

# **Tiered Licensure Advisory Task Force Report to the Legislature**

**February 15, 2012**

**As required by  
Minnesota 2011 First Special Session Chapter 11, Article 2**

**Submitted by**

**The Minnesota Department of Education  
and the  
Minnesota Board of Teaching**



## **Legislative Charge**

In July 2011, the Minnesota Legislature enacted a law requiring:

*“The Board of Teaching and the commissioner of education must jointly convene and facilitate an advisory task force to develop recommendations for a statewide tiered teacher licensure system ...”* (See Appendix A for full text of the legislation).

## **Task Force Composition**

In compliance with this law, the Minnesota Board of Teaching (BOT) and Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) established a task force comprised of 18 individuals. Eleven members represented organizations specifically referenced in the law, and an additional seven members were selected through an open appointments process through the Minnesota Secretary of State’s office. The following considerations were central to the selection of the members for the open appointments: increased representation of teacher perspective, ethnic diversity, and diversity of professional expertise and experience. Table 1 provides the names of all task force participants as well as designation as either a representative of an organization named in the law or an additional appointment.

**Table 1**

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Tim Alexander      | Minnesota Association of School Personnel Administrators (MASPA) |
| Jim Bartholomew    | Minnesota Business Partnership                                   |
| Bill Blazar        | Minnesota Chamber of Commerce                                    |
| Mary Cecconi       | Parents United   |
| Carol Clark        | Minnesota Association of Career and Technical Educators (MACTE)  |
| Mary Pat Cumming   | Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP)     |
| Matt Dorschner     | Minnesota Elementary School Principals Association (MESPA)       |
| Garnet Franklin    | Education Minnesota  |
| Bill Kautt         | Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA)                       |
| Eric Schneider     | Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA)            |
| Barbara Washington | Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (MACTE)  |
| Jane Gilles        | Education Minnesota; Additional Appointment                      |
| Daniel Gregory     | Minnesota ASCD; Additional Appointment                           |
| Allen Hoffman      | Superintendent, former BOT member; Additional Appointment        |
| John Melick        | Former Director of Educator Licensing; Additional Appointment    |
| Catherine Pulkinen | Teacher Educator; Additional Appointment                         |
| Laura Saatzer      | Teacher Leader; Additional Appointment                           |
| Greg Utecht        | Technology Program Manager; Additional Appointment               |

In addition to the legislatively mandated participants and the additional members appointed, the task force leadership also invited four legislators to participate as ex-officio, non-voting members. As ex-officio members, these legislators were able to engage in dialogue with task force members, and will be equipped to provide insight to their colleagues in the Legislature regarding the complexities of the process and policy issues as well as share legislative considerations to the task force throughout the task force work. Table 2 provides the names of the ex-officio members.

**Table 2**

| Tiered Licensure Task Force<br>Ex-officio Legislative Members |
|---|
| Representative Sondra Erickson                                |
| Representative Kory Kath                                      |
| Senator Chuck Wiger   |
| Senator Pam Wolf  |

The task force was co-chaired by Board of Teaching Executive Director Karen Balmer and Minnesota Department of Education Assistant Commissioner Rose Chu. Internal support was provided by colleagues at both the Board of Teaching and the Department of Education. The task force met seven times between October and February; all meetings were held at MDE. Attendance and participation in the meetings was strong, with 14 or more members present at each of the meetings.

### ***Task Force Process***

In order to ensure that all task force members had substantial opportunity both to contribute and to learn from other members, the task force process relied heavily on cross-representational table groups discussing materials and targeted questions followed by sharing back to the full task force. All meeting materials, including table group feedback, are available on the website below:

<http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Welcome/AdvBCT/TierLicAdvTaskForce/index.html>

See Appendix B for a schedule of meeting discussions.

### ***External Support***

The task force work was supported by two nationally funded research organizations: Regional Educational Laboratory-Midwest and the North Central Comprehensive Center. Both of these organizations were well-equipped to support this work.

- The **Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Midwest** provided external research support to the Minnesota Tiered Licensure Advisory Task Force. A representative from REL Midwest attended the task force meetings. This representative observed the task force conversations and provided insight into the available research when necessary and relevant. REL Midwest provided a research brief and policy scan on teacher certification systems in 17 states and the District of Columbia. This brief was used at the November 8 and November 29 meetings of the task force to guide conversations and provide information about comparable systems in other states. REL Midwest also provided a supplementary document to this brief which included answers to additional questions raised during the review of the report.

