

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2023

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HOUSE BILL 432  
PROPOSED COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE H432-PCS10432-BE-23

Short Title: Principal Licensure Changes.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 23, 2023

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO UPDATE PRINCIPAL LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS AND TO DEVELOP A  
3 PORTFOLIO-BASED ASSESSMENT, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE DEPARTMENT  
4 OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

6  
7 **PART I. PRINCIPAL LICENSURE UPDATES**

8 **SECTION 1.(a)** G.S. 115C-270.1 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

9 "(1a) Approved administrator preparation program or approved APP. – An  
10 administrator preparation program, as defined in G.S. 115C-284.1, that has  
11 been approved by the State Board as meeting the requirements established by  
12 rule."

13 **SECTION 1.(b)** G.S. 115C-270.20 reads as rewritten:

14 "**§ 115C-270.20. Licensure requirements.**

15 ...

16 (b) ~~Administrator and Student Services Personnel. Administrator Licenses.~~ – The State  
17 Board shall establish ~~classification and levels of preparation necessary for issuance of licenses~~  
18 ~~for administrators and student services personnel rules~~ for the issuance of the following classes  
19 of administrator licenses, including required levels of preparation for each classification:

20 (1) Administrator license. – A five-year renewable license issued to an individual  
21 who meets all of the following requirements:

22 a. Holds a bachelor's degree.

23 b. Has successfully completed an approved administrator preparation  
24 program.

25 c. Has at least four years of experience as a licensed professional  
26 educator.

27 d. Has submitted a portfolio to the State Board for approval that meets  
28 criteria adopted by the State Board.

29 (2) Provisional assistant principal license. – A one-year license to be employed as  
30 an assistant principal, renewable twice, issued to an employee of a local board  
31 of education if one of the following requirements is met:

32 a. The local board of education determines there is a demonstrated need  
33 for administrators and the employee enrolls in an approved  
34 administrator preparation program by the end of the first year of  
35 provisional licensure.



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1                   b.     The employee is participating in an internship required for completion  
2                             of an approved administrator preparation program.

3       **(b1) Student Services Personnel Licenses.** – The State Board shall establish rules for the  
4 classification and levels of preparation necessary for issuance of licenses for student services  
5 personnel.

6       (c)     Notwithstanding the requirement in subsection (a) of this section that an individual  
7 must hold a bachelor's degree with coursework relevant to the requested licensure area for  
8 individuals seeking licensure in a career or technical education area, the State Board may  
9 establish alternate criteria related to that area to establish competency in lieu of a bachelor's  
10 degree.

11       (d)     Lifetime License for Professional Educators. – The State Board of Education shall  
12 issue a lifetime license, which shall require no renewal, to an individual currently licensed as a  
13 professional educator who has met at least one of the following criteria:

14           (1)     Completed 30 or more years of creditable service with the Teachers' and State  
15                    Employees' Retirement System.

16           (2)     Completed a combined total of 30 or more years of employment as a licensed  
17                    teacher, administrator, or student services personnel in one or more public  
18                    school units in North Carolina."

19       **SECTION 1.(c)** G.S. 115C-270.30 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

20       **"(b1) Administrator Licensure Renewal.** – Rules for continuing licensure for administrators  
21 shall include continuing education in high-quality, integrated digital teaching and learning."

22       **SECTION 1.(d)** G.S. 115C-284 reads as rewritten:

23       **"§ 115C-284. Method of selection and requirements.**

24       (a)     Principals and supervisors shall be elected by the local boards of education upon the  
25 recommendation of the superintendent, in accordance with the provisions of G.S. 115C-276(j).

26       (b)     In the city administrative units, principals shall be elected by the board of education  
27 of such administrative unit upon the recommendation of the superintendent of city schools.

28       **(b1) To qualify for certification as a school administrator, an individual must meet all of**  
29 **the following requirements:**

30           (1)     ~~Submit a complete application to the State Board.~~

31           (2)     ~~Pay the applicable fee.~~

32           (3)     ~~Have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or accredited university.~~

33           (4)     ~~Have one of the following:~~

34               a:     ~~A graduate degree from a public school administration program that~~  
35                    ~~meets the public school administration program approval standards~~  
36                    ~~established by the State Board of Education.~~

37               b:     ~~A master's degree from an accredited college or accredited university~~  
38                    ~~and, by December 31, 1999, have completed a public school~~  
39                    ~~administration program that meets the public school administration~~  
40                    ~~program approval standards set by the State Board of Education.~~

41               e:     ~~Education and training determined by the State Board of Education as~~  
42                    ~~equivalent.~~

