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Testimony for 2019 Assembly Bill 195 – A License to teach based on reciprocity

I would like to thank Chairman Thiesfeldt and all of the committee members for hearing Assembly Bill 195 today. Also, I would like to thank Senator Marklein for his willingness to work on this legislation and be the lead senate sponsor.

With significantly low statewide unemployment, it is becoming more and more difficult for almost all sectors of the economy to find and retain qualified workers. The intention of this legislation is to give superintendents and school boards more tools to attract and retain qualified teachers.

Under current law, there are a number of different pathways a person who has been educated and licensed to teach out of state can become licensed to teach in the state of Wisconsin. A person educated and licensed out of state can start teaching in Wisconsin with a 1 Year License with Stipulations. This license is renewable for a 2nd year. At this point the person has 2 years of teaching experience in the state of Wisconsin, but must go through additional requirements to advance to a Tier II Provisional License.

A person educated and licensed out of state, who also has one year of teaching experience in that state, can start teaching in Wisconsin with a License Based on Reciprocity. This is a 5 year license that can be renewed unlimitedly. A person could teach their entire career in Wisconsin by renewing this license. However, there is no pathway to advance to a Tier II Provisional License.

This bill would continue to allow a person who is educated and licensed out of state to begin teaching in Wisconsin with a 1 Year License with Stipulations. After two successful semesters, that person would then be eligible for a License Based on Reciprocity and if the applicants teaching experience was deemed successful by the district.

Furthermore, this bill would move the License Based on Reciprocity to a Tier II Provisional License. This recognizes that all persons with significant in state teaching experience should have a similar pathway to additional licensure.

This bill is a common sense approach that would remove unnecessary, and often frustrating, obstacles for qualified persons who want to teach in Wisconsin at a time when the demand for their services is very high.

Your support for Assembly Bill 195 would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you



LAKESHIA MYERS

Wisconsin State Representative • 12th Assembly District

HERE TO SERVE YOU!

**Assembly Committee on Committee on Education
Public Hearing AB 195
Testimony of State Representative LaKeshia Myers
May 30, 2019**

Chairman Thiesfeldt, Vice-Chair Kitchens and Members of the Committee, thank you for providing me the opportunity to submit written testimony on Assembly Bill 195, relating to a license to teach based on reciprocity and granting rule-making authority.

I am a Wisconsin teacher that has a license based on reciprocity. As a state, we know that we need teachers and AB 195 would allow us to attract and retain teachers to our state. It also opens up the opportunities for teachers who earned credentials elsewhere to become eligible for lifetime licenses in Wisconsin after six successful semesters of teaching in our state.

As an educator, who has had to navigate the murky process of licensure based on reciprocity, I understand how discouraging the process can be and what passing AB195 would mean for teachers in this situation.

I want to thank Representative Tranel for his foresight on this issue and for collaboration with me on this much needed legislation.

I encourage my colleagues support of AB 195 and look forward to your help in the attraction and retention of qualified educators to serve in Wisconsin classrooms.

Sincerely,

Representative LaKeshia N. Myers



HOWARD MARKLEIN

STATE SENATOR • 17TH SENATE DISTRICT

May 30, 2019
Assembly Committee on Education
Testimony on Assembly Bill 195

Good morning!

Thank you Chair Thiesfeldt and committee members for hearing Assembly Bill 195 (AB 195), which makes changes to the license to teach based on reciprocity. Representative Tranel and I drafted this bill based on conversations with superintendents in our districts.

Under current law, there are a number of different pathways a person who has been educated and licensed to teach out of state can become licensed to teach in the state of Wisconsin. A person educated and licensed out of state can start teaching in Wisconsin with a 1 Year License with Stipulations. This license is renewable for a 2nd year. At this point the person has 2 years of teaching experience in the state of Wisconsin, but must go through additional requirements to advance to a Tier II Provisional License.

A person educated and licensed out of state, who also has one year of teaching experience in that state, can start teaching in Wisconsin with a License Based on Reciprocity. This is a 5 year license that can be renewed unlimitedly. A person could teach their entire career in Wisconsin by renewing this license. However, there is no pathway to advance to a Tier II Provisional License.

