

Notable Policy Provisions in the 2015 E-12 Conference Committee Report

Licensing

- **Basic Skills Test:** Board of Teaching (BoT) must require candidates to pass a board-adopted skills examination and removes ACT and SAT alternatives.
- **Limited Licenses:** Allows BoT to issue up to 4 temporary, one-year teaching licenses to an otherwise qualified candidate who has not yet passed the skills test; BoT may issue a restricted license to otherwise qualified candidates who can't pass skills tests; two-year provisional license for candidates in a field they were not yet licensed in or in a field with a teacher shortage.
- **Prep Program Reporting:** Requires teacher/principal prep programs to report on performance and outcomes to BoT and Board of School Administrators (BoSA), and districts must annually report to BoT and BoSA on teacher evaluation data, those who accepted continuing contracts, and those who were placed on probation or were discharged from positions.
- **Out-of-State Candidates:** Requires BoT to create streamlined licensure measures for out-of-state candidates and modifies some of those out-of-state candidate requirements; directs the BoT to enter into interstate agreements for licensure of teachers from adjoining states.
- **Other Provisions:** Exempts career and technical education instructors from teacher licensure requirements until 2020; grounds for teacher license revocation, suspension, or denial includes any offense requiring registration as a predatory offender; BoT must notify candidates who applied for licensure via portfolio on approval decision within 90 days, and then MDE licensing department must approve or deny the portfolio within 60 days upon resubmission.

Student Testing

- **MCA Writing Test:** Requires a new high school writing test aligned to state standards.
- **College Entrance Exam Optional:** Makes taking a nationally recognized entrance exam optional but requires districts to provide, and MDE to pay for, and administer a test in the district when requested.
- **Testing Reduction:** Eliminates the Explore, Plan, and Compass; creates a non-exclusive list of situations where a student is not penalized for not taking a test; limits local tests to 1% of instructional hours with an exemption a district creates an agreement with the local union and updates its World's Best Workforce (WBWF) plan.
- **2015 Testing Disruption:** Requires the commissioner to notify the legislature when testing is suspended due to disruptions; commissioner must contract with a vendor to determine impact of disruptions on 2015 MCAs; if there was a disruption, districts can decide not to report scores for 2014-15 school year for the purposes of teacher evaluation and accountability purposes; and MDE must report on MCA administration vendor performance.

MDE Reporting

- **Homeless Students:** Include homeless student data in student and school performance reports.
- **Rigorous Course Taking:** Disaggregate data by student group, school district, and postsecondary institution in the annual rigorous course taking report.
- **Swimming Instruction:** Inventory and report on existing resources and best practices available for swimming instruction in MN.

- **Tuition for Noncredit-Bearing Courses:** Report on tuition costs for noncredit-bearing college courses at the U of M and MnSCU for developmental or remedial purpose and break out the number of affected students in each high school.
- **World's Best Workforce:** Report a list of the districts that have not submitted their WBWF plans and those that are not achieving their performance goals.
- **Comprehensive Vision Examination:** Report the number of children who have had a comprehensive vision examination.

Special Education

- **Paraprofessionals:** Special education paraprofessionals must be trained on students' specific needs.
- **Online IEP System:** Districts no longer have to use statewide SPED online system in future but their systems must interact with it.
- **MDE:** Requires MDE to help special education teachers comply with legal requirements, look into how to reduce paperwork, and identify the reading level and any fixes to its special education forms.
- **Dyslexia Definition:** Defines dyslexia as a specific learning disability. Those with a diagnosis of dyslexia must meet state and federal eligibility criteria to qualify for special education services.

Other Provisions

- **Student placement:** An administrator cannot place students in consecutive years with a teacher who is under an improvement plan.
- **Four-day week:** Grandfathers districts that currently have four-day weeks and allows them to maintain program until 2019-20 school year. Future approvals depend on meeting World's Best Workforce goals. If discontinued, the districts are allowed a one-year transition.
- **Labor Day Start:** All districts may start on September 1 for the 2015-16 school year.
- **American Indian Education Act:** Updated based on recommendations from the Tribal Nations Education Committee.
- **Comprehensive Vision Examination:** In their screening program, districts must ask parents of the date of the child's most recent comprehensive vision examination; defines comprehensive vision examination as one done by optometrist or ophthalmologist.
- **High School Study Abroad Programs:** Districts and charters with students participating in study abroad or foreign exchange programs must report incidents of student death, hospitalization, and illness during those programs.

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