

**8705.2100 REQUEST FOR INITIAL PROGRAM APPROVAL (RIPA).**

Subpart 1. **Application required.** An application for initial approval of a program must be submitted in accordance with the timelines and procedures established and published by the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board.

Subp. 2. **Request for initial program approval (RIPA).** The request for initial program approval (RIPA) must be submitted according to the procedures in this subpart.

A. The unit leader or designee shall submit to the board an application for each new teacher preparation program for which approval is requested through the online educator preparation provider application system (EPPAS).

B. Programs that have submitted applications may not begin enrolling candidates prior to approval by the board.

C. The unit must verify that sufficient financial, physical, human resources, and qualified teacher educators have been dedicated to the program to sustain it if approved.

D. Program applications must include all requirements in subitems (1) to (6).

(1) The application must provide evidence of the following program development standards:

(a) a summary of the program development process, including name and contact information for individuals engaged in program development, including a school partner, teacher educators, content instructors, and practicing teachers in the licensure field; and

(b) the name and contact information for the designated program leader, who is responsible for delivery of this program and is qualified as a teacher educator pursuant to part 8705.1010, subpart 5, item B, (Standard 23).

(2) For initial licensure programs, the application must provide evidence of teaching and assessing the standards of effective practice (SEP) under part 8710.2000, including:

(a) evidence that the program provides candidates with a professional sequence of learning opportunities based on the standards under part 8710.2000; and

(b) evidence of how the program will provide opportunities for candidate learning and assessment specific to each standard.

(3) For initial and additional licensure programs, the application must provide evidence of teaching and assessing content standards for one or more licensure programs under parts 8710.3000 to 8710.8080, including:

(a) evidence that the program provides candidates with a sequence of learning opportunities based on the specific content standards of one or more licensure program under parts 8710.3000 to 8710.8080, including field-specific methods instruction and reading methods; and

(b) evidence of how the program will provide opportunities for candidate learning and assessment specific to each standard of the identified licensure program.

(4) The application must provide evidence that the program provides and requires clinical experiences aligned to the scope and content of the licensure field sought, as required in part 8705.1010, subpart 3.

(5) The application must provide evidence of its program type. A program can have more than one program type. Program types include:

(a) "Baccalaureate," defined as a licensure program that grants credit and is designed for candidates who are seeking their undergraduate degree at the same time as completing a teacher preparation program.

(b) "Classroom-based," defined as a licensure program designed for on-site learning where more than 80 percent of the instructional content is provided in a shared physical space.

(c) "Hybrid," defined as a licensure program designed for a combination of classroom-based and online learning, where 20 to 80 percent of the instructional content is provided in a shared physical space and the remaining is provided in a virtual format.

(d) "Online," defined as a licensure program designed for distant learning where more than 80 percent of the instructional content is provided through a virtual format. Candidates must complete field experiences and student teaching in a face-to-face format.

(e) "Other," a provider can request recognition of additional licensure program types. The board must approve or deny the request.

(f) "Post-baccalaureate," defined as a licensure program that grants credit and is designed for candidates who have already completed an undergraduate degree. The program may or may not lead to an advanced degree.

(g) "Residency," defined as a program offered in partnership with a designated school partner that provides a year-long clinical experience integrating learning opportunities and student teaching. A residency program uses a cohort-based model that pairs candidates, often referred to as residents, with cooperating teachers. The residency program must ensure each candidate is placed for a full academic year to co-teach and participate in professional development for at least 80 percent of the contracted school week. The residency program must ensure that each cooperating teacher serves as the teacher of record and receives ongoing professional development in co-teaching, mentoring, and coaching skills. Candidates may receive a stipend, salary, or other form of commensurate financial support during the residency program.

(h) "Transfer," defined as a licensure program that meets only a subset of licensure standards and does not recommend candidates for licensure. This program type is only available to units approved as restricted units.

(6) The application must identify a process for continuous improvement that includes:

(a) identification of three key assessments used to assess all candidates and identify areas to track for program efficacy, including at least one assessment monitoring applicable content standards in parts 8710.3000 to 8710.8080. Each assessment must monitor no more than ten specific substandards in part 8710.2000 or content standards;

(b) attestation that all candidates must attempt board-approved content and pedagogy exams prior to recommendation, and such data will be remitted to the board to demonstrate program efficacy;

(c) attestation that all candidates must submit a complete board-adopted performance assessment prior to recommendation, and such data will be remitted to the board to demonstrate program efficacy; and

(d) attestation that the implementation of the battery of board-adopted surveys must be provided for candidates, program completers at completion and one year after completion, and the program completers' current supervisors one year after completion.

**Subp. 3. Initial review procedures.**

A. RIPAs must be initially reviewed by trained content experts and board staff according to timelines and consistent with standards adopted by the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board. During the initial review, the content experts must identify each applicable standard in this chapter and parts 8710.2000 to 8710.8000 that align to the licensure area as:

(1) "Met: " when the substance of the standard is evidenced through a learning opportunity and an assessment;

(2) "Met with Concern: " when the substance of the standard is evidenced through a learning opportunity and an assessment but the reviewer is concerned with how the standard was identified or evidenced in its submission; or

(3) "Not Met: " when the substance of all or part of a standard is not evidenced through a learning opportunity and an assessment or when there is evidence of false or conflicting information tied to a particular standard.

If the applicable standards are found to be "Met" and there are no requests for a discretionary variance from standards in this chapter or chapter 8710, the program will be recommended to the board for approval.

B. If during the initial review applicable standards are identified as "Met with Concern" or "Not Met," the provider may choose to make changes to learning opportunities and assessments for a second review. During the second review, the content experts must review changes to learning opportunities and assessments for standards identified as "Met with Concern" or "Not Met" during the initial review and determine whether the standards are "Met," "Met with Concern," or "Not Met."

C. The program review panel (PRP) must review all RIPAs with standards identified as "Met with Concern" or "Not Met" and all RIPAs seeking a discretionary variance from board rule.

The PRP must make a recommendation to the board regarding whether the program should be approved.

Subp. 4. **Board determinations.** The board must take one of the following actions based upon the PRP's recommendation.

A. The board may grant initial approval for up to three years to launch the program and to begin to collect candidate and program efficacy data needed for continuing approval. A program with initial approval must seek continuing approval by submitting a program effectiveness report for continuing approval (PERCA) on the same reporting cycle as the unit.

(1) Continuing approval is granted when:

(a) data from a minimum of ten program completers shows that candidates meet board-adopted thresholds on state-required examinations and performance assessments; and

(b) the program continues to demonstrate compliance with the standards and requirements of this chapter.

(2) If, after three years, the program has fewer than ten program completers, another three years of "initial approval" shall be granted. If, after six years of "initial approval," there are fewer than ten program completers, the program will be forwarded to the PRP.

(3) If data from at least ten program completers shows that candidates do not meet board-adopted thresholds on state-required examinations and performance assessments, the program must be forwarded to the PRP.

B. The board may deny the request for initial approval. The program may not enroll candidates. The provider may not submit a request for initial program approval until after one year has passed since the date of the denial action.

**Statutory Authority:** *MS s 122A.09; 122A.092*

**History:** *39 SR 822; L 2017 ISp5 art 12 s 22; 45 SR 1159*

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