- The **North Central Comprehensive Center (NCCC)** at Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) provided research support and technical assistance as the task force worked to develop recommendations for a statewide tiered teacher licensure system. Representatives from NCCC attended the task force meetings to observe task force conversations, facilitate meeting discussions, and present relevant information. NCCC compiled and shared two reports on issues of concern to the task force: *Requirements for Level 2 and Level 3 Teaching Certificates in 50 States and the District of Columbia and Teacher Induction: An Examination of Six States' Approaches to Supporting High Quality Teaching Among New Teachers*. NCCC facilitated the discussion of key findings in these reports at the November 8, 2011, and January 17, 2012, meetings, respectively.

Both REL-Midwest and NCCC are committed to continuing this work with the Board of Teaching and Department of Education and will provide ongoing support as needed through the next phases of work.

### ***Research Base and Resources***

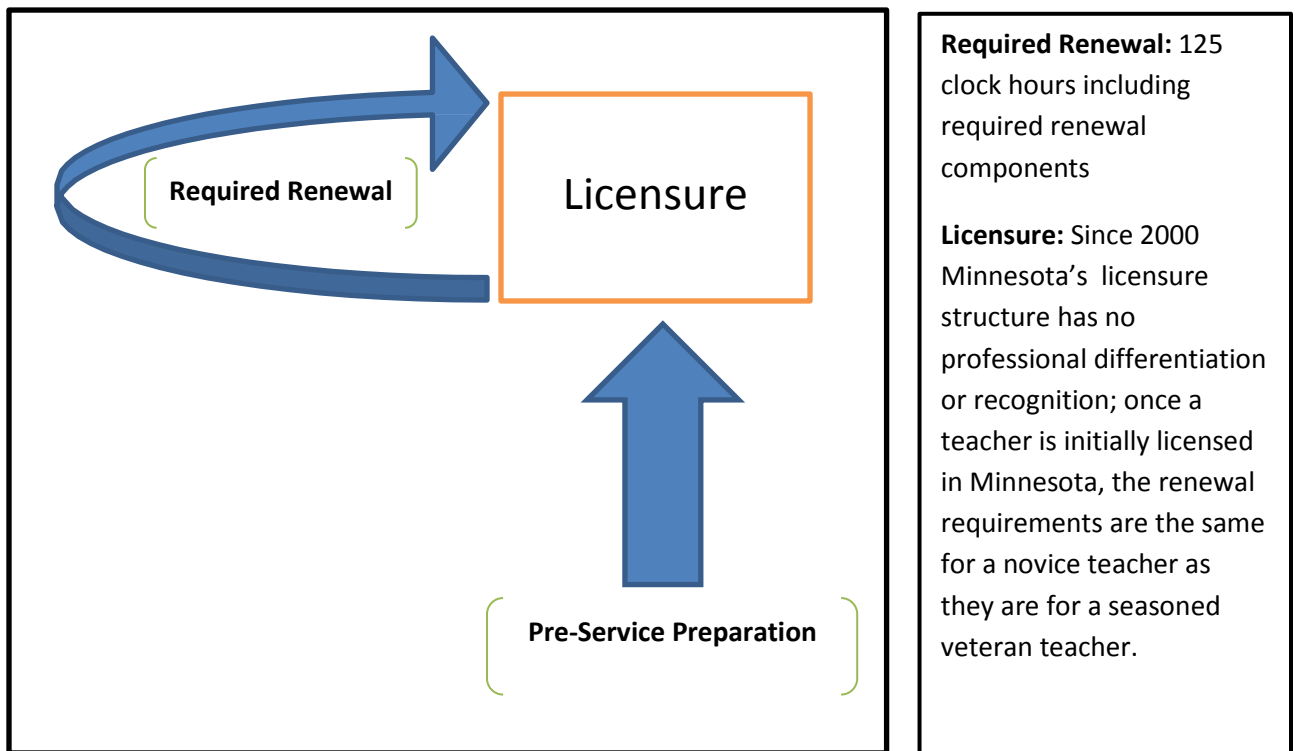
The task force relied heavily on research and materials specific to our legislative charge and reviewed numerous research resources. The information provided in these resources included explanations of the current status of teacher licensure in Minnesota to ensure that the task force was appropriately informed. The resources also included summaries of the available research on teacher certification and licensure, tiered teacher licensing systems, performance-based assessment of teachers, and teacher induction programs. Furthermore, the resources included policy scans and explanations of the current licensure and induction systems in other states across the nation. Finally, the resources also included guidelines and recommendations for practice standards and induction programs designed to improve educator quality.