43           (5)     ~~Pass the exam adopted by the State Board.~~

44       (c)     ~~The State Board of Education shall have entire control of certifying all applicants for~~  
45 ~~supervisory and professional positions in all public elementary and high schools of North~~  
46 ~~Carolina; and it shall prescribe the rules and regulations for the renewal and extension of all~~  
47 ~~certificates, and shall determine and fix the salary for each grade and type of certificate which it~~  
48 ~~authorizes. The State Board of Education shall require each applicant for an initial certificate or~~  
49 ~~graduate certificate to demonstrate the applicant's academic and professional preparation by~~  
50 ~~achieving a prescribed minimum score at least equivalent to that required by the Board on~~  
51 ~~November 30, 1972, on a standard examination appropriate and adequate for that purpose. If the~~

1 Board shall specify the National Teachers Examination for this purpose, the required minimum  
2 score shall not be lower than that which the Board required on November 30, 1972. The Board  
3 shall not issue provisional certificates for principals.

4 The Board shall issue a one year provisional assistant principal's certificate to an employee  
5 of a local board only if: (i) the local board determines there is a shortage of persons who hold or  
6 are qualified to hold a principal's certificate and the employee enrolls in an approved program  
7 leading to a masters degree in school administration before the provisional certificate expires; or  
8 (ii) the employee is enrolled in an approved masters in school administration program and is  
9 participating in the required internship under the masters program. The Board shall extend the  
10 provisional certificate for a total of no more than two additional years while the employee is  
11 completing the program.

12 (c1) It is the policy of the State of North Carolina to maintain the highest quality principal  
13 and assistant principal education programs in order to enhance the competence of professional  
14 personnel certified in North Carolina. To ensure that principal and assistant principal preparation  
15 programs are upgraded to reflect a more rigorous course of study, the State Board of Education  
16 shall submit to the General Assembly not later than March 1, 1992, a plan to promote this policy.  
17 In developing this plan, the State Board shall consider (i) requiring these programs to include  
18 additional preparation for site based decision making and for the additional autonomy being  
19 granted to local school units, (ii) enhancing program entrance requirements to include assessment  
20 of an applicant's ability to complete the program and to perform as a principal, and (iii) enhancing  
21 the overall content of the programs.

22 The State Board of Education, as lead agency in coordination and cooperation with the  
23 University Board of Governors and such other public and private agencies as are necessary, shall  
24 refine the several certification requirements, standards for approval of institutions of principal  
25 and assistant principal education, standards for institution based innovative and experimental  
26 programs, and standards for improved efficiencies in the administration of the approved  
27 programs.

28 (c2) The State Board of Education shall adopt new standards by July 1, 2008, for school  
29 administrator preparation programs. The new standards shall:

- 30 (1) Be aligned with the revised standards for the evaluation of school executives  
31 and specifically address the use of the results of the Teacher Working  
32 Conditions Survey;
- 33 (2) Require evidence of a high level of institutional commitment, including  
34 dedicated resources, for administrator preparation program improvements and  
35 redesign;
- 36 (3) Require the use of cross functional work teams to determine a common  
37 curriculum framework that (i) is designed to align with defined standards, (ii)  
38 includes rigorous core courses, and (iii) will produce administrators who meet  
39 the defined standards. The cross functional work teams shall include  
40 school based personnel, faculty from schools of education and other  
41 disciplines from institutions of higher education, and representatives of State  
42 agencies;
- 43 (4) Require the use of cross functional work teams to design and periodically  
44 update specific standards regarding placement, required activities, and  
45 evaluations of clinical experiences. These standards shall include appropriate  
46 training for the school leaders who agree to accept and supervise interns;
- 47 (5) Require written agreements between the institution of higher education and a  
48 local school administrative unit to govern their shared responsibility for (i)  
49 recruitment and preparation of school administrators, especially with regard  
50 to clinical experiences including the internship, and (ii) a new administrator's  
51 success once employed;

- 1           (6)    ~~Require authentic partnerships between adjunct faculty and full-time faculty~~  
2           ~~to fully address the need for both practical, field-based experience and~~  
3           ~~academic, theory-based experience. These partnerships may require a change~~  
4           ~~in the institution of higher education's definition of scholarly activity and its~~  
5           ~~reward system;~~  
6           (7)    ~~Require all candidates to complete a year-long internship; and~~  
7           (8)    ~~Require the development of portfolios for emerging leaders that provide~~  
8           ~~evidence they are applying their training to actual school needs and~~  
9           ~~challenges.~~

10       ~~Institutions of higher education shall redesign their school administrator preparation~~  
11       ~~programs to meet the new standards and report to the State Board of Education on the redesign~~  
12       ~~by July 1, 2009.~~

