

MEMORANDUM

TO: Kirwan Commission, Working Group 2

FR: Center for International Education Benchmarking, NCEE

RE: National Board Certification as Part of a State Educator Career Ladder and Alternative Performance Assessments for Advanced Licensure

According to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), 44 states included National Board certification as either an option or a requirement for teacher licensure or renewal as of November 2017.¹ Some states also provide the option of a state-specific portfolio-based assessment process as an alternative to NBPTS for advancing to a higher licensure tier. The extent to which these portfolio-based assessment processes are comparable to NBPTS varies by state.

Massachusetts, the highest-performing state on NAEP in 2017, has in its regulations a Department of Education-sponsored Performance Assessment Program as one option for advancing to Professional Licensure in addition to NBPTS or other options, like earning a relevant master's degree. The program includes "a series of seminars and a performance assessment" but is not currently available.^{2,3} This memo will focus on the portfolio-based assessment processes offered as options alongside NBPTS in **Washington State** and **Ohio**, two relatively high-performing states on NAEP 2017, as well as in **Wisconsin**, a state with slightly lower overall NAEP performance.

For context, in terms of cumulative state rankings by NAEP 2017 scores across grades four and eight reading and math, Washington is ranked 10th, Ohio is ranked 15th and Wisconsin is ranked 21st. (Note: This ranking is based on an internal methodology, as NAEP does not rank states by score.) Compared to the National Public average scores, Washington and Wisconsin score significantly higher in both grade eight subjects and not significantly different in both grade four subjects. Ohio scores significantly higher in grade four reading and grade eight math and not significantly different in grade four math and grade eight reading.

¹ http://www.nbpts.org/wp-content/uploads/state_incentive_chart.pdf

² <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr7.html?section=all>

³ <https://gateway.edu.state.ma.us/elar/licensurehelp/LicenseRequirementsCriteriaPageControl.ser>

Washington State

There are two tiers of teacher licensure in Washington State. Teachers enter the profession with a Residency Certificate and then can either renew the Residency Certificate indefinitely or earn the optional second-tier Professional Certificate.⁴

The two routes to upgrade from a Residency Certificate to a Professional Certificate are National Board certification or Washington's Professional Certificate Assessment (ProTeach). Candidates using National Board certification need at least three years of successful teaching experience, while candidates using ProTeach need at least two years.⁵ As of 2016, about 83 percent of teachers who completed the ProTeach assessment passed.⁶ Cowan & Goldhaber (2014) found that teachers who pass ProTeach are more effective (in terms of value-added to students' achievement on standardized tests) than those who fail in reading but did not find evidence for this in math; the authors describe the magnitude of their results as similar to the estimated differences in effectiveness of National Board certified teachers versus non-NBCTs.⁷ Washington's Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB), though, reports that ProTeach does not signal teacher effectiveness as strongly as National Board certification.⁸

ProTeach will only be available as an option through 2019, when the current contract with ETS – engaged by the state to help develop, implement and administer ProTeach – ends. The discontinuation of ProTeach was in response to a decision by the PESB in 2017 to make obtaining the Professional Certificate optional. This decision was necessitated by 2017 legislation requiring the PESB to make the Residency Certificate renewable in five-year intervals, eliminating the need to advance to a Professional Certificate.⁹ Once ProTeach ends, the PESB will determine whether there will be a second pathway to the Professional Certificate alongside National Board certification.¹⁰

ProTeach was designed by a team that included P-12 educators, higher education faculty and other stakeholders, and was reviewed by “state and national experts on teacher licensure assessment.”¹¹ ETS provided guidance in assessment design, validity, fairness and reliability.¹² ProTeach evaluates teachers on the three standards and 12 criteria Washington set for its Professional Certificate.¹³ For example, teachers

⁴ <https://www.pesb.wa.gov/educator-pathways/teacher-certification-in-washington-state/>

⁵ <http://lawfilesexst.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2017-18/Pdf/Bill%20Reports/House/1341%20HBA%20ED%2017.pdf>

⁶ <http://lawfilesexst.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2017-18/Pdf/Bill%20Reports/House/1341%20HBA%20ED%2017.pdf>

⁷ <http://cedr.us/papers/working/CEDR%20WP%202014-2.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.pesb.wa.gov/data-reports/annual-report-to-the-board/knowledge-skills-assessment/>

