

Standards for Licensure and the School Business Administrator



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Introduction

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PI 34 implements the Wisconsin statute that outlines the specific requirements of the new professional licensing reform statute. PI 34 applies to all licensed educators in the state, including teachers and administrators. The intent of this brochure is to outline the requirements of the law that apply specifically to licensed school business administrators. The author has taken the liberty of using the term school business administrator or administrator in lieu of the statutory use of “educator” for the purpose of clarity. Hopefully, school business administrators will gain a better understanding of the requirements of the law and begin to assess what they may need to do prior to full implementation of the law in July 2004.

Guiding Principles

PI 34 is based on a set of guiding principles. Administrative licensure will move from the course and credit orientation of attaining six semester credits every five years to a performance and competency orientation. The principles include:

- Requiring performance based program approval and licensure
- Career-long administrative preparation
- Collaboration among institutions of higher education, school districts and the Department of Public Instruction
- Establishing a community of learners such as mentors, professional development team members, peers and other stakeholder groups
- Creating a shared vision of what administrators should know and be able to do
- Demonstrating the knowledge, skills, and dispositions outlined in the Wisconsin/ASBO administrative standards as documented through the creation of the Professional Development Plan (PDP)

Licensure Stages

PI 34 has created three career stages of licensing: initial administrator, professional administrator and master administrator. Any school business administrator who completes the licensure requirements after August 31, 2004 will enter the profession with initial administrator licensure and must comply with the new rules to retain the license.

School business administrators licensed prior to July 1, 2004 will be “grandfathered” under the old licensure rules for all certifications they currently hold. Those administrators may continue to renew their licenses by attaining six semester credits every five years. Life licensed administrators are exempt from the requirements of PI 34.

Currently licensed administrators have the option of renewing their licenses under the new PI 34 requirements. If they opt to use the new guidelines, they will be working towards the second stage of licensure designating you as a professional administrator. They may return to the old model of credit acquisition at any future date to renew their licenses.

It should be noted that DPI clock hours are not obtainable after July 1, 2004, but may be used until July 1, 2008. This means that you may use clock hours earned prior to July 1, 2004 for license renewal in 2004 through 2008. Only semester credit hours will be honored after July 1, 2008 for those renewing their licenses under the old rules. Also, business administrators who want to add licensure in another administrative category, e.g. district administrator, must comply with the new licensure rules.

Administrators who have retained the professional level of licensure for at least five years may transition to the 10 year master license level. Attainment of the master license is only possible by completing the requirements of the new PI 34 rules.

Addendum:

Currently licensed business administrators who receive another administrative license after August 2004, e.g. district administrator, will bring that license in at the professional level. They will always have the option of completing a professional development plan or re-licensing using credits.

Components of Licensure

Each of the three licensure stages contain several specific components that will be reviewed to promote a better understanding of the requirements of the new law.

INITIAL ADMINISTRATOR

The initial administrative license applies to all administrators who complete their program requirements after August 31, 2004. It also applies to all out-of-state administrators who have less than five years experience in the profession. The initial license is for five years and is non-renewable. Administrators who possess this license must complete the requirements of PI 34 within the five year period to progress to the professional license level. The requirements of PI 34 can be completed in less than five years, but no less than three years. Failure to complete the requirements within the five year period will result in the loss of the license.

The initial licensee must successfully complete and document participation in four major activities as outlined in PI 34. The activities include participation in an orientation to their district, attendance at support seminars linked to the administrative standards and district goals, involvement in a formal mentorship program, and the development of a professional development plan. Only by successfully completing the aforementioned activities will an initial administrator be able to transition to the professional licensure level.

PI 34 requires the local school district to develop a plan that meets the initial administrator's needs. Districts are supposed to arrange for a meaningful orientation, provide support seminars linked to the standards and the administrator's needs, provide a mentor and make available a pool of DPI licensed administrators and staff from institutions of higher education to serve on the initial administrator's professional development team. Districts must file the plan with the DPI prior to the start of the 2004-05 school year.