13       ~~(e3)    The State Board of Education shall require that all students in school administrator~~  
14       ~~preparation programs demonstrate competencies in (i) using digital and other instructional~~  
15       ~~technologies and (ii) supporting teachers and other school personnel to use digital and other~~  
16       ~~instructional technologies to ensure provision of high-quality, integrated digital teaching and~~  
17       ~~learning to all students. The State Board of Education shall include continuing education in~~  
18       ~~high-quality, integrated digital teaching and learning as a requirement of licensure renewal.~~

19       (d)    ~~Repealed by Session Laws 1989, c. 385, s. 1.~~

20       ~~(d1)    It is the policy of the State of North Carolina that, subsequent to the adoption of a~~  
21       ~~system of classroom teacher differentiation and prerequisites to candidacy for principal, a~~  
22       ~~classroom teacher must have attained at least the second level of differentiation, have at least~~  
23       ~~four years of classroom teaching experience, and possess, at least, a Masters Degree in Education~~  
24       ~~Administration. This subsection shall not apply to educational personnel certified as of July 1,~~  
25       ~~1984.~~

26       (e)    The State Board shall not issue provisional licenses for principals. It shall be unlawful  
27       for any board of education to employ or keep in service any principal or supervisor who neither  
28       holds nor is qualified to hold a license in compliance with the provision of the law or in  
29       accordance with the regulations of the State Board of Education. However, a local board of  
30       education may select a retired principal or retired assistant principal to serve as an interim  
31       principal for the remainder of any school year, regardless of licensure status.

32       (f)    The allotment of classified principals shall be one principal for each duly constituted  
33       school with seven or more state-allotted teachers.

34       (g)    Local boards of education shall have authority to employ supervisors in addition to  
35       those that may be furnished by the State when, in the discretion of the board of education, the  
36       schools of the local school administrative unit can thereby be more efficiently and more  
37       economically operated and when funds for the same are provided in the current expense fund  
38       budget. The duties of such supervisors shall be assigned by the superintendent with the approval  
39       of the board of education.

40       (h)    All principals and supervisors employed in the public schools of the State or in  
41       schools receiving public funds, shall be required either to hold or be qualified to hold a certificate  
42       license in compliance with the provision of the law or in accordance with the regulations of the  
43       State Board of Education."

44       **SECTION 1.(e) G.S. 115C-284.1 reads as rewritten:**

45       "**§ 115C-284.1. ~~School administrator~~ Administrator preparation programs.**

46       (a)    Role of APPs. – To recommend candidates for licensure, an administrator preparation  
47       program (APP) shall be approved by the State Board. For the purposes of this section, an APP is  
48       any entity that meets all of the following:

- 49       (1)    Prepares, trains, and recommends candidates for administrator licensure.

- 1           (2)   Leads to a Master's of School Administration (MSA) or Master's of Education  
2           in Educational Leadership unless the candidate already holds a master's or  
3           doctoral degree in an education-related field.
- 4           (3)   Meets one of the following:
- 5               a.    Is accredited by a programmatic accrediting agency recognized by the  
6                Secretary of Education pursuant to federal law.
- 7               b.    Was approved by the State Board of Education as a school  
8                administrator preparation program prior to April 1, 2023.
- 9           (b)   State Board Authority. – The State Board shall have the authority to approve an APP  
10          that meets the requirements established by rule as provided in subsection (c) of this section.
- 11          (c)   Rules for Granting State Approval. – The State Board shall adopt rules for granting  
12          approval to APPs in accordance with this section. The rules shall ensure the following:
- 13               (1)   A rigorous approval process that requires that the criteria in this section are  
14                met.
- 15               (2)   An application process, peer review, and technical assistance provided by the  
16                State Board.
- 17               (3)   An approval period of five years and process for renewal of approval.
- 18          (d)   Minimum Approval Standards. – At a minimum, the rules established as provided in  
19          subsection (c) of this section shall require APPs to meet the following requirements:
- 20               (1)   Require all candidates to complete an internship that is at least 350 hours in  
21                duration.
- 22               (2)   Require the development of portfolios that meet criteria adopted by the State  
23                Board and provide evidence that candidates are applying their training to  
24                actual school needs and challenges.
- 25               (3)   Require that all APP candidates demonstrate competencies in (i) using digital  
26                and other instructional technologies and (ii) supporting teachers and other  
27                school personnel to use digital and other instructional technologies to ensure  
28                provision of high-quality, integrated digital teaching and learning to all  
29                students.
- 30               (4)   Align with the standards for the evaluation of school executives and  
31                specifically address the use of the results of the Teacher Working Conditions  
32                Survey.
- 33               (5)   Require evidence of a high level of institutional commitment, including  
34                dedicated resources, for APP improvements and redesign.
- 35               (6)   Require the use of cross-functional work teams to determine a common  
36                curriculum framework that (i) is designed to align with defined standards, (ii)  
37                includes rigorous core courses, and (iii) will produce administrators who meet  
38                the defined standards. The cross-functional work teams shall include  
39                school-based personnel, faculty from schools of education and other  
40                disciplines from institutions of higher education, and representatives of State  
41                agencies.
- 42               (7)   Require the use of cross-functional work teams to design and periodically  
43                update specific standards regarding placement, required activities, and  
44                evaluations of clinical experiences. These standards shall include appropriate  
45                training for the school leaders who agree to accept and supervise interns.
- 46               (8)   Require written agreements between the institution of higher education and a  
47                public school unit to govern their shared responsibility for (i) recruitment and  
48                preparation of school administrators, especially with regard to clinical  
49                experiences, including the internship, and (ii) a new administrator's success  
50                once employed.

