

Replenishing Wisconsin's Teacher Pipeline

Wisconsin's private schools face many of the same staffing challenges as their public school counterparts.

Thousands of Wisconsin's private school teachers are required to have a state license; hold master's degrees; and/or move from neighboring states. Private school teachers also want to transfer between the private and public school sectors. But the current, complex licensure process bars people from easily and affordably obtaining a teaching license. Based on WCRIS' voluntary experience with the licensure process, we urge lawmakers and education leaders to consider the following solutions to the state's teacher shortage:

- 1 Simplify the process.** Reshape the licensing process to create clear, affordable and understandable pathways for people to become teachers. The state should offer only two K-12 licenses, Provisional and Lifetime licenses, to make licensure more accessible.
- 2 Offer license reciprocity.** Wisconsin should offer teacher license reciprocity with all other states in the U.S., without requiring additional qualifications, except a criminal background check.
- 3 Recognize graduate school degrees.** A doctorate or master's degree should immediately qualify an individual to teach in K-12 schools, without requiring additional expensive or time-consuming qualifications, except a criminal background check.
- 4 Permit those with a teaching license to teach in any K-12 level.** Having a teaching license should qualify individuals to teach at any grade level, not only in the level they specialized.
- 5 Make individuals with a bachelor's degree in any field eligible for teacher licensure.** A major in education should not be required.
- 6 Provide grants for second-career professionals.** State grants would cover the cost of second-career professionals to voluntarily attend courses on topics such as K-12 classroom management; adolescent brain development; curriculum expectations; how to motivate the adolescent learner; or similar courses specific to K-12 education.
- 7 Pay student teachers.** These teachers-in-training should be paid a state-funded minimum wage while working in K-12 schools. There should be a provision allowing them to function similar to student nurses or medical residents.
- 8 Learn from Teach for America.** Wisconsin's teacher licensure process should model the requirements for Teach for America. The organization has been successful in attracting teacher candidates and getting them in schools.

Given the K-12 proficiency rate statewide, the state's teacher licensure system has not proven to create better elementary and secondary students. Already, the state schools of education are not in sync with the new literacy law. **The time for change is now.**

See reverse side for a visual of the complicated teacher licensure process. →

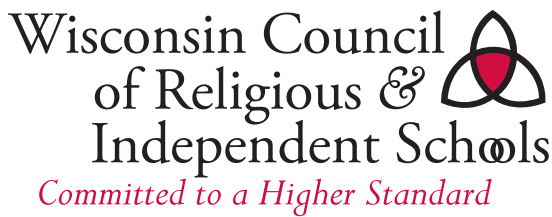
Teacher Licensure in Wisconsin: Complicated, Confusing and Correctable

This flowchart demonstrates the steps and requirements that educators must follow to obtain a Provisional Teaching License, just one of the state's many license types.

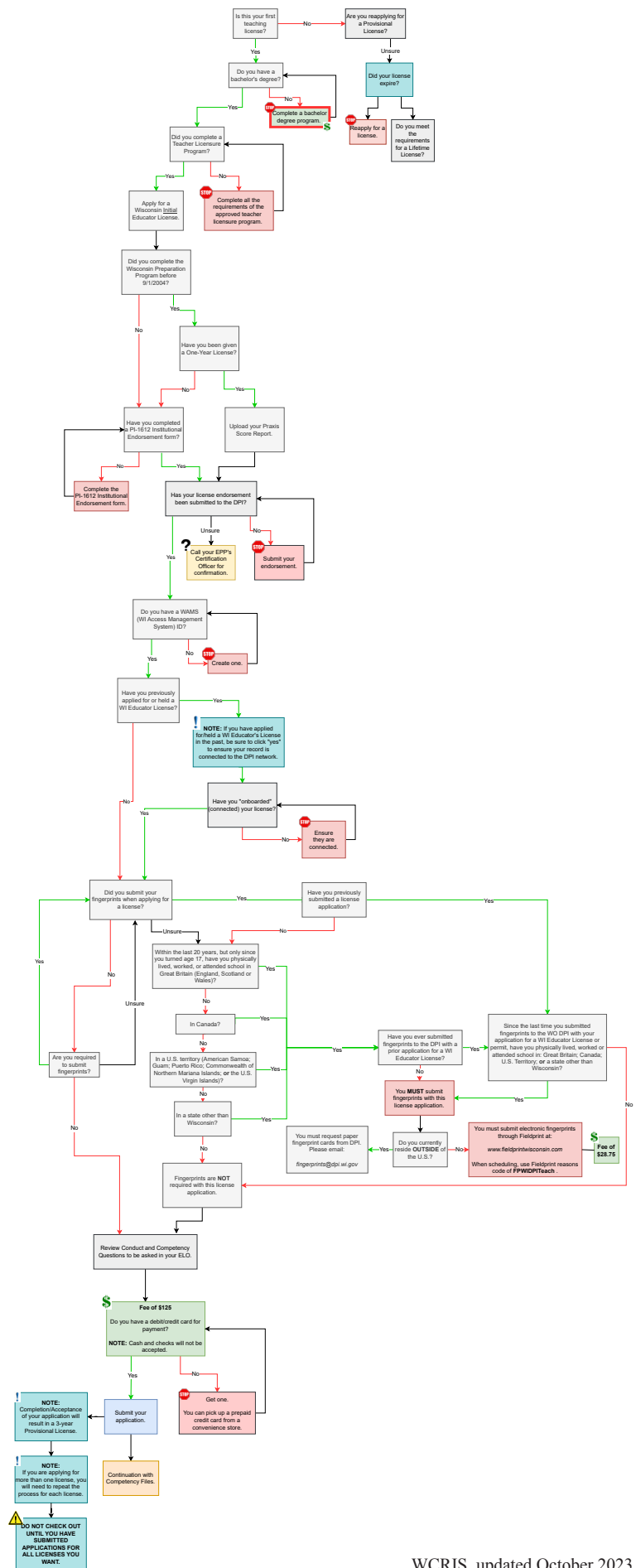
Even beyond the amount of time that overworked and underpaid educators spend on navigating the licensure process, there are non-refundable fees associated with some of the steps. Many teachers likely pay the fees out-of-pocket.

On behalf of the over 120,000 private K-12 students in Wisconsin, WCRIS encourages state lawmakers and education leaders to consider the solutions on the reverse side of this page to make teacher licensure in Wisconsin more affordable and accessible.

Contact WCRIS with any questions. We're here to serve!



WCRIS supports the unique missions of member schools through advocacy, education and partnerships, to ensure an extraordinary education and equitable opportunity for each child.



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