The Wisconsin Association of School Business Officials (WASBO) recognized early on that it would be difficult, if not impossible, for most school districts to provide meaningful support seminars and mentorships to comply with the intent of PI 34. WASBO has long provided support seminars throughout the year. The seminars are designed to help new as well as veteran administrators stay abreast of new issues and hot topics. The seminars present great opportunities for school business administrators to address their needs and enhance their skills, knowledge, and professional practice. The WASBO regionals also provide a variety of professional development

activities on a regular basis. These meetings create an opportunity for new and veteran school business administrators to collaboratively work together to improve the profession. More recently, WASBO has developed a formal mentorship program available to all members. The program is designed to provide all initial administrators with a trained, veteran school business administrator mentor. The mentorship program is also designed to enhance the on-going orientation to the profession by providing support seminars. It is hoped that districts utilize the resources provided by WASBO to assist initial administrators in complying with the requirements of PI 34.

The most comprehensive requirement of PI 34 for the initial administrator is the creation and completion of a professional development plan (PDP). The PDP serves as a contract between the initial administrator, members of a professional development review team (PDT), and the state superintendent. The plan will show how administrators are going to increase their proficiency based on the administrative standards. Also, the plan will outline how the administrator intends to improve student learning.

The PDP process allows the administrator the opportunity to direct their own professional growth by developing a plan related to the administrative standards. Administrators determine their own goals to demonstrate growth and improve student learning. The number of goals selected is up to the administrator, but they must address two or more of the administrator standards, which include ASBO International Standards.

The PDP for initial administrators is designed to be completed over a three to five year period. The first year is for self-reflection. Years two through four are for annual reflection and revision of goals, objectives and activities. The final year is used to provide evidence of growth to the PDT for review and verification of the plan.

The professional development team is convened at the discretion of the initial administrator. However, it is the local school district's responsibility to have a plan in place that identifies a pool of trained members who are available to serve on the team. The team is comprised of three persons, including a member from an institution of higher education, an administrator selected by the superintendent and approved by the board, and an administrator in the same license category who is selected by peers. The team members do not have to be from the employing school district or institution from which the administrator graduated. Mentors should not serve on the review team.

The professional development plan is made up of several components. The plan should include the following:

- Description of the school district and administrative position
- Description of the goal(s) and standards to be addressed
- Rationale for the goal(s)/standards selected
- Plan of assessment and documentation of goal achievement
- Specific plan to meet the goal including objectives, activities, timelines etc.

The professional development plan is to be reviewed annually by the administrator. Significant revisions to the goals, standards, objectives or activities will require review and approval by the team. The completed plan will contain a summary and reflection statement as well as documentation as to the successful completion of the plan.

A majority of the PDT must verify completion of the plan and notify the DPI of their findings. If the team does not approve the plan, the administrator can revise the plan for reconsideration. If there is no plan approval by the end of the fifth year, the initial administrator will not receive the next level of licensure. The state superintendent hears appeals of the team's decisions.

PROFESSIONAL ADMINISTRATOR

When a person achieves the professional administrator licensure, they possess a five year, renewable license. They don't have to advance to the master administrator level. Professional licensure requires that the administrator develop and complete a professional development plan similar to the initial administrator. There are two differences in the plan. First, the plan must be for the full five years. There is no three to five year option that was available to the initial administrator. Second, the program development team is now comprised of three administrators identified by peers. There is no institution of higher learning member requirement.

Administrators who are certified prior to July 1, 2004 have the option of pursuing the professional level of licensure by successfully completing a professional development plan or keeping their current licensure by completing six semester hour credits every five years. Administrators can move between the two options for subsequent licensure at their discretion. Administrators certified after August 31, 2004 will have to utilize the professional development plan option.

MASTER ADMINISTRATOR

The master administrative licensure is not required. It is a renewable, ten year license. Administrators who seek this licensure must apply to the state superintendent. The minimum requirements are a master's degree, five years of administrative experience, evidence of contribution to the profession and evidence of improved student learning. The master's level is, in effect, a high stakes portfolio assessment. The assessment is reviewed and verified by three assessors appointed by the state superintendent. The assessors make a recommendation for approval to the state. Appeals can be made in a similar manner to those available to the initial and professional administrator if the assessment team deems the plan unacceptable for master licensure.