⁹ <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-zal22G3X16JiNvnTYg6NKndtzDL4uOyKqAcUjnN-Bw/edit>

¹⁰ <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1VfXpDuVeOMZz3t2t4S3QnrVPHjSOBMMsbGMNR5PHcdQ/edit#heading=h.jziicxong61>

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¹¹ <http://www.waproteach.com/overview/index.html>

¹² <http://www.waproteach.com/overview/index.html>

¹³ <http://www.waproteach.com>

demonstrate mastery of the first standard (effective teaching) by designing and/or adapting a challenging curriculum.¹⁴

Teachers submit three portfolio entries, each of which meets three to five of the 12 criteria, to complete the ProTeach process. The total fee for initial portfolio submission is \$570.¹⁵ The timeline for submitting these entries depends on when teachers register and which deadlines they choose, and can range from about two to 14 months.¹⁶ The three required entries should illustrate:¹⁷

- 1) Professional Growth and Contributions (measures analysis of and reflection on professional growth and its impact on student learning)
- 2) Building a Learning Community (measures description and analysis of the learning environment)
- 3) Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (measures analysis of and reflection on curriculum, instruction and assessment, as well as its impact on the learning of three focus students)

For each entry, teachers must submit evidence, such as artifacts and student work samples, as well as written commentary explaining the interactions with the students who created the student work.¹⁸

ProTeach portfolios are scored online by “rigorously trained Washington educators,” which can include P-12 educators and higher education faculty, as well as ProTeach district coordinators/facilitators or support providers. The training program was designed by ETS and prepares each scorer to become an expert in scoring only one entry. At least four different scorers score each portfolio.^{19,20,21}

Washington State provides an annual bonus for NBCTs, which is not offered to ProTeach Portfolio completers.²² In 2017-18, the annual bonus is \$5,296 for current NBCTs and \$3,172 for teachers who become NBCTs sometime during the 2017-18 school year. There is an additional bonus of up to \$5,000 for teachers in “challenging, high-poverty schools,” defined in terms of FRPL eligibility (at least 70 percent for elementary schools, 60 percent for middle schools and 50 percent for high schools) or state institutional education program (e.g., in juvenile detention centers). The “challenging, high-poverty schools” bonus is prorated for teachers who are not in qualifying schools full-time.²³

¹⁴ http://www.waproteach.com/overview/standards_criteria.html

¹⁵ <http://www.waproteach.com/registration/fees.html>

¹⁶ http://www.waproteach.com/registration/dates_deadlines.html

¹⁷ http://www.waproteach.com/overview/standards_criteria.html

¹⁸ <http://lawfilesexternal.wa.gov/biennium/2017-18/Pdf/Bill%20Reports/House/1341%20HBA%20ED%2017.pdf>

¹⁹ <http://www.waproteach.com/overview/index.html>

²⁰ <http://www.waproteach.com/overview/index.html>

²¹ http://www.waproteach.com/scoring/become_scorer.html

²² <http://www.k12.wa.us/certification/nbpts/TeacherBonus.aspx>

²³ <http://www.k12.wa.us/certification/nbpts/TeacherBonus.aspx>

Ohio

Ohio has four tiers of teacher licensure, of which the top two are optional.^{24,25} Teachers enter the profession with the first-tier Resident Educator License. They advance to the second-tier Professional Educator License by completing the required Ohio Resident Educator Program, a four-year program of mentoring and professional development for beginning teachers.^{26,27} The third-tier Senior Professional Educator License requires a master's degree, nine years of experience and demonstration of effective teaching through the Master Teacher Portfolio (described below). The highest licensure tier, the Lead Professional Educator License, has the same requirements as the third-tier license except that there are two options to demonstrate effective teaching: teachers can either complete the Master Teacher Portfolio *and* earn the Teacher Leader Endorsement (described below) or earn National Board certification.²⁸ The highest tier of licensure is the focus of this section because the requirements provide a choice between completing either National Board certification or a combination of the state Master Teacher Portfolio and Teacher Leader Endorsement.

