

Final Report

Continuous Review Process Work Group

**Wisconsin Educator Preparation
Program Approval**

For

Institutions of Higher Education

Approved November 14, 2011 by:

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Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Madison, Wisconsin**

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Background

With the enactment of PI 34, Wisconsin shifted to a standards and performance-based system of educator preparation. Each institution of higher education (IHE) would undergo a comprehensive Initial Program Approval to ensure compliance with PI 34. Following the initial approval, continuing program approval decisions would be based on a “Continuous Review Process.” Of the 33 IHE programs, 31 have undergone the comprehensive Initial Program Approval review process. To assist the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) in developing a Continuous Review Process (CRP), a workgroup was established. Membership included representatives from UW System institutions, Wisconsin private colleges and universities and the Teacher Education, Professional Development, and Licensing Team from the DPI.

Purpose of the Work Group

The formal charge of the work group was: To collaborate in the development of a Continuous Review Process for educator preparation programs. The work group would be guided by pertinent PI 34 citations:

PI 34.01 (15) “Continuous review process” means a system of review and approval of teacher education programs whereby program results are reviewed by the department annually and approval is granted by the state superintendent on a 5-year basis.

PI 34.06 (3) Continuing program approval decisions shall be based on a continuous review process. Every institution shall be visited each year by the SCD department liaison or other department professional staff. The program evaluation and approval shall be based on the performance of candidates for license measured against the standards in subch. II as described in s. PI 34.15 (1).

PI 34.06 (3) (b) If during the years of continual approval, an institution initiates a complete redesign of the professional preparation program, the state superintendent shall review and may approve the redesigned program following the procedure set forth in sub. (2).

PI 34.06 (4) Institutions shall submit new programs and substantive changes in previously approved programs to the state superintendent for approval prior to implementing a new program or change.

The work group would be further guided by a shared underlying belief: “We want high quality candidates entering the field from all of our preparation programs in Wisconsin.”

A Collaborative Process

The collaborative work began with a review of the Program Approval Handbook originally created in 2001 to ensure we built on the principles and procedures found in that document as we moved forward. Insights from other states facilitated the work group's understanding of educator preparation program approval in the context of performance-based assessment systems. Specifically, the work group engaged in extensive conversations with representatives from Minnesota, Washington, and California. Each state's processes afforded the work group the opportunity to better understand diverse approaches to the program approval process. Specifically, the states identified performance-based assessments that were embedded in their respective institutions of higher education teacher preparation programs.

The work group presented an update of their progress to colleagues from other Wisconsin IHEs at the spring, 2011 meeting of the Wisconsin Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (WACTE). Additionally, two members of the Department of Public Instruction Teacher Education, Professional Development, and Licensing Team CRP work group members presented the work of the work group at the April 4, 2011 meeting of the Professional Standards Council. Feedback from these groups informed the continued efforts of the work group.

On April 18, 2011, two representatives from the work group shared information with State Superintendent Tony Evers and members of his Cabinet. The goal was to solicit formal feedback to further guide development of the Continuous Review Process. The State Superintendent and others posed questions of the work group members. Questions and comments focused on: a performance assessment that has comparability/transferability across states; the need for seamlessness with the recommendations of the Wisconsin Educator Effectiveness Design Team¹; the desire for assessments that are valid and reliable; and the acknowledgement that the ability of the state to devise its own unique assessment system would be overly complex, daunting, and time-sensitive.

Performance-Based Assessment of Candidates

Through an extensive review of PI 34 and with a focus on performance-based assessment, the work group identified three areas as crucial to the Continuous Review Process: (1) the *clinical program*, (2) the *institutional assessment system*, and (3) *institutional evaluation of outcomes*. These three performance-based areas would be used by the IHEs to assure candidate proficiency in the Wisconsin Teacher Standards.

In order to document candidate performance at the pre-service level and provide a common outcome measure, teacher performance assessment was studied. The Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA), which was piloted by some Wisconsin IHEs, was analyzed in detail as becoming the core of the culminating assessment for teacher candidates. The TPA is currently being piloted in 22 states. Additionally, six states have agreed to use the TPA for formal program approval and/or licensure. The work group did an analysis of

both the pros and cons of adopting the TPA for program approval and/or licensure in Wisconsin.