See Appendix C for details of these resources.

## Context for Tiered Licensure Work

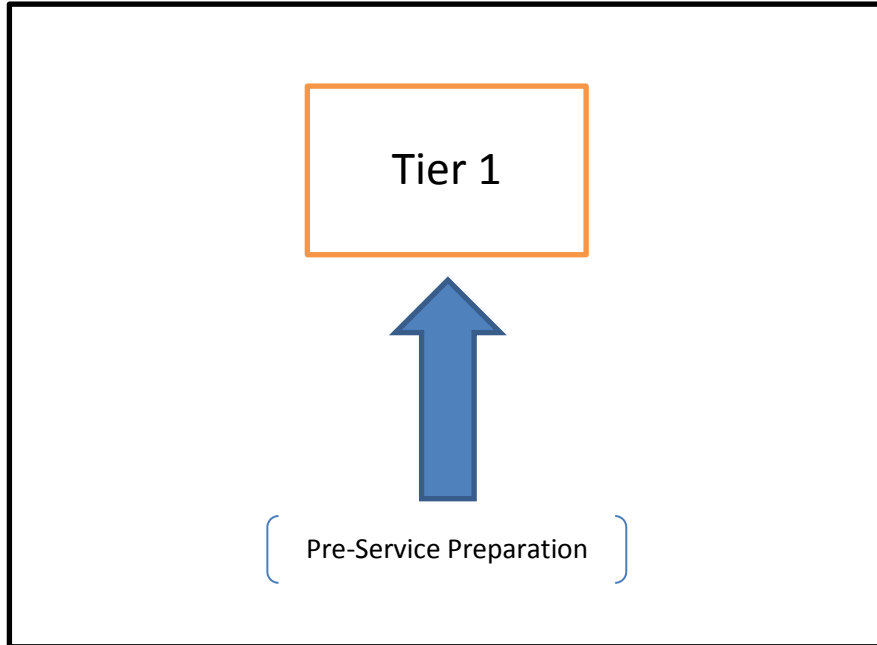
- 66,490 licensed Minnesota teachers, administrators, and related service providers serving in Minnesota schools.  
*Source: 2010-2011 Discrepancy Report*
- 275,413 valid Minnesota licenses in 2010-2011.  
*Note: Individual teachers may hold multiple licenses and/or may not be actively using a license.*  
*Source: 2011 Rule Exceptions Report*
- 443 local continuing education committees across the state doing the work of reviewing clock hours and authorizing license renewal.
- There are more than 40 specific current licensure fields offered in Minnesota.
- 32 colleges and universities are approved to prepare pre-service teachers for initial licensure and in-service teachers adding fields of licensure.
- Licensure is a state-sanctioned recognition that allows a teacher to practice in a specific content area across a specific scope (grade levels); local employers determine where teachers are placed and what specific assignments they are given within their licensure field

