



## **Economic Impact Analysis Virginia Department of Planning and Budget**

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### **8 VAC 20-21– Licensure Regulations for School Personnel Department of Education May 31, 2001**

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The Department of Planning and Budget (DPB) has analyzed the economic impact of this proposed regulation in accordance with Section 9-6.14:7.1.G of the Administrative Process Act and Executive Order Number 25 (98). Section 9-6.14:7.1.G requires that such economic impact analyses include, but need not be limited to, the projected number of businesses or other entities to whom the regulation would apply, the identity of any localities and types of businesses or other entities particularly affected, the projected number of persons and employment positions to be affected, the projected costs to affected businesses or entities to implement or comply with the regulation, and the impact on the use and value of private property. The analysis presented below represents DPB's best estimate of these economic impacts.

### **Summary of the Proposed Regulation**

The current Licensure Regulations for School Personnel include a provisional license that provide potential teachers an alternative route (versus the traditional route) to licensure. The Board of Education (board) proposes to add an additional route for teacher licensure. Through this proposed route, individuals would be able to obtain an eligibility license as an entry into the teaching profession. A form of the eligibility license exists under the current regulations, but is limited to military personnel.

### **Estimated Economic Impact**

#### **Differences between Routes to Teacher Licensure**

In the traditional route to teacher certification in Virginia, the candidate completes a state-approved teacher preparation program, which includes professional studies and student teaching. The professional studies must encompass at least 15 credits if teaching at the

secondary level, or 18 credits if teaching at the elementary level. The candidate also takes courses necessary for endorsement in specific content areas (for example, math courses for an endorsement to teach mathematics). Additionally, the candidate is required to pass<sup>1</sup> the PRAXIS I (basic skills: reading, writing, and mathematics) and PRAXIS II (subject area) exams, the national standardized qualifying exams for teachers. The Department of Education (department) will grant a collegiate professional license to candidates who meet these requirements and earn a bachelor's degree.

**Table 1: Differences between Routes to Teacher Licensure**

	<b>Standard Route</b>	<b>Current Alternative</b>	<b>Proposed Alternative</b>
<b>First License</b>	Collegiate Professional	Provisional	Eligibility
<b>When Obtained</b>	Before employment	After employment	Before employment
<b>Duration</b>	5 years	3 years	1 year
<b>Student Teaching</b>	Required	One year of successful, full-time experience in lieu of student teaching	Field experience and one year of successful, full-time experience in lieu of student teaching
<b>Professional Studies</b>	15 credits (for secondary) or 18 (for elementary) prior to licensure	15 credits (for secondary) or 18 (for elementary) during 3 year license period	12 credit-equivalent before employment
<b>PRAXIS I and II</b>	Pass before employment	Pass after employment	Pass before employment
<b>Requirements for Endorsement in a Content Area</b>	Course work	Course work	Course work, but can use work experience to meet elements of the course content requirements

Currently, individuals may enter the teaching profession via an alternative route (see Table 1 for a summary of the differences between routes to licensure). A person can obtain a provisional license to teach if he or she possesses a bachelor's degree, has completed the subject-specific coursework necessary for endorsement in a content area, and gains employment with a Virginia school division. The provisional license lasts for three years and is not renewable. In

<sup>1</sup> The board specifies which scores must be met or exceeded in order to qualify for a state teaching license.

order to be granted a collegiate professional license, the individual must accomplish the following by the end of the three-year provisional license period: pass PRAXIS I and II; complete 15 credits of professional studies if teaching at the secondary level, or 18 credits if teaching at the elementary level; and be judged to have demonstrated at least one year of successful, full-time teaching experience by the school division. The school division is required to provide a fully licensed experienced teacher in the school building to assist the provisionally licensed teacher.

The board proposes to permit individuals to enter the teaching profession through another alternative, somewhat accelerated licensing process. Applicants may obtain an *eligibility* license to teach if the following requirements are satisfied: completion of a bachelor's degree, completion of teaching area requirements in an endorsement area, at least five years of full-time work experience, passing scores on PRAXIS I and II, and completion of a professional studies program which includes field experience. Unlike the provisional license, individuals can earn the eligibility license prior to employment with a school division. The eligibility license lasts one year. The individual would then seek to obtain a collegiate professional license (the traditional renewable license). In order for an eligibility license holder to obtain the collegiate professional license, the individual must be judged by a school division to have demonstrated at least one year of successful, full-time teaching. A certified program provider that offers the professional studies courses would also provide a trained mentor for each teacher with an eligibility license. During the year that the individual holds the eligibility license, she attends at least five seminars conducted by the certified program provider; the seminars must include a minimum of 20 cumulative instruction hours.

