HOUSE BILL 432:
Principal Licensure Changes.

2023-2024 General Assembly

Committee:	Senate Education/Higher Education. If favorable, re-refer to Rules and Operations of the Senate	**Date:**	May 24, 2023
Introduced by:	Reps. Willis, Blackwell, Cotham, Torbett	**Prepared by:**	Kara McCraw*
Analysis of:	Second Edition		Staff Attorney

OVERVIEW: The 2nd edition of House Bill 432 would update principal licensure requirements and require the Professional Educator Preparation and Standards Commission (PEPSC) to develop a portfolio-based assessment for prospective principals.

CURRENT LAW:

School Administrator Licensure Requirements

G.S. 115C-284(b) identifies the statutory requirements for licensing school administrators, including the following:

- Bachelor's degree.
- One of the following:
  - A graduate degree from a public school administration program that is approved by the State Board of Education (SBE).
  - A master's degree and completion of a public school administration program approved by the SBE by December 31, 1999.
  - Education and training determined by the SBE as equivalent.
- Pass an exam adopted by the SBE.

Additionally, G.S. 115C-284(d1) requires the following for principal licensure:

- At least four years of classroom teaching experience.
- At least a Masters Degree in Education Administration.
- Achieve at least the second level of differentiation between classroom teachers.

G.S. 115C-284(c) requires the SBE to issue a one-year provisional assistant principal certificate to an employee of a local board of education if one of the following are met:

- The local board determines there is a shortage of persons who hold or are qualified to hold a principal's license and the employee enrolls in an approved program leading to a masters degree in school administration before the provisional certificate expires.
- The employee is enrolled in an approved masters in school administration program and is participating in the required internship under the masters program.

The SBE must extend the assistant principal provisional certificate for up to two additional years while the employee is completing the program.

School Administrator Preparation Requirements

G.S. 115C-284(c2) requires the SBE to adopt standards for school administrator preparation programs, and identifies certain requirements that must be included, such as:

- Requiring all candidates to complete a year-long internship.
- Requiring all candidates to develop portfolios.
- Requiring written agreements between the institution of higher education and a local school administrative unit to govern their shared responsibility for (i) recruitment and preparation of school administrators, especially with regard to clinical experiences including the internship, and (ii) a new administrator's success once employed.

Additionally, school administrator preparation programs must require candidates to demonstrate competencies in (i) using digital and other instructional technologies and (ii) supporting teachers and other school personnel to use digital and other instructional technologies to ensure provision of high-quality, integrated digital teaching and learning to all students. The SBE must also require school administrators to complete continuing education in high-quality, integrated digital teaching and learning as a requirement for licensure renewal. G.S. 115C-284(c3).

G.S. 115C-284.1 requires rules for approving school administrator preparation programs to incorporate criteria developed in accordance with G.S. 116-74.21 for assessing proposals under the School Administrator Training Program. G.S. 116-74.21 requires a competitive proposal process and criteria for assessing proposals to establish school administrator training programs within the constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina. No more than 12 school administrator programs can be established under the competitive proposal program.

Principal License Waivers

Section 1 of S.L. 2021-170, as amended by S.L. 2022-71, waived certain statutory school administrator licensure requirements for individuals who completed at least one course as part of a masters degree program or a post-masters certificate designed for school administrators prior to August 31, 2024, provided that the individual completes a masters degree program or a post-masters certificate designed for school administrators and meets all licensure requirements not otherwise waived by this provision prior to being licensed as a school administrator.

BILL ANALYSIS:

Part I would modify and clarify the statutory requirements for principal licensure. The SBE would be required to adopt rules for two classes of administrator license: an administrator license and a provisional assistant principal license.

For a renewable five-year administrator license, Part I would remove the exam and second level of differentiation requirements and further clarify that the following requirements must be met:

- Bachelor's degree.
- Successful completion of an approved administrator preparation program (APP).
- At least 4 years of experience as a licensed professional educator.
- Portfolio approved by the SBE.

The requirements for a one-year provisional assistant principal license would be the same as for the provisional assistant principal certificate under current law.

Part I would also clarify the parameters for approving APPs, which are defined as any entity that meets the following:

- Prepares, trains, and recommends candidates for administrator licensure.
- Leads to a Master's of School Administration (MSA) or Master's of Education in Educational Leadership unless the candidate already holds a master's or doctoral degree in an education-related field.
- Is accredited by a programmatic accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary of Education pursuant to federal law.

The SBE would be required to adopt rules for granting approval to APPs that ensure the following:

- A rigorous approval process that requires statutory criteria are met.
- An application process, peer review, and technical assistance provided by the SBE.
- An approval period of 5 years and a process for renewal.

The SBE's required rules for approving APPs would align with current law except that the rules must require an internship of at least 350 hours rather than a year-long internship.

The SBE would be required to develop rules for determining whether individuals who completed an out-of-state APP meet or exceed North Carolina requirements.

The new licensure and APP requirements would not apply to individuals eligible for a principal license requirement waiver under current law.

Additionally, Part I would make technical changes to reorganize the school administrator licensure and preparation statutes for clarity.

Part II would require PEPSC, in consultation with DPI and the North Carolina Principal Fellows Commission, to develop a portfolio-based assessment system for use in applications for administrator licensure. PEPSC would be required to submit its recommendations to the SBE by June 15, 2024.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The bill would be effective when it becomes law. Part I would apply beginning July 1, 2024.

**This bill summary was substantially contributed to by Brian Gwyn, Committee Counsel.*