This bill would continue to allow a person who is educated and licensed out of state to begin teaching in Wisconsin with a 1 Year License with Stipulations. After two successful semesters, that person would then be eligible for a License Based on Reciprocity.

Furthermore, this bill would move the License Based on Reciprocity to a Tier II Provisional License. This recognizes that all persons with significant in state teaching experience should have a similar pathway to additional licensure.

This bill is a common sense approach that would remove unnecessary, and often frustrating, obstacles for qualified persons who want to teach in Wisconsin at a time when the demand for their services is very high.

Thank you again for hearing AB 195, and your timely action on the bill.

Assembly Committee on Education
May 30, 2019

**Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Information on 2019 Assembly Bill 195**

Description of Assembly Bill 195:

This bill requires the department to issue a license to teach based on reciprocity to an individual who holds a license to teach in good standing from another state if the individual taught in Wisconsin under a license or permit issued by the department for at least two semesters and the school district or charter school where the applicant taught under that license or permit confirms that the applicant's teaching experience was successful.

The bill also changes a license to teach based on reciprocity from an initial license to a provisional license. Under the bill, the department must issue a lifetime license to an individual who obtains a provisional license to teach based on reciprocity if the individual successfully completes six semesters of teaching experience, as defined by the department.

Finally, the bill specifies that the department must issue a provisional license to teach to any individual who holds an initial license to teach based on reciprocity on the date the bill becomes law.

Background:

2015 WI Act 55 (2015-17 State Budget) required the department to grant an initial license based on reciprocity to an individual who satisfied the following:

1. The individual holds a license to teach granted by the proper authority of another state and is in good standing with the proper authority of that state.
2. The individual taught for at least one year under the license granted by another state.
3. The individual has received an offer of employment to teach in a school located in this state.

2017 WI Act 59 (2017-19 State Budget) repealed the requirement that a teacher or administrator must have received an offer of employment to teach in a school located in this state in order to qualify for a teacher license or an administrator's license based on licensure in another state.

Following the enactment of 2015 WI Act 55, the department has issued the following number of Teacher and Administrator Licenses Based on Reciprocity:

Year	Teacher	Administrator
2015-16	108	5
2016-17	220	11
2017-18	514	36
2018-19	409	26

Wisconsin Teacher Shortage

Wisconsin public schools, like schools across the country, are facing historic teacher shortages. Significantly fewer students are pursuing education as a career, and Wisconsin districts are reporting increasingly shallow applicant pools for a variety of positions. Certain disciplines, as well as certain areas of the state, are at critical shortage levels. Addressing these shortages, while attracting, developing, and retaining top talent, is one of the most critical public policy issues facing our state.