Pros cited by the work group included:

- the ongoing research to support the validity and reliability of the assessment;
- the ability to access aggregated data on candidate performance;
- the alignment of the TPA with National Board certification;
- the opportunity for comparability/transferability across states;
- the depth of feedback offered by TPA;
- the opportunity to establish a seamless transition from pre-service program to in-service induction and evaluation;
- the opportunity to be a part of the first generation of the initiative and thus influence the development of tools/assessments; and,
- the opportunity to use meaningful, well-articulated measures to provide feedback to programs and candidates; and
- the TPA aligns with the current portfolio requirement.

The work group also articulated cons associated with adoption of the TPA.

They included:

- the potential cost to candidates (\$300.00);
- concerns as to compatibility of TPA with existing electronic portfolio systems hosted by institutions of higher education;
- the potential loss of institutional and state autonomy;
- the amount of time involved in rating the TPA Teaching Event;
- the cultural shifts required to fully implement the TPA;
- the resources required to bring faculty and staff up to speed and the associate costs inherent anytime a change of this magnitude is adopted;
- the obligation to contract with an outside vendor;
- the absence of some TPA tools for specific licensure areas yet to be developed;
- the timeline for implementation of TPA (2013 as earliest date for full implementation); and,
- concerns about potential biases in the instrument--related to the SES and/or ethnicity of PK-12 students.

After weighing the advantages and disadvantages, the Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA) emerged, in the eyes of the work group, as the core of the culminating performance assessment for candidates in Wisconsin educator preparation programs. Additionally, the clinical program/institutional assessment system will address any gaps in the TPA.

Decision Point

The state superintendent approved the following recommendation:

“The Continuous Review Process Work Group recommends that the Teacher Performance Assessment be adopted as a required element of the assessment system used in the continuous review process and for licensure.”

While institutions would be required to administer the TPA, it would become a part of the overall assessment system. Further, each IHE would be able to develop embedded formative performance assessments unique to its program or retain those already in place. Successful completion of the TPA portfolio and content tests would satisfy the requirements of the exit level portfolio for teacher education candidates. The IHE may augment the portfolio as it deems necessary to meet the teaching standards.

The work group learned that the TPA is being used by some states for program approval and by other states for teacher licensure. The work group recognizes that the recommendation of utilizing the TPA may have implications for other licensing issues beyond the initial license endorsed by an approved Wisconsin teacher education preparation program. The state superintendent approved the following recommendation:

“The TPA will be required for Wisconsin initial teacher licensure.”

The IHEs are well aware that requiring the TPA for additional Wisconsin licenses and out-of-state initial teacher applicants may pose some challenges. As a result, they are committed to finding solutions to the potential barriers. This work would be done during Phase II.

Phase II of the CRP work would also include forming a work group to recommend policy on other licensure categories such as administrative, pupil services, and supplemental teaching currently not covered by the TPA.

Balancing a Performance-Based System and Compliance

The work group agreed that the Continuous Review Process would focus on collaboration between institutions of higher education and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. The work group further agreed that the goal was to develop a performance-based system that focused on candidate outcomes. The work group determined that data from key assessments throughout the program would be utilized as evidence of programmatic strengths and potential areas for programmatic change. Additionally, data from surveys of graduates and employers of graduates would provide further evidence to either affirm programmatic decision-making or serve as the impetus for programmatic change.

Continuous Review Process – Framework and Documentation

The Continuous Review Process will entail an annual liaison visit to be focused on data from key assessments and programmatic changes made by the IHE. While the DPI liaison will be in contact with his/her respective institutions of higher education throughout the year, she/he will make at least one visit to the institution annually. However, an IHE could request an onsite team consultation/review as needed. The work group focused on developing “core questions” that would provide a framework for the institutions to use throughout the Continuous Review Process and to guide the annual liaison visit.

Core Questions for the Continuous Review Process:

- What is your program learning from your existing assessment system and what are you doing in response to this information/data?
- Have you made any major/meaningful changes to your program? What changes have you made? Why? Why not?
- Share the progress you have made implementing the TPA in your initial teacher preparation program. (This will sunset after the TPA is fully implemented.)
- What technical assistance could the DPI provide your campus?