### **Teacher's Perspective**

The proposed new licensing process has several advantages for prospective teachers. First, the professional studies requirement appears to be less burdensome than under either the current alternative route or the traditional route. The candidate would complete the equivalent of 12 credits of professional studies either via a 180 hour (clock hours) intensive summer course or by other means, such as at night or on the weekends, within one year before obtaining the eligibility license. In addition, the candidate attends at least five seminars including a minimum of 20 cumulative instruction hours, which is equivalent to about 1.3 credits. In total, an

individual following the proposed new licensing process would complete the equivalent of about 13.3 credits. This compares with 15 to 18 credits (about 5 or 6 classes) under the current alternative and the traditional route. Second, candidates can use work experience to meet elements of the course content requirements for endorsement in a content area. Third, the prospective teacher can obtain a license without first obtaining a position with a school division. According to the department, school divisions often do not consider job candidates who are not already licensed. This can create a barrier for individuals seeking to enter the profession via the current alternative route. Thus, the new process may make it easier for non-traditional teaching candidates to obtain teaching positions. Fourth, the student teaching requirement for individuals following the new route is limited to some summer field experience, considerably less time than in the traditional route. Instead, the licensee is assigned a trained mentor to work with during her time teaching under the eligibility license. This will allow the candidate to become employed as a teacher significantly sooner than she would be able to under the traditional route.

Finally, under the eligibility license program the certified program provider is responsible for providing the trained mentor. Under the provisional license program, school divisions are responsible for providing an experienced teacher to be available for assistance. Thus, mentoring would be less costly for school divisions under the eligibility license program than under the provisional license program. This too may make it easier for non-traditional teaching candidates to obtain teaching positions.

For prospective teachers, the new licensing process also has some distinct disadvantages. Unlike the current alternative route, candidates must have at least five years of full-time work experience, pass PRAXIS I and II, and complete 180 hours of professional studies requirements prior to licensure and employment. Also, the eligibility license lasts only one year, versus three years for the provisional license. If the school division believes the individual has the potential to be a good teacher, but has yet to demonstrate the necessary skills to advance on to the collegiate professional license, then the eligibility license may be extended for one year. If the school division does not believe the individual has the potential to be a good teacher based on the year of observation, then the eligibility license expires at the end of the year. Thus, the candidate has only one or two years in which to demonstrate one year of successful, full-time teaching versus three years under the current alternative.

Overall, the proposed addition of the eligibility license and the accelerated route to licensure may be an attractive alternative for individuals considering entry into teaching. The advantages of the new route will likely outweigh the disadvantages for some; and the current alternative route remains open for those individuals that find that route preferable.

### **Commonwealth's Perspective**

For the citizens of Virginia, the proposed new route to licensure has several advantages. If the proposed route encourages individuals to enter the teaching profession who would not have otherwise entered, then it increases the pool of prospective teachers from which local school districts may hire. The department has indicated that there are widespread and persistent teacher shortages in Virginia, and that the shortages are projected to increase over the next decade. An increased pool of qualified teachers would help reduce the current and projected shortage and thus may help reduce class size, or at least keep class size from increasing. The impact of reduced class size is not well understood; the research literature on the value of reduced class size is mixed. Some studies find statistically significant positive effects on achievement due to smaller class size; for examples see Finn and Achilles (1999) and Krueger (1999). While other studies find that class size does not have a statistically significant effect on student achievement; for examples see Hoxby (2000) and cited studies in Hanushek (1999).

Another advantage of the proposed new route to licensure is that the candidate needs to show sufficient teaching competence within one (or possibly two) years, rather than the three in the current alternative. If the candidate lacks the ability to be a successful teacher, then she may stop teaching sooner under the new route versus the current alternative route. Additionally, the candidate demonstrates knowledge in relevant subject areas prior to teaching via passing PRAXIS I and II prior to teaching. Teachers with provisional licenses can teach up to three years without passing these exams. If some individuals who would have otherwise followed the current alternative route choose the proposed new route, then these individuals will need to acquire sufficient knowledge to pass the PRAXIS exams prior to teaching. Therefore, students with teachers entering by the new route may be more likely to have a new teacher with greater knowledge in the subject than they would otherwise.

The proposed new licensing process also has some disadvantages. Under the pilot program this route does involve a higher cost to taxpayers than the other alternative licensing route. The department estimates that the cost of the pilot program will be about \$4,072 per candidate; with 100 participants in the program that is \$407,200 in total. It has not been determined who will pay the costs once the pilot program is over and the department begins to approve professional studies training programs for eligibility licenses run by colleges, training schools, etc (certified program providers). The costs could be borne by the Commonwealth, localities, teaching candidates themselves, or some combination of those entities.