## Current Licensure Structure

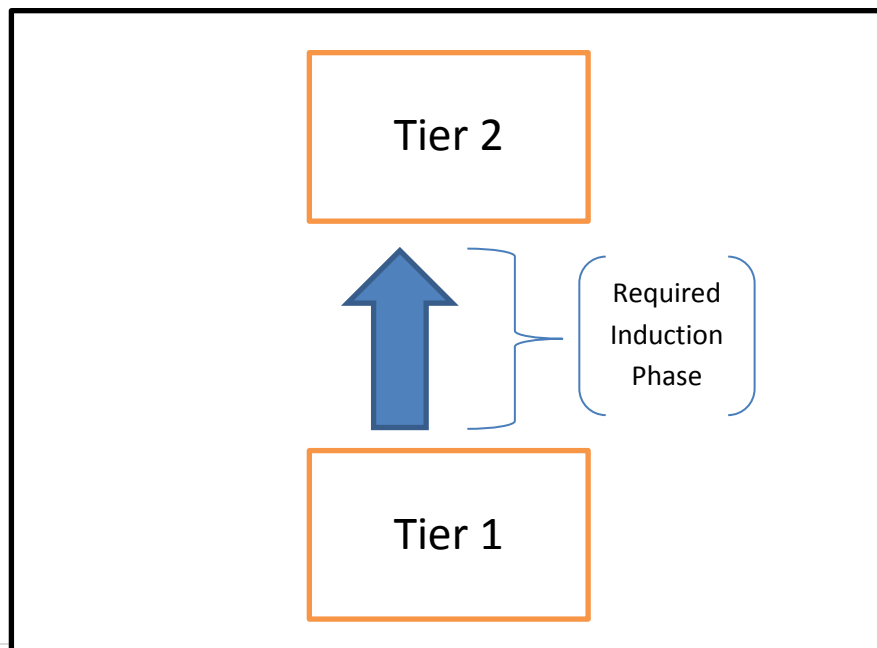


***The majority of task force members agree to the following recommendations:\****

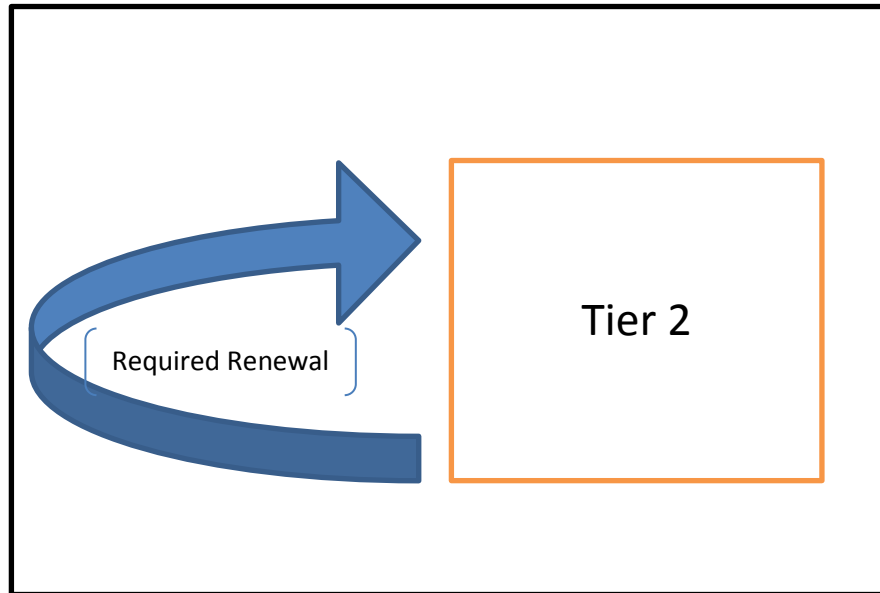
1. Teacher candidates who meet Minnesota Board of Teaching standards shall be eligible for an **Initial License**.



2. Teachers holding initial licensure shall participate in a Board of Teaching-approved program of **induction to the profession**.
3. Teachers completing the induction program shall be eligible for a **Professional License**.



4. Renewal of a full professional license shall be based on a teacher's **continued development of professional skills and knowledge** based on Board of Teaching standards.



5. **Continued work** is necessary to ensure that the licensure and renewal requirements are premised on research-based practices leading to effective teaching and learning.

**\* Notes:**

1. 16 of 18 task force members agreed to all five recommendations.
2. The Minnesota Business Partnership does not support the recommendations due to a lack of a resolution around the number of tiers in the system and key policy issues surrounding a state mandated induction program.
3. The Minnesota Chamber of Commerce does not support Recommendations #4 and #5 due to a need for further study of research that links teacher licensure to effective teaching and measurable improvements in student achievement.

## ***APPENDIX A: Minnesota 2011 First Special Session Chapter 11, Article 2***

Sec. 10. Minnesota Statutes 2010, section 122A.09, subdivision 4, as amended by Laws 2011, chapter 5, section 1, is amended to read:

Subd. 4. **License and rules.** (a) The board must adopt rules to license public school teachers and interns subject to chapter 14.

...

