

**Statement of Administrative Impact and Projected Costs of Implementing the
Proposed Revisions to 8 VAC 20-21-10 et seq. Licensure
Regulations for School Personnel Career Switcher Alternative Route
To Licensure for Career Professions**

Prior to the adoption of any regulations affecting school divisions, Section 22.1-17 of the *Code of Virginia* requires that the Board of Education and the Department of Education prepare a statement of the administrative impact of such regulations on school divisions and the projected costs of implementing and complying with such regulations. The Department is required to send a copy thereof to each division superintendent.

The Board of Education is in the process of revising its Licensure Regulations for School Personnel to establish a career switcher alternative route to licensure for career professions.

Authority: Code of Virginia, Section 22.1-16. **Bylaws and regulations generally:**
"The Board of Education may adopt bylaws for its own government and promulgate such regulations as may be necessary to carry out its powers and duties and the provisions of this title."

Code of Virginia, Section 22.1-298. **Regulations governing licensure:**
"The Board of Education shall, by regulation, prescribe the requirements for the licensure of teachers. Such regulations shall include a requirement that every teacher seeking initial license take a professional teacher's assessment prescribed by the Board. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the Board may provide for the issuance of a provisional license, valid for a period not to exceed three years, to any person who does not meet this requirement or any other requirement for licensure by law."

Purpose: According to the federal government, schools will need 200,000 new teachers a year for the next decade--up from 150,000 in recent years--as student enrollment increases and current teachers retire. As a result, many school systems welcome adults who are willing to leave established careers for teaching. Researcher Emily Feistritzer found that 10 percent of new teachers hired in 1996 came from another profession; the percentage is growing yearly (*U.S. News*, 10/26/98). A survey conducted of local school divisions in Virginia supports the need for additional qualified teachers.

An alternative route to licensure does exist in Virginia; however, the current route may be problematic for career switchers who may have related experiences and training. To increase opportunities for school divisions to employ career switchers with rich experiences, a career switcher alternative route to licensure for career professions is proposed. This route to licensure will allow career switcher program completers to apply directly to the Department of Education for a license.

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Substance: The Licensure Regulations for School Personnel contain provisions governing:

- Administration of the Regulations
- Purpose and responsibility for licensure
- Conditions for licensure
- Types of licenses, dating of license
- Adding and deleting endorsements
- Alternative route to licensure
- Requirements for renewing a license
- Requirements for endorsement areas for teachers, support personnel (reading specialists, counselors, school social workers, etc.), and school leaders
- Revocation, cancellation, suspension, denial and reinstatement of teaching licenses

Summary of the Proposed Regulations:

The following proposed changes to the regulatory language for the amendment to expand the alternative route to career professions are:

1. Under Part I, Definitions: the words and terms “certified provider” and “mentor” were added and used throughout the proposed regulatory document.
 - a. “Certified Provider” means a provider certified by the Department of Education to provide preparation and training for applicants seeking the eligibility license specified in 8 VAC 20-21-80.
 - b. “Mentor” means a classroom teacher hired by the local school division who has achieved continuing contract status or other instructional personnel including a retired teacher who meets local mentor selection criteria. The mentors should work in the same building as the teachers they are assisting or be instructional personnel who are assigned solely as mentors. A mentor should be assigned a limited number of teachers at any time. Instructional personnel who are not assigned solely as mentors should not be assigned to more than four teachers at any time. Mentors guide teachers in the program through demonstrations, observations, and consultations.
2. At least five years of full-time work experience or its equivalent are required for participation in the program.
3. Intensive Level I Preparation is defined as 180 clock hours of instruction, including field experience, rather than isolating hours for instruction and field experience.
4. The intensive summer session (Level I) may be expanded to a full one-year program. Level II will remain a full-year induction program with the assistance of a mentor.
5. The responsibility for the selection, preparation, and placement of the mentor was assigned to the local school division, rather than to the program provider, to maintain consistency with requirements for HB2710 and SB1145: Education Accountability and Quality Enhancement Act of 1999.

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6. Criteria for certification of programs were clearly established to provide guidance to program providers interested in conducting a career switcher program. The criteria include the following provisions:
 - a. Certified providers will receive a five-year certification at the end of the first year. Subsequent reviews will be conducted on a five-year cycle, or as deemed necessary.
 - b. Program providers must document that individuals accepted in the career switcher program meet the prerequisites, including the requirement that participants must have five years of full-time experience or equivalent.
 - c. The proposals submitted for program certification must include at least the following:
 1. Purpose, description, and program design for Level I and II for integrating the program preparation with curriculum and instruction.
 2. A description of collaborative and cooperative arrangements with educational agencies.
 3. The identification of credentials and qualifications of the program and seminar instructors and the preparation sites.
 4. A description of how the program will be administered and managed, including the identification of the program manager and fiscal agent.
 5. Maintenance of data and annual reporting to the Department of Education program and individual assessments.

Estimated Administrative Impact:

The proposed revisions offer another route to licensure. The Virginia General Assembly provided initial funding to conduct the career switcher program during the 2000-2002 biennium. Funding was used to provide an alternative pathway into teaching for 200 individuals who had not completed a teacher preparation curriculum but had considerable life experiences, career achievements and an academic background that was relevant for teaching in pre-K through grade 12.

If funding is not available for the 2002-04 biennium, individuals participating in the program may be assessed a fee. Public educational agencies interested in conducting a career switcher program will be eligible to request state grants, pending available funding. Public and private educational agencies can request approval of program certification requirements to conduct career switcher alternative route to licensure programs.