

North Carolina Approval Process for Innovative Lateral  
Entry Licensure Programs

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction  
Educator Recruitment and Development Division

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Public Schools of North Carolina  
**State Board of Education | Department of Public Instruction**

## ***Introduction:***

In 2007, the North Carolina State Board of Education passed a policy that opened the State's doors to innovative lateral-entry licensure programs. The State Board of Education recognized that such programs can provide effective teachers in school systems that might otherwise struggle to fill positions with high-quality educators. The creation of a high-quality teacher workforce requires a sufficient supply of teachers who have been well-prepared prior to their entry into the workforce. North Carolina is home to a number of lateral-entry programs, including those run by school districts, programs sponsored by external partners, and those in partnership with institutions of higher education. Nationally, over thirty states offer alternative routes to teacher licensure.

This guide details the process through which the State Board of Education approves new innovative lateral-entry licensure programs. The guide specifically outlines the information that should be included in a successful proposal, including public school partnerships, evidence that candidates are prepared to be effective educators, and a focus on the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards. The State Board of Education looks forward to approving creative new programs that meet all the standards of quality.

## ***The Approval Process:***

This guide includes the State Board of Education policy on innovative lateral-entry licensure programs in the Appendix (beginning on Page 4).

### **Step One: The potential partner submits a proposal for a teacher or school executive lateral-entry program to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.**

The school district, college or university, or organization seeking to begin a lateral-entry program should submit a written application to the Educator Recruitment and Development division at the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI). Proposals can be sent to the division's director, Dr. Lynne Johnson, at [lynne.johnson@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:lynne.johnson@dpi.nc.gov). The next section of the guide discusses the recommended contents of the proposal.

The Educator Recruitment and Development division will contact the individual designated as the proposal's point of contact, during which NCDPI staff will outline the approval process, answer any questions that the potential partner may have, and ask any clarifying questions. At this time, the potential partner may decide to submit a revised proposal.

**Step Two: The Statewide Evaluation Committee on Teacher Evaluation evaluates the proposal for the innovative lateral-entry licensure program.**

The Statewide Evaluation Committee will assess the extent to which the proposal meets the standards outlined in State Board policy. NCDPI staff will provide the potential partner with written feedback on the Committee's evaluation. At this time, the potential partner may provide addendums to their original proposal to address any questions. The Committee will then re-evaluate the proposal.

**Step Three: The Statewide Evaluation Committee on Teacher Evaluation recommends program approval to the State Board of Education.**

The Committee will make a decision on its approval or rejection of the initial proposal or the proposal after it has been re-submitted with addendums.

**Step Four: The State Board of Education considers the lateral-entry program as a discussion item during its Twenty-first Century Professionals Committee meeting.**

An NCDPI staff member will present the recommendation of the Statewide Evaluation Committee on Teacher Education to the State Board of Education. Representatives from the school district, college or university, or external organization that submitted the proposal should be present to address any questions that the State Board Committee may have. If the proposal was not submitted directly by a school district, the district that will be served by the program should also send representatives to the meeting. The State Board Committee will decide on a recommendation for program approval to the entire State Board.

**Step Five: During the next month, the State Board of Education considers the lateral-entry program as an action item.**

If the Twenty-first Century Professionals Committee recommends the lateral-entry program for approval, the State Board of Education will make the final decision on program approval.

***The Standards for Program Approval:***

The State Board of Education requires innovative lateral-entry licensure programs to meet six key standards. The proposal must also clearly state how the program will develop competencies on the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation Instrument or School Executives Evaluation Instrument. This explanation can be woven throughout the proposal as the potential partner addresses each of the following standards, or it can be located in one section of the proposal.

**Standard One: The program is planned, developed, implemented and evaluated by a school system, or by a community college/college/university in conjunction with a school system and has been reviewed by the State Evaluation Committee on Teacher Education. The proposed innovation is sound and has the potential for strengthening the preparation process for lateral entry teachers or school executives.**

Evidence for Standard One can include information on the program's recruitment and selection processes, pre-service training, licensure coursework, processes for ensuring the effectiveness of educators, plans to remove ineffective educators from the program, and plans for continual refinement and improvement of the program based on feedback from participants and school administrators, as well as other sources of data.