The Master Teacher Portfolio requires teachers to demonstrate each of the following criteria as described in the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession: consistent leadership; focused collaboration; distinguished teaching (focus on students and environment); distinguished teaching (focus on content, instruction and assessment); and continued professional growth.²⁹ The portfolio has two parts:^{30,31}

- 1) A written narrative of maximum 12 pages responding to prompts on the five criteria listed above (e.g., explaining how the teacher's involvement in leadership roles has strengthened student learning or the teaching profession); and
- 2) [Evidence](#) – such as student work samples, teacher evaluations or detailed written descriptions – demonstrating the teacher's performance in each of the five criteria (10 pieces of evidence maximum, with at least one piece for each criterion)

Teachers submit their portfolios to the Master Teacher Committee in each district. A Master Teacher Committee must have at least five members, the majority of whom are teachers. (As more Master Teachers are prepared, the goal is for all teacher members to be Master Teachers.) The committee may also include building and central office

²⁴ <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Teaching/Licensure/Audiences/Senior-Professional-Educator-and-Lead-Professional>

²⁵ <http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/3301-24>

²⁶ <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Teaching/Resident-Educator-Program>

²⁷ <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Teaching/Resident-Educator-Program/Resident-Educator-FAQs#FAQ2286>

²⁸ <http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Teaching/Licensure/Audiences/Senior-Professional-Educator-and-Lead-Professional/Four-Tiered-teacher-licensure-structure.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US>

²⁹ <http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Teaching/Professional-Development/Master-Teacher/Master-Teacher-description-for-website-002.pdf.aspx>

³⁰ <http://www.orrville.k12.oh.us/sites/orrville.k12.oh.us/files/files/Master%20Teacher%20Portfolio.pdf>

³¹ http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Teaching/Professional-Development/Master-Teacher/C_mtapplication_RevMar18lskm.pdf.aspx

administrators or board members. The state suggests that teachers be involved in choosing the teachers on the committee, while the superintendent appoints the remaining members.³² At least two committee members score each application using a standardized rubric. Teachers must earn “exemplary” on four of five criteria.

For the highest tier of licensure, teachers choosing to complete the Master Teacher Portfolio (instead of pursuing National Board certification) must also earn the Teacher Leader Endorsement. The Teacher Leader Endorsement prepares teachers for mentoring and coaching peers, providing staff development and helping the principal develop and support a vision and goals for the school.³³ Teachers pursuing this endorsement must have at least four years of successful teaching experience and a master’s degree. Programs are offered through higher education institutions and include between nine and 12 credit hours.³⁴ For example, Ohio State University offers a nine-credit-hour program with three courses: Introduction to Education Administration; Inquiry in Teacher Education; and Educational Leadership, Learning and Teaching. The Teacher Leader Endorsement is not required for NBCTs.³⁵

The state describes the four licensure tiers as part of a “career ladder for educators,” although it is unclear how exactly teachers’ roles change and/or if compensation changes. The National Council on Teacher Quality reports that Ohio’s Senior Professional Educator and Lead Professional Educator Licenses are associated with leadership opportunities and additional compensation, but specific examples and salary ranges are not provided.³⁶ There is not an annual bonus or other financial incentive specifically for NBCTs.³⁷

Wisconsin

There are three teacher licensure stages in Wisconsin.³⁸ Teachers enter the profession with a Provisional Educator License. They can either renew the Provisional Educator License indefinitely, or progress to the Lifetime License after six semesters of successful teaching.³⁹ They then have the option to earn a Master Educator License. Teachers can become Master Educators in two ways: through National Board certification or completion of the Wisconsin Master Educator Assessment Process (WMEAP).⁴⁰

³² http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Teaching/Professional-Development/Master-Teacher/B_mtappprocess_08-24-2015.pdf.aspx

³³ https://www.ohiohighered.org/files/uploads/education-prep/documents/teacher_leader_endorsement_program_standards.pdf

³⁴ https://www.ohiohighered.org/sites/ohiohighered.org/files/uploads/education-prep/documents/info-updates/Approved_Prep_Program_Delivery_Levels_Ohio_Licenses_Endorsements.pdf