Also, individuals following the new licensing process will have fewer hours of professional studies education and will not be required to have student teaching experience. The 1996 National Commission on Teaching and America's Future report, "What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future," emphasizes the importance of pedagogy training and that all teachers should graduate from an accredited school of education. However, research exists that indicates that students with teachers who have not had the additional hours of professional studies and student teaching experience perform no worse than students who have traditionally certified teachers. Barnes, Salmon, and Wale (1989), Goebel, Romacher, and Sanchez (1989), and Miller, McKenna, and McKenna (1996) all find that students of alternative route teachers do at least well as pupils of traditionally licensed teachers. In a careful study that uses the *National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988* (NELS) data set, Goldhaber and Brewer (2000) find that math and science students who have teachers with emergency credentials do no worse than students whose teachers have standard teaching credentials. Goldhaber and Brewer also find that science students who have a teacher with a BA in education perform no better than students whose teacher does not have an education degree; and having a teacher with a BA in education actually has a statistically significant negative effect on students' math scores.

## **Conclusion**

Increasing the pool of qualified teachers from which school divisions may hire is beneficial in that it will help fill vacancies and may allow school divisions to be more selective in their hiring. Although there is not a complete consensus concerning the quality of teaching by alternatively certified teachers versus traditionally certified teachers, existing research implies

that students with alternatively certified teachers perform at least as well as students with traditionally certified teachers, particularly in subjects with the most severe teaching shortages (math and science). It is unclear, though, by how much the addition of the new process will add to the pool of qualified teachers. Some individuals who will choose the new process would likely have followed the current alternative route if the former route were not available, and thus will not be truly adding to the pool of qualified teachers.

As stated earlier, the department estimates that the cost of running the pilot program will be about \$4,072 per candidate. The department believes that the cost of the new licensing process per candidate will decrease as the program is more established and economies of scale are utilized. The board has not determined who will pay the costs once the pilot program is over and the department begins to approve professional studies training programs for eligibility licenses run by colleges, training schools, etc. If all the costs are borne by the candidate, then the proposed eligibility license route would appear to produce a net economic benefit. By choosing to follow the eligibility license route, the candidate demonstrates that she believes the benefits outweigh the costs for her, and thus the benefits outweigh the costs in aggregate (she bears all the costs). The participation of individuals in the new program will likely be less without any public subsidy, than with some public subsidy. Thus, the total benefit is limited when the candidate bears all the cost.

Subsidizing some or all of the costs will likely increase the participation rate in the new licensing process. Determining whether increasing the subsidy adds to net economic benefit depends on how much the subsidy improves student performance. Increasing the subsidy could potentially improve student performance by adding to participation in the new program (more qualified candidates to hire could fill more positions and reduce class size), and improving the quality of teachers that are hired (larger pool for school divisions to choose from, and higher subsidy may entice better potential teachers to enter the profession). Even if an accurate estimate of how much student performance would improve given a specific subsidy increase existed, determining whether that level of improved student performance was worth the given subsidy cost to the public would depend upon how much the public valued improved student performance. Reliable estimates of how much a subsidy would increase the pool of qualified teaching candidates and by how much that would improve student performance do not exist.

Thus, it cannot be determined what the ideal subsidy, if any, would be for participants in the new program.

According to the results of a department survey of Virginia school divisions, shortages of science and mathematics teachers are much more severe than in other non-special education areas. If public funds are to be used to subsidize the participation in the new program, perhaps state funds would be most effectively used to alleviate teacher shortages by focusing proportionally more of the subsidies into the specific teaching fields where the shortages are greatest. The potential effectiveness of these subsidies on recruiting new teachers across different fields should also be taken into consideration. Since potential participants qualified to teach science or math may on average earn more in their current career than potential participants qualified to teach in other areas, the same dollar amount of subsidy may be less effective in inducing these individuals into the teaching profession than those individuals with less lucrative careers.

## **Businesses and Entities Affected**

The proposed changes to the regulation will affect the 132 school divisions, as well as potential teachers and potential providers of the proposed intensive professional studies programs.

## **Localities Particularly Affected**

The proposed changes to the regulation affect localities throughout the Commonwealth.

## **Projected Impact on Employment**

The proposed changes to this regulation may increase the number of teacher positions that are filled in the Commonwealth. Since many of the individuals that may enter teaching via the proposed eligibility license would be leaving other jobs, the net positive impact on total employment for the Commonwealth due to fewer teaching vacancies is likely to be small. The proposed eligibility license may also increase employment with potential providers of the proposed intensive professional studies programs.

## Effects on the Use and Value of Private Property

The proposed eligibility license may produce additional demand for professional studies training from private colleges and contractors. The potential additional demand could increase the value of these private entities.

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