**Standard Two: The program is appropriately organized and administered. There is a structure for the oversight and management of the program which ensures flexibility and accountability.**

Evidence for Standard Two can include information on the program's staffing structure and the collection of formative and summative data on program success.

**Standard Three: The program has sufficient and appropriate human, fiscal, and physical resources.**

Evidence on Standard Three can include information on the human resources of the program staff, including their knowledge, skills, and abilities, fiscal resources, tentative budget, and physical resources.

**Standard Four: The program addresses the needs of the students.**

Evidence for Standard Four can include information on how the program collects and analyzes participant feedback, plans for mentoring during the school year, support for struggling teachers, professional learning communities formed by participants, training curriculum, and efforts to retain teachers in the classroom.

**Standard Five: The program includes exit levels of competence, a procedure for recommending licensure, and a follow-up process.**

Evidence for Standard Five can include quality assurance steps during recruitment and selection, pre-service training, and each year in the classroom, as well as standards that must be met before a candidate is recommended for licensure.

**Standard Six: The program has clearly defined measurable expected outcomes/results.**

Evidence for Standard Six can include program-wide and individual-level student achievement and student growth goals, teaching ratings on the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation Instrument, and feedback from participants and their administrators.

***Contact Information:***

Any of the following individuals can provide additional information about the approval process for innovative lateral-entry licensure programs.

Dr. Lynne Johnson  
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**Appendix:**

**NORTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Policy Manual**

**Policy Identification**

**Priority:** Twenty-first Century Professionals

**Category:** Teacher Education

**Policy ID Number:** TCP-B-010

**Policy Title:** Policy Defining Innovative/Experimental Programs for Lateral Entry Teacher Licensure

**Current Policy Date:** 08/01/2007

**Other Historical Information:** Previous Board dates:

**Statutory Reference:**

**Administrative Procedures Act (APA) Reference Number and Category:**

INNOVATIVE/EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAMS FOR LATERAL ENTRY TEACHER LICENSURE

- (a) An innovative/experimental program for lateral entry teacher licensure is an alternative to the regular approved program and involves public schools, the Department of Public Instruction, and the NC Professional Teaching Standards Commission in the planning and implementation of programs.
- (b) A school system, community college, or college/university shall receive approval by the SBE before it implements an alternative program. The Department of Public Instruction shall issue a license to all individuals who complete these approved programs who are recommended by the school system, community college, or college/university and who otherwise meet licensure requirements.
- (c) When the Department of Public Instruction receives a proposal to establish an alternative program, it will review the proposal in consultation with the NC Professional Teaching Standards Commission, including making on-site visits with agencies as required. The State Evaluation Committee on Teacher Education will review the proposal and information from the on-site visit and recommend to the SBE whether or not the proposed program should be approved.
- (d) The SBE may approve programs which meet the following standards:

- (1) The program is planned, developed, implemented and evaluated by a school system, or by a community college/college/university in conjunction with a school system and has been reviewed by the State Evaluation Committee on Teacher Education. The proposed innovation is sound and has the potential for strengthening the preparation process for lateral entry teachers.
  - (2) The program is appropriately organized and administered. There is a structure for the oversight and management of the program which ensures flexibility and accountability.
  - (3) The program has sufficient and appropriate human, fiscal, and physical resources.
  - (4) The program addresses the needs of the students.
  - (5) The program includes exit levels of competence, a procedure for recommending licensure, and a follow-up process.
  - (6) The program has clearly defined measurable expected outcomes/results.
- (e) The SBE will evaluate approved innovative/experimental programs annually based on a written report submitted by the school system or IHE and/or by an on-site State visitation team to assure that the program is preparing lateral entry teachers who can function effectively in the public schools of the State. Based on the annual report, the SBE may continue or terminate the innovative/experimental program.