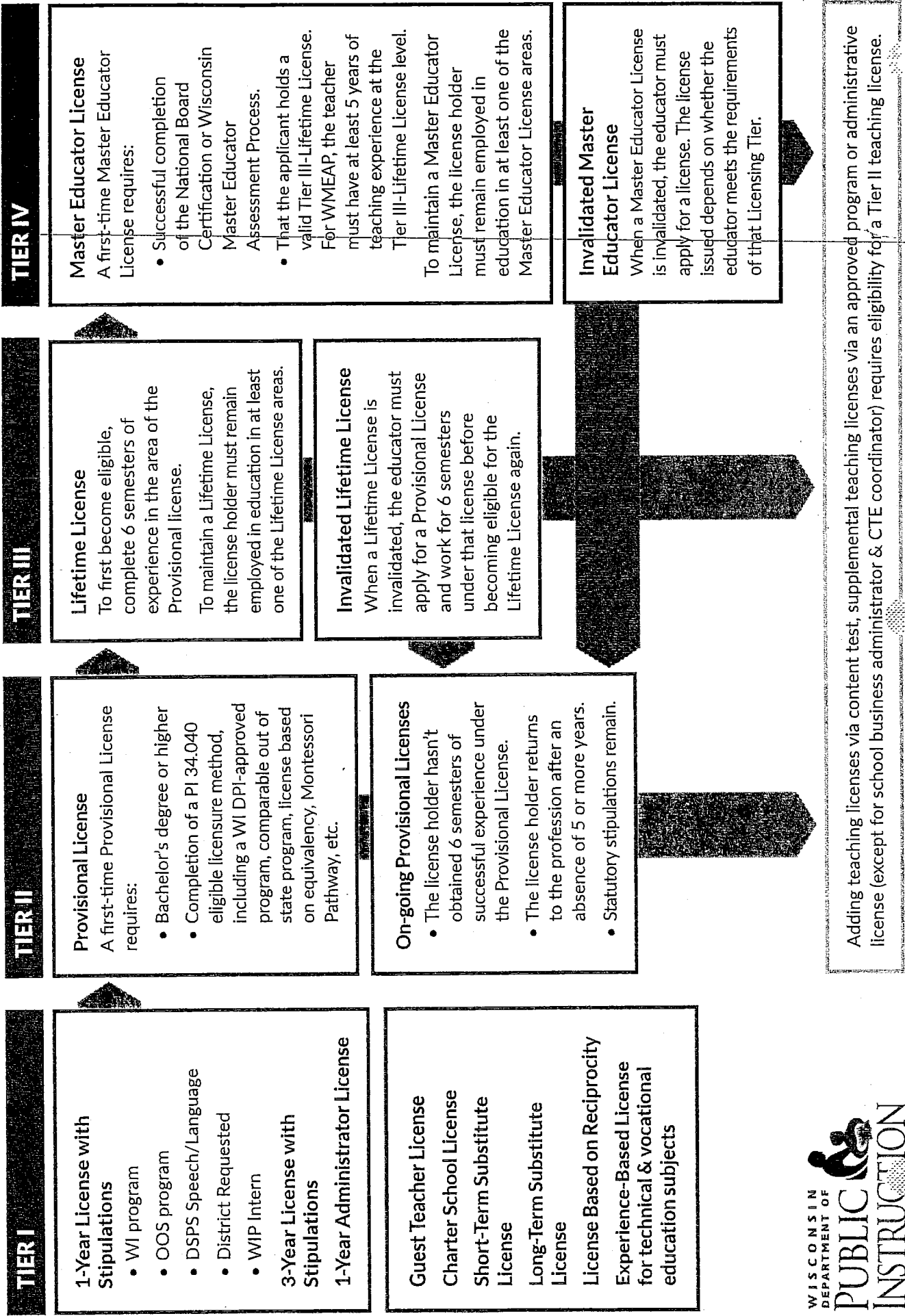
The department is pursuing multiple strategies to address the educator workforce shortage, including the Talent Development Initiative, a large-scale collaboration to improve the recruitment, retention, and development of Wisconsin's educators. Ultimately, the goal of this initiative is to deliver a statewide strategic plan focused on recruiting, retaining, and developing Wisconsin's world class education workforce.

While the longer-term Talent Development Initiative is progressing, a Working Group on School Staffing issues convened in March 2016. The Working Group identified several key staffing problems facing schools across the state, including chronic staffing shortages across many disciplines; fewer applications for available positions; fewer standout candidates in applicant pools; substantial veteran staff retirements and less age diversity among staff; and difficulty retaining experienced educators in high-demand fields. In addition, members recognized that rural schools are "shorthanded everywhere," and rural staff members must increasingly assume additional roles in order to function.

As part of our efforts to address this shortage, the department is also engaged in a working group with the University of Wisconsin System. The task force is looking at how the University of Wisconsin System can work with stakeholders to improve college affordability, reduce student loan debt, and address teacher workforce shortages in Wisconsin, as well as increase access to teacher education and school leadership programs in the UW System.

The department looks forward to continuing to work with our stakeholders and the Legislature on the educator shortage our schools are facing while maintaining the high quality of our educators so all Wisconsin children have access to the classrooms they need.

Wisconsin Licensing System for Teachers, Pupil Services, and Administrators



Testimony on Bill AB 195 Relating to: a license to teach based on reciprocity and granting rule-making authority.

