

## State Readiness Tool—Licensure Deep Dive

### Questions to Consider

1. Raise licensure standards to support the new vision of teaching.

- Do our licensure standards require educators to demonstrate their ability to use a tiered system of support to prepare a diverse range of students for the demands of college and the workplace?
- Do the licensure standards require teachers to demonstrate expertise in differentiated core instruction within a tiered instructional system with varying degrees of intensity?
- Do the licensure standards for new teachers align with college- and career-ready standards that we have in place for students and (if applicable) for evaluating educators?
- Will we require, as recommended in the Task Force report, that all teachers are able to develop student literacy across the curriculum?
- Will we require that all teachers know how to plan instruction for English language learners (ELLs) and students with learning differences using a tiered system of support?
- Do the standards require teachers to meet a high bar to be licensed?
  - Are current licensure standards credible with the public, and do they reflect our learner-ready teacher definition?
  - On what is the recommendation from the Preparation Program based?
    - Completing an approved program
    - Passing required test(s) of content and pedagogical knowledge and skills
    - Demonstrating effective teaching performance, including a passing score on a performance assessment
    - Demonstrating the ability to implement a tiered system of support for students
    - Adding selectivity criteria into teacher preparation programs
    - Passing a background check
- Are the standards well enforced? Do they differentiate between effective and ineffective teachers? Are they applicable to all candidates from any teacher preparation program provider?

Source: Council of Chief State School Officers. (2015). *Network for Transforming Educator Preparation—State Readiness Tool, Modified Version*. Washington, DC: Author.



## Questions to Consider

2. Increase the rigor of licensure assessments to emphasize indicators of teacher and leader effectiveness.

- Do our licensure assessments measure the likelihood that a teacher will be effective across various student populations (e.g., ELLs, low-income, students with disabilities)? Do they align with the standards used for state licensure (e.g., InTASC)?
- Do our licensure assessments address tasks essential to supporting student growth in today's learning environments, such as critical thinking skills, collaborative problem solving, analyzing student assessment and other data, and using a tiered system of support?
- Do they use multiple performance-based measures to give a comprehensive view of effectiveness?
  - Do assessments include real-time observations or authentic artifacts of teaching that might include the following:
    - Teacher and student work examples or samples
    - Unit or lesson planning and implementation
    - Case studies of students
    - Video of actual teaching
    - Analysis of student assessment results
    - Reflection on teaching
- Have we clearly stipulated to prospective teachers and teacher preparation programs the kinds of assessment data that should be submitted with candidate recommendations and that will inform licensure decisions?
- Do assessments provide formative feedback to candidates that can be used for continuous improvement?
- Are there sufficient resources to administer the assessments systemwide to all licensure candidates and clarity about who shares which responsibilities (e.g., preparation program, K–12 cooperating teacher)?
- Are assessors equipped with the necessary skills to carry out these assessments, including a deep knowledgebase of evidence-based practices to support all students, including students with diverse learning needs?
- Do the assessments narrow the gateway to licensure while attending to issues of bias and adverse impact? Is the narrowing acceptable to the other goals of licensure?



### Questions to Consider

3. Create multitiered licensure systems that drive an educator's progression toward increased expertise and career opportunities.

- Does the licensure system include multiple tiers?
- Do those tiers form a coherent developmental continuum that reflects our performance expectations for effective teachers?
- Do the tiers align with increasing needs in teacher skills and competency to perform within a tiered system of support with varying degrees of intensity?
- Are the first tier(s) in the system linked to induction, mentoring, and other scaffolding that will help beginning teachers grow rapidly in effectiveness?
  - Who has responsibility for inducting new teachers? Preparation programs? Districts? State? Shared?
- Is there an infrastructure of support in place to help educators move through the developmental continuum?
  - Learning progressions for teachers can inform preparation program curriculum development and scaffolding of preparation experiences during clinical practice; a bridging plan for continued growth from preservice into induction; ongoing professional growth plans linked to evaluation systems at the district level; and requirements for initial and tiered licensure levels
- Is there an assessment or evaluation of effectiveness required to move to the next tier? Does it provide feedback to the teacher and opportunity to improve?
- Do these tiers influence the career pathways and progressions that districts and schools use? Do preparation programs track their graduates and offer them continued support at each tier, especially during induction?



## Questions to Consider

4. Streamline licensure systems so they support the new vision of teaching, are more efficient to administer, and establish reciprocity with other states.

- How difficult is it to become a candidate for licensure? Will the state set entry requirements for preparation programs? What will the requirements be? Will they impact underrepresented student groups?
  - New generations of workers anticipate having multiple careers across their lifetime. How can we accommodate career-changers and create flexibility that allows them to become education professionals without undue burdens or sacrificing high standards?
- What should the licensure structure look like? What is the range of developmental levels and content a license should address? Is the use of “endorsements” still relevant? If so, how should they be structured (e.g., to address greater depth and breadth of content, wider range of student developmental levels)?
- Do we need to revisit how we license special education teachers?
- Do we need an alternative initial licensure policy if we hold to common standards of performance? If so, how do they adhere to the same rigor of standards and assessments and not inadvertently create a “work-around” system?
- Does our system make acquiring a state license as easy as possible for teachers licensed in other states while still holding them to a uniformly high standard? For example:
  - Passing scores on common licensure assessments vary from state to state—how does our system address the differences?
  - Requirements for content knowledge vary across states—how does our system address the differences?
  - What evidence do we need to award a license to a teacher from another state?
    - Graduate of a state-approved program
    - Graduate of a nationally accredited program
    - Completion of clinical practice that includes the following:
      - Coteaching versus observing
      - Quality and role of school-based clinical faculty
      - Urban or rural experience
      - Experience with students with disabilities and second-language learners
    - Passing score on licensure tests, which include content, pedagogical, and teaching performance data?
    - Satisfactory evaluation scores from state or district process?
    - Teaching experience?
- Are there states with similar requirements to ours with whom we could begin to explore reciprocity?

