

Recent Educator Licensure Legislation

Updated November 24, 2025

Senate Bill 1947 is now [Public Act 104-0128](#)

Senate Bill 1947 was signed into law August 1, 2025, and makes the following changes, which are effective January 1, 2026. ISBE will write rules to implement the requirements of the public act; rules are anticipated to be final and posted in summer 2026.

Licensure Testing Requirements

1. All educators are now required to pass a content test (for each applicable endorsement) prior to receiving the professional educator license (PEL). This requirement will apply to all initial licensure applications submitted to ISBE on or after the law's effective date (January 1, 2026).
 - a. Applicants who are pursuing licensure through the route commonly referred to as "reciprocity" (see Section 21B-35(a)(1) of the Code) must pass the Illinois content test for each content area sought prior to receiving the PEL. The testing requirement is new.
 - b. Applicants who are pursuing licensure by completing an out-of-state approved program and meet the other requirements, such as completing student teaching and specific coursework, (see Section 21B-35(a)(2) of the Code), must pass the Illinois content test or provide evidence of passing a content test at the time of initial licensure in another state, for each content area sought, prior to receiving the Illinois Professional Educator License and applicable endorsement(s). This option is currently in place and will remain unchanged with the new legislation. Therefore, educators can still obtain an Illinois license through this option and not have to take the applicable Illinois content area test(s), as long as the other requirements of 21B-35(a)(2) are met.
 - c. Out-of-country applicants who are pursuing licensure must pass the Illinois content test prior to receiving the Professional Educator License. This requirement is new.
2. The edTPA waiver is extended from September 1, 2025, to September 1, 2029.
3. ISBE will begin incorporating the three topics required for initial licensure (methods of teaching special education; methods of teaching reading and reading in the content area; and methods of teaching English learners) into a test that will be required as part of initial licensure. Test design is still in development, but ISBE plans to launch a test for one or more content areas by July 1, 2027.

Exemptions for School Support Personnel and Chief School Business Officials

4. All educators seeking PELs endorsed for school support personnel (school counselor, school nurse, school psychologist, school social worker, and speech language pathologist) or chief school business official (CSBO) are exempt from coursework in the following three topics that are required for initial licensure: methods of teaching special education; methods of teaching reading and reading in the content area, and methods of teaching English learners.
 - a. Illinois educator preparation programs can immediately remove these requirements from school support personnel and CSBO licensure programs.

- b. ISBE will apply this exemption to licensure applications beginning January 1, 2026. Educators who were previously marked deficient for one of these coursework topics may request a re-evaluation by submitting documentation to ISBE on or after January 1, 2026. A form will be developed and posted for this purpose closer to January 1.
5. Clinicians who seek the professional educator license endorsed in a school support personnel area and who hold certain clinical licenses issued through the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR) will be exempt from the Illinois licensure content test. This exemption will not be in effect until ISBE rules specifying acceptable license are finalized and posted, which is anticipated for summer 2026.

Changes in Illinois Educator Preparation

In addition to the changes identified in items 2, 3, 4, and 5 above, the following requirements are relevant to Illinois educator preparation programs:

6. A new "Paraprofessional to Teacher" pathway program shall be outlined in rules.
7. A new "Community College Partnership" program shall be outlined in rules.
8. Three new administrative or faculty members, plus one ex-officio member from the Illinois Community College Board, will be added to the State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board.
9. A Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA) Advisory Committee shall be convened to advise ISBE in operationalizing and implementing a pilot, state-developed pilot TPA.
10. Beginning September 1, 2026, all teacher preparation programs in the State shall participate in a pilot program for the teacher performance assessment developed by the State Board of Education.

Senate Bill 28 is now [Public Act 104-0020](#)

Senate Bill 28 was signed into law June 30, 2025, and makes student growth components optional in teacher performance evaluations. The law went into effect July 1, 2025.

Senate Bill 1584 is now [Public Act 104-0111](#)

Senate Bill 1584 was signed into law August 1, 2025, and allows the State Board of Education, in consultation with the State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board, to consider extending the validity date of a short-term approval of no more than one year if the approval holder demonstrates an inability to apply for and receive licensure prior to the short-term approval's expiration due to a serious medical condition. The law is effective January 1, 2026, but ISBE will write rules to detail the extension request process. Rules are anticipated to be final and posted in summer 2026.