all teacher-licensure activities into a single entity to provide accountability and a “one-stop shop” that will assume complete responsibility for determining individual eligibility, processing applications, and issuing/revoking licenses. Communications with candidates for licensure, particularly denial letters, must explicitly state requirements for completion.

MOTION PREVAILS

Sen. Clausen MOVES that the Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensing, subject to future review for effectiveness and efficiency, supports the existing structure of the Board of School Administrators (BOSA), which is independent of teacher licensing. BOSA would continue to

enter into agreements with other parties, as necessary, regarding licensing matters. **MOTION PREVAILS**

Licensing:

Sen. Pratt MOVES that the Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensing supports adoption of a tiered licensure framework in statute that ensures high standards, understandability, consistency, transparency, and identifies several accessible and affordable pathways for candidates at various stages of education and careers. **MOTION PREVAILS**

Sen. Dahms MOVES that the Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensing supports incorporating the unique and valuable skill-sets of CTE (career and technical education) instructors within the tiered licensure framework, including recognition of industry-related professional credentials and verifiable work experiences. **MOTION PREVAILS**

Sen. Dahle MOVES that the Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensing supports the adoption of technical and clarifying recommendations from the Office of the Revisor of Statutes, in cooperation with House and Senate nonpartisan staff, to provide increased comprehension of teacher licensure provisions in statutes and rules. **MOTION PREVAILS**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:21 p.m.

THANK YOU

A special thank you goes out to all of the legislators, stakeholders, officials, and legislative staff for their work contributing to the success of the bipartisan Legislative Study Group on Educator Licensing.

A special thank you also goes to Kasey Gerkovich of the Legislative Coordinating Commission for organizing and providing administrative support for LSGEL meetings.