Connie Valenza, Platteville Superintendent.

I am here today to ask for your assistance and support in addressing the ongoing and worsening crisis related to ensuring all students in rural areas have qualified teachers. Over the last six years in CESA 3 alone, we went from having 43 teachers on emergency licenses, to having 106. Our applicant pool has dropped to small percentages of what I used to see 10 years ago.

For the many on emergency licensure, rural access to quality, flexible programs to remove stipulations is difficult and discouraging. This leads many to access programs that do not provide the necessary support and pedagogy, which in turn, often results in teacher burnout and lack of retention. I am also concerned about the "Educator Equity Gap." Our population of minority students is consistently increasing, yet our access in rural Wisconsin to teachers of color is virtually non-existent. It is imperative that there are flexible pathways to licensure for non-traditional college students, unnecessary barriers to licensure be mitigated, and support given to aspiring teachers to overcome necessary barriers.

As a destination district in Southwest Wisconsin with the highest average compensation and benefit package, we are

struggling to keep our positions filled. We recently hired an outstanding African-American teacher at Westview Elementary who amazes me with her abilities as a first-year teacher. She came to us after many years in the military, and was supported and encouraged by "Troops to Teachers." She met all of the requirements of her "out of state" teacher preparatory program and was eligible for licensure in the state she was based in. Fortunately for us, she sought a position and was hired in our district. Unfortunately for her, because she did not teach for a year in the state that she initially met the requirement in, she has to go through the EdTPA process here in Wisconsin in order to remove the stipulations from her license. That first year as a teacher is hard. She has shared her worries with me that her efforts to meet this requirement will take time away and divert attention from the important work she does for her students, every day.

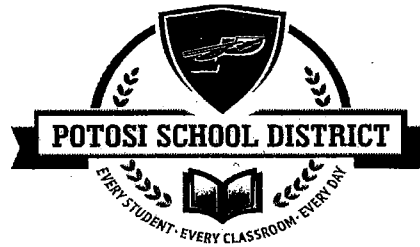
Platteville School District offers an extensive and rigorous new-teacher preparation program and pairs each of our new teachers with a mentor. I feel confident that our first year teachers have grown tremendously by the end of the year and absolutely comfortable making a recommendation as to whether they should be licensed. Presently, a teacher who teaches out of state for one year after graduating from their teacher preparation program can automatically receive the Wisconsin license, without regard to aptitude, performance, or training/mentoring in their first year of teaching.

Being near the state border, it is not untypical for us to have quality applicants from another state. Just this week, we hired a special education teacher who just completed their program, student-teaching in our school system. Of course we offered him a position. He met all of the requirements for licensure in Iowa while student teaching in Wisconsin. He wants to teach in Platteville and we want him. The change we are asking for would allow us to recommend him for licensure after a year of successful teaching. Please trust us to be able to do that.

Any support that you can give rural school districts to address this problem is imperative and greatly appreciated.

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District Administrator
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Tammy Cooley
Pupil Services Director
(608) 763-2162



Mike Uppena
K-12 Principal
(608) 763-2161

Mark Siegert
Athletic Director
(608) 763-2161

Assembly
Testimony Before the Committee on Education
Thursday, May 30, 2019
Regarding Assembly Bill 195

I am very excited about Assembly Bill 195 regarding teacher reciprocity licensure. With Potosi bordering Iowa and being very near to Illinois, we are in a unique location to experience the frustrations and challenges of out-of-state licensure issues. Because of low candidate pool numbers (sometimes receiving zero applicants) we frequently hire teachers from our neighboring states (IA, IL, and MN). Over the past 6 years, Potosi staff averages an 18.2% turnover annually. This means we do a lot of hiring most years. The following table illustrates our new teacher hires, the states they came from, or the number we hire away from neighboring districts:

