
Educator Licensure Policy 5.502

The Background:

Tennessee State Board of Education Educator Licensure Policy 5.502 details requirements for issuance, renewal, advancement, and reactivation of all license types.

This item proposes revisions to the policy necessary to implement statutory changes to educator licensure pursuant to Chapter 3 of the Public Acts of 2021, 1st Extraordinary Session, known as the “Tennessee Literacy Success Act.”

To ensure all educators are adequately trained in Foundational Literacy Skills, beginning on August 1, 2023, the Tennessee Literacy Success Act requires teachers endorsed to teach in grades K – 3 and instructional leaders to complete a literacy assessment or professional development to acquire, renew, or advance a license. Revisions to this policy build on previously proposed revisions to the Educator Licensure Rule 0520-02-03-.11 by detailing the endorsements that will require completion of these new licensure requirements, beginning with licensure applications submitted on August 1, 2023.

Additionally, this item includes revisions to remove specific requirements for occupational licensure advancement. Requirements recommended for removal were in place during a period in which occupational preparation programs were not subject to the same review processes as academic programs, as they are now. Removal of these requirements will also result in a streamlined pathway for currently licensed educators to become approved to teach occupational courses.

Furthermore, this item includes revisions adding clarifying language to out-of-state pathways for additional endorsement to align with current initial licensure requirements for out-of-state educators.

Finally, the Department is proposing the following new endorsements:

- Two new Occupational endorsements (Aviation Maintenance and Diesel Technician); and
- One new School Services Personnel endorsement (Speech Language Pathology Assistant), a pathway that was proposed and approved on final reading in July 2021 in the Educator Licensure Rule.

Between first and final reading, the following changes were made:

- The addition of a department-managed pathway to the Computer Science K-12 endorsement as required by Public Chapter 979 of the 112th General Assembly;
- The addition of the new limited license type to align with Public Chapter 1093 of the 112th General Assembly and State Board emergency rules creating the pathway to the limited license. The emergency rules are proposed for approval at this board meeting.
- The removal of outdated or duplicative pathways to specific endorsements that do not require candidate assessments and language regarding eligibility to teach specific elementary education courses;
- The addition of active endorsements that were inadvertently missing from the endorsement table; and

- The updating of endorsements that require demonstration of meeting expectations of the Tennessee Literacy Success Act.

Policy Justification:

T.C.A. § 4-5-230 requires that justification for adopting an item as a policy instead of a rule be submitted to the chair of the Government Operations Committee. This item is proposed to be adopted as a policy because it defines or explains the meaning of a statute or rule and/or concerns only the internal management of state government that does not affect private rights or privileges.

The Fiscal Analysis Impact:

T.C.A. § 49-1-212 requires that the Department prepare a fiscal analysis of any policy, rule, or regulation proposed to the State Board of Education. This item has no financial impact on an LEA.

The Recommendation:

The Department of Education recommends approval of this item on final reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.