The annual liaison visit would entail multiple activities. Prior to the visit, the IHE would prepare a status report in response to the aforementioned core questions. Additionally, the IHE would be responsible for the establishment and maintenance of an electronic document room that would house data and information related to the work of the educator preparation program. Following the visit, the DPI liaison would create a summary document that captures the salient points of the annual visit. These annual summary documents would be the basis for a recommendation to the State Superintendent for continued approval. In summary, the Continuous Review Process includes the following elements:

- Development of a status report in response to core questions
- Access to documents contained in the electronic document room, if needed
- Conducting the annual liaison visit to discuss the continuous review process questions
- Documentation of the visit by the liaison

Reports prepared for other accrediting bodies that address the core questions may be used as the status report.

Substantive Change – Working Definition

The work group discussed what would constitute a substantive change within PI 34.06 (4). At the September 20, 2011 meeting, the work group agreed to the following definition:

- *Any change in the published mission or objectives of the institution or education program;*
- *the addition or deletion of program components that represent a significant departure from those that were previously approved;*
- *a change in the legal status or form of control of the program; or*
- *an addition of a new licensure program.*

An IHE would address substantive changes by submitting updates to the electronic documentation room and/or new licensure program reports. These changes would likely also be included in the annual status report.

Triggering Event

Following the Initial Comprehensive Review, an onsite team review will not be required unless a triggering event occurs. The work group endeavored to identify what would constitute a triggering event. Triggering events would include but are not limited to the following:

- A formal “complaint” relative to compliance with PI 34 program approval is registered with the DPI about an educator preparation program (the legitimacy of the complaint would have to be verified)
- Data indicates candidates are not consistently successful in key program assessments
- Data from the statewide data collection system evidences poor performance of program completers
- The DPI has evidence that the professional preparation program may no longer be in compliance with PI 34

When a triggering event occurs the DPI would organize a team to conduct an onsite team review. This team may include, upon request, an IHE representative from another Wisconsin campus.

Conclusion

The Continuous Review Process Work Group puts forth this document as representative of the views of the Wisconsin Association of Colleges of Teacher Education. This document and the recommendations contained therein are submitted to the State Superintendent for approval. Pending approval, the following suggested timeline would be implemented:

Tentative Timeline for Continuous Review Process (CRP)

Fall 2011 Activities:

- Complete the Continuous Review Process (CRP) development and seek approval from the state superintendent
- Work with IHEs in “approved with conditions” status to make progress on their action plans
- Form work groups to complete the CRP development for administrator and pupil services categories

Spring 2012 Activities:

- Complete annual liaison visits for IHEs in “approved” and “approved with conditions” status to assist them in learning the CRP process
- Conduct comprehensive Initial Program Reviews for the two remaining IHEs
- Create a timeline for TPA implementation activities; upon approval of TPA within CRP

Summer 2012:

- Hold Educator Preparation Program Learning Summit*

Fall 2012 and Spring 2013 Activities:

- Determine professional development needs for the year based on the Summer 2012 Learning Summit
- Begin first CRP annual liaison visits – IHE prepares a status report based on the CRP core questions; DPI conducts a visit and prepares a summary document
- IHE's scheduled for state superintendent approval this year receive approval based on 2012-2013 status report and the liaison summary document

Summer 2013:

- Hold Educator Preparation Program Learning Summit*

Fall 2013 and Spring 2014 Activities:

- Determine professional development needs for the year based on the Summer 2013 Learning Summit
- CRP annual liaison visits – IHE prepares a status report based on the CRP core questions; DPI conducts a visit and prepares a liaison summary document
- IHEs scheduled for state superintendent approval this year receive approval based on the 2012-2013 liaison summary document and the 2013-2014 status report and the liaison summary document

This process repeats itself annually. The liaison summary documents become cumulative in providing a summation across the five-year program approval cycle. The CRP work group expressed interest in holding a summer educator preparation program learning summit* to evaluate the CRP implementation efforts and provide an opportunity to learn while implementing the TPA.

The CRP work group will continue to delineate a timeline specific to the implementation of the TPA. The target for full implementation of TPA would be 2015-2016: that is, candidates who complete programs after August 31, 2015 will need to complete a TPA for initial licensure.

*The Wisconsin Educator Effectiveness Design Team is working to develop the framework for a teacher and principal evaluation system for Wisconsin. To learn more visit: <http://www.dpi.wi.gov/tepd/edueff.html>.