	# New Teachers	States They Are From	Non-Teaching Degree Hires
2018-19 Cohort	7	2 Minnesota 2 Iowa 3 WI	(1) Special Ed. Teacher who was an aide in a neighboring district, who had a bachelor's degree and we hired him on an emergency license as he gets his special education certification. (5) Hired away from neighboring districts.
2017-18 Cohort	10	2 Iowa 8 WI	(1) Tech Ed Teacher with a bachelor's degree in agriculture on an emergency license. (1) Special Ed. Teacher who was an aide in a neighboring district, who had a bachelor's degree and we hired her on an emergency license as she gets her special education certification. (1) English Teacher with a bachelor's degree in Science on an emergency license as he gets his teaching certification. (1) Business Ed. Teacher with a bachelor's degree in Social Studies on an emergency license as he gets his Business Ed. certification. (1) Music Teacher with a bachelor's degree in human resources on an emergency license as she gets her Music certification. (4) Hired away from neighboring districts.
2016-17 Cohort	3	3 WI	(1) Special Ed. Teacher licensed for regular education and working on an emergency license as she gets her special ed endorsement. (2) Hired away from neighboring districts.

“Every Student, Every Classroom, Every Day”

2015-16 Cohort	6	2 Iowa 4 WI	(1) Special Ed. Teacher with a bachelor's degree in biology with an emergency license as she gets her spec ed certification. (1) Hired away from neighboring district.
2014-15 Cohort	7	1 Iowa 6 WI	
2013-14 Cohort	4	4 WI	(2) Hired away from neighboring districts.

As you can see from the above table 9 out of our last 37 teacher (over 24% or 1 out of every 4) hires came from another state.

We are fully in support of your efforts to streamline the licensure process and to expedite the ability for incoming educators to teach in WI. My understanding is that WI is one of 6 states that have not signed on to the NASDTEC (National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification) Interstate Agreement for Educator Licensure. Doing so could help ease the struggles my teachers have as they work to get their WI teaching license.

There can be varying levels of difficulty or confusion as a teacher with or without a license from another state tries to teach in WI. Whether it is deciphering which requirements apply to each individual situation, or having to pass a battery of expensive exams, some end up teaching at a private school or charter school where more flexibility exists, and certification is not required.

It is our hope that the passage of this Bill will result in easier certifications for out-of-state teachers with relatively few requirements. Because of the current market situation, as long as the prospective teacher satisfactorily passes their education program from a neighboring state, that evidence should be effective in earning a WI teaching license. Much of the state to state certification agreements include unnecessary or obscure requirements for moving teacher credentials from one state to another. In theory they may seem appropriate, but in practice end up becoming a deterrent to remaining in the profession. We have in-house professional development and coaching for all of our new hires. Special education teachers coming in under an emergency license, are given 35 hours of one-on-one coaching from our best special ed teacher to ensure their skills are at par.

TO: Members, Assembly Education Committee

FROM: Sharon L. Schmeling, Executive Director

DATE: May 30, 2019

RE: Assembly Bill 195 – License to teach based on reciprocity

Thank you for taking on the issue of teacher licensure, which is complicated and has become a barrier for entry into the teaching profession. The entire licensing process would benefit from subject matter hearings hosted by your committee so the various stakeholders in teacher licensure could collaboratively wrestle with how to improve the process so as to improve the pipeline of teachers.

The Wisconsin Council of Religious & Independent Schools (WCRIS) represents 800 schools across the state. The vast majority of our 6,000 teachers are licensed. While most of our private schools require licensure, those that don't often still employ licensed teachers because the teachers themselves have chosen to be licensed as part of their professional practice.

Most of our teachers hold licenses from Wisconsin, but many also have licenses from religiously-affiliated colleges and universities from around the country.

Our teachers move between the public and private school systems so their ability to navigate the licensure process is important to the pipeline that supplies licensed teachers in Wisconsin.

AB 195 would certainly help alleviate the teacher shortage. It would be even more effective if it would recognize teaching experience in private K-12 schools in Wisconsin.

Currently, the bill requires DPI to issue a reciprocity-based license to a teacher with a license from another state if the teacher taught in Wisconsin under a license or permit issued by DPI for at least two semesters and the school district or charter school where they taught under that license confirms the teaching experience was successful.