1           (9) Require authentic partnerships between adjunct faculty and full-time faculty  
2 to fully address the need for both practical, field-based experience and  
3 academic, theory-based experience. These partnerships may require a change  
4 in the institution of higher education's definition of scholarly activity and its  
5 reward system.

6           ~~(10) Rules for approval of school administrator preparation programs shall~~  
7 ~~incorporate~~ Incorporate the criteria developed in accordance with  
8 G.S. 116-74.21 for assessing proposals under the School Administrator  
9 Training Program.

10           (e) The State Board of Education shall develop rules to determine whether an applicant  
11 who completed an administrator preparation program outside the State meets or exceeds the  
12 requirements to hold a North Carolina administrator license."

13           **SECTION 1.(f)** G.S. 115C-238.68(1) reads as rewritten:

14           "(1) Principal. – The board of directors shall employ and contract with a principal  
15 for a term not to exceed three years. The principal shall meet the requirements  
16 for ~~certification~~ licensure set out in ~~G.S. 115C-284, G.S. 115C-270.20(b)(1),~~  
17 unless waived by the State Board of Education upon submission of a request  
18 by the board of directors. The principal shall be responsible for school  
19 operations and shall exercise those duties and powers delegated by the board  
20 of directors."

21           **SECTION 1.(g)** G.S. 115C-287.1(h) reads as rewritten:

22           "(h) An individual who holds a provisional assistant principal's license and who is  
23 employed as an assistant principal under ~~G.S. 115C-284(e) G.S. 115C-270.20(b)(2)~~ shall be  
24 considered a school administrator for purposes of this section. Notwithstanding subsection (b) of  
25 this section, a local board may enter into one-year contracts with a school administrator who  
26 holds a provisional assistant principal's license. If the school administrator held career status as  
27 a teacher in the local school administrative unit prior to being employed as an assistant principal  
28 and the State Board of Education for any reason does not extend the school administrator's  
29 provisional assistant principal's license, the school administrator shall retain career status as a  
30 teacher unless the school administrator voluntarily relinquished career status or is dismissed or  
31 demoted pursuant to G.S. 115C-325. Nothing in this subsection or ~~G.S. 115C-284(e)~~  
32 G.S. 115C-270.20(b)(2) shall be construed to require a local board to extend or renew the contract  
33 of a school administrator who holds a provisional assistant principal's license."

34           **SECTION 1.(h)** G.S. 116-239.10(1) reads as rewritten:

35           "(1) Principal. – The constituent institution shall employ and contract with a  
36 principal for a term not to exceed three years. The principal shall meet the  
37 requirements for licensure set out in ~~G.S. 115C-284, G.S. 115C-270.20(b)(1),~~  
38 unless waived, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Public  
39 Instruction, by the State Board of Education upon submission of a request by  
40 the chancellor that is approved by the Subcommittee. The principal shall be  
41 responsible for school operations and shall exercise those duties and powers  
42 delegated by the chancellor."

43           **SECTION 1.(i)** This section shall not apply to any individual eligible for a principal  
44 license requirement waiver pursuant to Section 1 of S.L. 2021-170, as amended by Section 2.8  
45 of S.L. 2022-71.

## 46 **PART II. DEVELOPMENT OF PORTFOLIO-BASED ASSESSMENT**

47           **SECTION 2.** The Professional Educator Preparation and Standards Commission  
48 (PEPSC), in consultation with the Department of Public Instruction and the North Carolina  
49 Principal Fellows Commission, shall develop a portfolio-based assessment system for use in  
50

1 applications for administrator licensure pursuant to G.S. 115C-270.20(b)(1). PEPSC shall  
2 present recommendations to the State Board of Education for approval by June 15, 2024.

3

4 **PART III. EFFECTIVE DATE**

5 **SECTION 3.** This act is effective when it becomes law. Section 1 of this act applies  
6 beginning July 1, 2024.