

# PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COUNCIL FOR TEACHERS

2005-2006 Annual Report  
May 2006

## MISSION:

In 1997, Wisconsin Act 298 created the Professional Standards Council for Teachers (PSCT) under the direction of the Department of Public Instruction (DPI). The Council consists of 19 members appointed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and confirmed by the Senate; professional associations or institutions nominate seventeen members. Additionally, a parent representative and a student representative are included. (Appendix A)

In the words of the Wisconsin Legislative Staff memorandum in 1998:

*“The primary focus of the council is on classroom teaching. The purpose of the council is to ensure the quality of the profession of teaching by recommending to the State Superintendent a set of high standards for licensing that maintains quality classroom teaching, addresses the changing needs for the instruction of pupils in the state and provides the continual professional development of teachers.”*

The Act provides a statutory mechanism to review, propose, or revise teacher preparation policies and to assist the State Superintendent in improving teacher preparation, licensure, and regulation. (Appendix B)

Consistent with the statutory duties of the PSCT to “*report annually to the appropriate standing committees of the Legislature on the activities and effectiveness of the council,*” the Council respectfully submits this report.

### **Mission:**

***To ensure the quality of the profession of teaching by recommending to the State Superintendent a set of high standards for licensing that maintains quality classroom teaching:***

The primary work of the PSCT focuses on the implementation of PI 34, the Wisconsin Quality Educator Initiative, in effect since the promulgation of rules in April 2000. The implementation has been led by the Department of Public Instruction and informed by the PSCT under the direction of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction with the support of Teacher Education, Professional Development and Licensing staff. The impact of PI 34 has been to replace PI 4 (educator program approval) in 2000 and PI 3 (educator licensing requirements) in August 2004.

Beginning with the 2005-06 school year, school districts have begun to employ as Initial Educators individuals who successfully completed an approved program after August 31, 2004, and, that is, those who were issued an Initial Educator license by the Department

for the first time in a particular category {teaching, pupil services, or administration}. School districts employing Initial Educators have additional responsibilities for their support, including:

- Providing them with collaboratively developed and ongoing orientation,
- Providing support seminars reflecting the standards
- Providing them with qualified, trained mentors

Following is a brief description of the activities conducted by the PSCT in support of PI 34 requirements during 2005-06:

- The Department of Public Instruction conducted a comprehensive survey of “Institutions of Higher Education-Quality Educator Initiative Support and Services to School Districts” about the support they provide for school districts around the requirements of PI 34. (Appendix C)
- Training for Professional Development Plan (PDP) team members has been held throughout the state in CESAs, school districts, and license renewal centers. Seventy-six PDP team training sessions have been held at license renewal support centers, school districts and Uni-Servs during 2005-06.

Numbers of trained PDP team members are (as of 4-20-06):

❖ higher education representative:	367
❖ pupil services personnel:	230
❖ administrators:	1,353
❖ teachers:	3,073

- License Renewal Support Centers have been established around the state to serve initial educators needing license renewal but not currently employed in a school district. Professional educators may also use the services of the License Renewal Support Centers if they choose to renew their licenses through the completion of a professional development plan.
- The Wisconsin Master Educator Assessment Process (WMEAP) is being piloted in areas of licensure that are not certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. There are currently 28 candidates who have submitted portfolios for review under the WMEAP process. In June 2006, a cadre of assessors will be trained to evaluate these candidate portfolios, and the actual evaluations will be conducted during summer 2006. In addition, Wisconsin was honored to be a recipient of a grant from the Wallace Foundation to develop a state and national model for master administrator licensure for urban principals. There are currently 30 principals participating in the Wallace Fellows project.
- A Title II federal monitoring visit was conducted at the Department of Public Instruction and three school districts to review implementation of ESEA Title II and the state’s criteria for identifying highly qualified teachers.

**Mission:**

*To address the changing needs for the instruction of pupils in the state:*

- The critical element in utilization of the Professional Development Plan as a basis for educator licensing is a focus on enhancing student learning, a foundational principle of PI 34.
- The chair of the Professional Standards Council for Teachers is a member of the Collaborative Council, a group of education partners that includes CESAs, teachers, administrators, school board members, teachers' unions, UW System and WAICU representatives, and other stakeholders who work collaboratively with the State Superintendent and the DPI on education initiatives.

**Mission:**

*To support the continuous professional development of teachers:*

- The professional development of educators is a guiding principle of PI 34 with an emphasis on career-long educator preparation and ongoing collaboration between higher education, PK-12, and the Department of Public Instruction.
- State Superintendent Burmaster has created a DPI Cross-Agency PI 34 Implementation Team to focus department-wide action related to implementation of PI 34, including ensuring that all professional development activities conducted by DPI divisions and teams align with one or more of the teacher, administrator, and/or pupil service standards.
- Grants to support the mentoring of initial educators, provided by the Legislature and administered through the DPI, will be available beginning 2006-07.

The PSCT is aware of ongoing challenges in the implementation of PI 34. Some of those challenges present opportunities to address:

- The timely dissemination of practical, standardized information about PI 34 implementation continues to be a priority. There is also a need for continued support for school districts during the PI 34 implementation process through ongoing training and funding. It will be important to compile and share "best practices" in mentoring and other induction activities among school districts.
- Equalizing the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) and the Wisconsin Master Educator Assessment Process (WMEAP) routes to the Master Educator license. Currently, there are grants available for NBPTS certification but not for the Wisconsin Master Educator Assessment Process. Parity between the two routes should be attained.
- Personnel needs for implementing the new rules. The need for mentors and members of Professional Development Plan verification teams, particularly university personnel at the Initial Educator stage, will continue to be a challenge for school districts. Additionally, the matter of providing remuneration to members of Professional Development Plan teams is being considered. It is expected that new, market-based approaches will arise over time.

- The use of technology for creating and verifying plans. There are numerous tools available--from school districts, CESAs and unions--that have the potential to help teachers organize and create their plans and to provide efficiency in verifying them.
- The restructuring of district salary schedules to recognize the various stages of licensure--initial, professional, and master educator. There is a need to ensure that Professional Educators are knowledgeable about options to seek license renewal through use of a Professional Development Plan and/or completion of six semester credits at the university level.

Another area of responsibility includes the implications of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) with regard to state responsibility in general and PI 34 implementation in particular. PI 34 has put Wisconsin ahead of the curve for the “highly qualified” educator requirement in the ESEA. The monitoring visit from the federal government in spring 2006 verified that Wisconsin’s implementation plan is effective in ensuring highly qualified teachers, both in teacher preparation programs and professional development activities.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

The membership of the Professional Standards Council for Teachers is representative of the entire education and school district community. This diversity is its strength. It allows us to have discussions and make decisions that are responsive from many different perspectives. The Council models the collaboration of groups such as public and private universities, public and private teacher organizations, administrator organizations, the school board association, parents, and students. It truly models the collaboration in student learning underlying PI 34.

This report is one of the responsibilities of the Council. We are pleased to submit it to the Senate and Assembly Education Committees. We would like to suggest that, in addition to this written report, we have the opportunity to meet with members of the Senate and Assembly Education Committees. Ongoing discussions concomitant with the “real-life” implementation of PI 34 could be of much value to all stakeholders.

#### **Appendix A – List of membership of the PSCT**

#### **Appendix B – Statutes creating the Professional Standards Council for Teachers**

#### **Appendix C – Institutions of Higher Education: Quality Educator Initiative Support and Services to School Districts Survey Results**

#### **Appendix D – The Wisconsin Standards**

#### **Appendix E – Copies of 2005 PSCT meeting minutes**