³⁵ <https://ehe.osu.edu/educational-studies/endorsements/teacher-leader/>

³⁶ <https://www.nctq.org/yearbook/state/OH-Leadership-Opportunities-79>

³⁷ <https://www.nctq.org/yearbook/national/Leadership-Opportunities-79>

³⁸ <https://dpi.wi.gov/tepd/licensing/types/educator-general>

³⁹ <https://dpi.wi.gov/tepd/do-i-need-apply-lifetime-license>

⁴⁰ <https://dpi.wi.gov/tepd/licensing/types/educator-general>

The NBPTS route is available for teachers in most subject areas and school counselors, while the WMEAP route is for teachers licensed in subjects not available through NBPTS, administrators and pupil services professionals. This means that NBPTS is the primary route to the Master Educator License for teachers, as the only teacher licensure areas in which WMEAP is available are: theater, computer science, dance, psychology, speech and language pathology, assistive technology, adaptive education and adaptive physical education.^{41,42} WMEAP was designed to be comparable to the NBPTS process.⁴³

Teachers pursuing Master Educator License through WMEAP must submit two applications. The first application is for initial eligibility, and the second application is a series of portfolio entries.

The first application must include:

- Documentation of a related master's degree;
- Verification of at least five years of successful experience;
- A summary of two to five contributions they have made to the education profession within the past five years, with evidence to document the contributions; and
- A summary of how they have had an impact on improving student learning within the past five years, with supporting evidence.

Once this initial application has been approved, candidates have up to two years to develop and submit their required portfolios. Portfolios must demonstrate mastery of the ten Wisconsin Teacher Standards through student work samples, video recording and written analyses. Candidates make four total portfolio entries, each of which has a minimum time commitment of about 40 hours. The four entries are:⁴⁴

- 1) Formal and Informal Assessment
- 2) Individual, Small/Whole Group Teaching and Instruction (must include video)
- 3) Organizing and Planning Systematic Instruction
- 4) Collaborating with Colleagues, Families and Communities to Promote Pupil Learning

Each portfolio entry has specific requirements. For example, the first entry (Formal and Informal Assessment) must include a two-page written narrative of the learning and assessment of two to four students over at least two weeks of instructional time; an eight-page analysis of this learning and assessment, including why specific assessment methods were used and how they connected to instruction; a two-page reflection on how these assessment strategies were effective and how instruction/assessment could

⁴¹ <https://dpi.wi.gov/tepd/licensing/types/master/wmeap>

⁴² <https://dpi.wi.gov/tepd/licensing/types/master-educator>

⁴³ <https://dpi.wi.gov/tepd/licensing/types/master/wmeap-history>

⁴⁴ <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/tepd/pdf/wmhbtteach.pdf>

be modified in the future; and a maximum of 15 pages of artifacts, including both formative/summative and formal/informal assessments.⁴⁵

WMEAP portfolios are assessed by a team of three educators. These educators must: have the same or similar job responsibilities as the applicant; have been nominated by professional organizations, including school board organizations; have been provided training by the Department of Public Instruction; and have been approved for appointment by the State Superintendent. There may be an additional school board member on WMEAP assessment teams. The same requirements for nomination, appointment and training apply for school board members. Training takes place annually during the summer and is based on a portfolio assessment guide developed by “a national expert in teacher portfolio assessment” and Wisconsin educators. Assessors are trained in ensuring objectivity, using the Wisconsin Educator Standards and assessments rubrics accurately, controlling bias, finding patterns accurately and reaching consensus.^{46,47}

The financial incentives are the same for Master Educators who have successfully completed either the NBPTS or WMEAP process.⁴⁸

- Master Educators who have evaluation ratings of Effective or Highly Effective can be reimbursed for up to \$2,000 of the cost of completing either process
- They can also apply for an annual grant in each of the subsequent nine years after the effective date of the Master Educator license. Annual grants are \$2,500 for teachers who do not teach in high-poverty schools or \$5,000 for teachers who do teach in high-poverty schools. (“High-poverty” is defined as schools with 60 percent or more of students eligible for free- or reduced-price lunch.)
- In order to remain eligible for annual grants, teachers must continue to receive evaluation ratings of Effective or Highly Effective.^{49,50}

⁴⁵ <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/tepd/pdf/wmhbteach.pdf>

⁴⁶ <https://dpi.wi.gov/tepd/licensing/types/master/wmeap-assessors>

⁴⁷ <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/tepd/pdf/wmhbteach.pdf>

⁴⁸ <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/115/11/42>

⁴⁹ <https://dpi.wi.gov/tepd/programs/wmeap-reimbursement-grant>

⁵⁰ <https://dpi.wi.gov/tepd/programs/nbpts-reimbursement-grant>