We urge you to amend the bill to include private school teachers in this provision. This would require multi-point changes in the bill. First, the bill should allow DPI to issue a reciprocity-based license to a private school teacher with a license from another state. Second, the bill should allow DPI to issue a permit or license to private school teachers for at least two semesters. And, finally, the bill should allow private schools where those teachers taught under those licenses to confirm to DPI that their teacher's teaching experience was successful.

The change to include private school teachers will treat them equitably, and will also strengthen the overall teacher pipeline in Wisconsin.

Archdiocese of Milwaukee

Association of Christian
Schools International

Christian Schools
International

Diocese of Green Bay

Diocese of LaCrosse

Diocese of Madison

Diocese of Superior

Lutheran Church
Missouri Synod
North Wisconsin District

Lutheran Church
Missouri Synod
South Wisconsin District

Wisconsin Association
of Independent Schools

Wisconsin Conference
of Seventh Day Adventists

Wisconsin Evangelical
Lutheran Synod
Northern Wisconsin District

Wisconsin Evangelical
Lutheran Synod
Western Wisconsin District

Wisconsin Evangelical
Lutheran Synod
Southeastern Wisconsin
District

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Hello, my name is Molly Tranel. I was born and raised in Southwest, Wisconsin. After high school, I decided to attend Loras College in Dubuque, IA, because of its close proximity to home and small school environment. During my undergraduate career, I fulfilled all the requirements to become a licensed teacher in Iowa. I took and passed two PRAXIS tests: *Principles of Learning and Teaching* (189) and *Elementary Ed: Content Knowledge* (180). I successfully completed my student teaching placement while preparing a portfolio aligned with the *The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium* standards, also known as the InTASC standards.

After graduation, I was hired by Benton Elementary School as their second grade teacher for the 2017-2018 school year. I filled out an application to get my One-Year License with Stipulations. In April of 2018 (the same school year), I received a letter that said I was granted a One-Year License with Stipulations. This license applied to the 2017-2018 school year. In order to apply for another One-Year License or earn my provisional educator license, I needed to provide a Wisconsin Passing Score of the *edTPA*, which is a portfolio of videos and reflections used to demonstrate teaching readiness and takes one semester to complete, and the *Foundations of Reading Test*. I took and passed the *Foundations of Reading Test* in June 2018.

My contract at Benton was re-approved by administration for the 2018-2019 school year. I again applied for a One-Year License with Stipulations in March 2019. On April 23, 2019, I received a letter that I was granted another One-Year Licenses with Stipulations, which applies to this current school year. In order to earn my provisional educator license I need to provide a Wisconsin passing score on the *edTPA*.

I called DPI and spoke with Ariana Baker and she explained that going forward, I can be granted a one-time exception, with administrator approval, to apply for another One-Year License with Stipulations. Once that school year is over, I am no longer allowed to teach in Wisconsin until the *edTPA* is attempted.

For reference, when Stanford developed the EdTPA, the portfolio required for me to become a licensed Wisconsin teacher, it relied on the InTASC standards. On their website, it states the creators of EdTPA "drew from experience gained from...the InTASC standards" which are the standards used by Iowa and that I have already met. Therefore, the *edTPA* would require many hours of my time that seem unnecessary, as I have already completed a portfolio aligned with the InTASC standards.

The *edTPA* website also states that "aspiring teachers must prepare a portfolio of materials during their student teaching clinical experience." As stated previously, I already completed my student teaching experience and therefore would be preparing the portfolio while being a full-time classroom teacher. This would require me to take time away from planning quality instruction for my students and instead spend time proving that I am qualified to teach in the first place, which I have already successfully done for two years.

Many people I graduated with, whom are from Wisconsin, chose to stay in Iowa because of the excess requirements to get a Wisconsin license. Namely: Haley Weiderholt, Kaylyn Thiell, and Maggie Clements. In talking with them, they explained they would rather stay in Iowa than have to complete Wisconsin's redundant requirements. I understand that the teacher shortage is a difficult problem that the state of Wisconsin is already facing. By creating an out-of-state reciprocity pathway with administrator approval, you will keep and attract quality teachers to Wisconsin and continue to provide a quality education for our students.