(g) The board must grant licenses to interns and to candidates for initial licenses based on appropriate professional competencies that are aligned with the board's licensing system and students' diverse learning needs. The board must include these licenses in a statewide differentiated licensing system that creates new leadership roles for successful experienced teachers premised on a collaborative professional culture dedicated to meeting students' diverse learning needs in the 21st century and formalizes mentoring and induction for newly licensed teachers that is provided through a teacher support framework.

### **Sec. 48. TIERED LICENSURE ADVISORY TASK FORCE.**

(a) The Board of Teaching and the commissioner of education must jointly convene and facilitate an advisory task force to develop recommendations for a statewide tiered teacher licensure system, consistent with Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.09, subdivision 4, paragraph (g), that is premised on:

(1) appropriate research-based professional competencies that include content skills, adaptive expertise, college-readiness preparation, multicultural skills, use of student performance data, and skills for fostering citizenship, among other competencies that improve all students' learning outcomes;

(2) ongoing teacher professional growth to enable teachers to develop multiple professional competencies;

(3) an assessment system for evaluating teachers' performance that is aligned with student expectations and value-added measures of student outcomes and includes an emphasis on developing students' reading and literacy skills, among other measures and outcomes, and recognizes and rewards successful teachers;

(4) an expectation that teachers progress through various stages of teaching practice throughout their teaching careers and receive opportunities for leadership roles commensurate with their practice and competency; and

(5) a periodic evaluation of the licensing structure to determine its effectiveness in meeting students' learning needs.

When developing its recommendations, the task force is encouraged to consider, among other resources, the draft "Model Core Teaching Standards" developed by the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium.

(b) Each of the following entities shall appoint a member to the advisory task force: Education Minnesota, the Minnesota Association of School Administrators, the Minnesota Association for Colleges of Teacher Education, the Minnesota Association of School Personnel Administrators, the Minnesota Elementary School Principals Association, the Minnesota Secondary School Principals Association, the Parents United Network, the Minnesota Business Partnership, the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, the Minnesota School Boards Association, and the Minnesota Association of Career and Technical Educators. The executive director of the Board of Teaching or the commissioner may appoint additional advisory task force members. Task force members may seek advice from the Educator Development and Resource Center at the University of Minnesota on



developing a research-based framework for a differentiated licensure system in Minnesota.

(c) Upon request, the commissioner must provide the task force with technical, fiscal, and other support services.

(d) Task force members' terms and other task force matters are subject to Minnesota Statutes, section 15.059. The commissioner may reimburse task force members from the Department of Education's current operating budget but may not compensate task force members for task force activities.

(e) The executive director of the Board of Teaching and the commissioner must submit by February 15, 2012, a joint report to the education policy and finance committees of the legislature recommending a differentiated statewide teacher licensing structure.

(f) The advisory task force expires on February 16, 2012.

**EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment.

## **APPENDIX B: Task Force Schedule**

### **Tiered Licensure Task Force Schedule**

Note: All meetings will be held at the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) Conference Center (CC) A, Room 14.

| <b>Date</b>             | <b>Time</b> | <b>Location</b> | <b>Agenda</b>  |
|-------------------------|-------------|-----------------|--|
| Tuesday,<br>October 18  | 3:30 – 6:00 | CCA<br>Room 14  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome and Introductions</li> <li>• Task Force Charges and Expectations</li> <li>• Review MN past and current licensing structures and regulatory context</li> <li>• Process framework presentation/discussion</li> <li>• Next Steps               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Data and research needs</li> <li>○ Critical questions</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| Tuesday,<br>November 8  | 3:30 – 6:00 | CCA<br>Room 14  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Renewal Requirements for other Professions</li> <li>• Debrief NCCC Report</li> <li>• Establish Baseline Assumptions and Core Principles</li> <li>• Small Group Discussion</li> <li>• REL Midwest Presentation</li> <li>• Next Steps</li> </ul>  |
| Tuesday,<br>November 29 | 3:30 – 6:00 | CCA<br>Room 14  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Current MN System and InTASC Standards</li> <li>• Begin to Identify Guiding Principles</li> <li>• Review other States' Models</li> <li>• Finalize Task Force Principles</li> </ul>   |
| Tuesday,<br>December 6  | 3:30 – 6:00 | CCA<br>Room 14  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TSP Presentation</li> <li>• Practices that impact Learning Outcomes</li> <li>• Underlying Purpose and Principles of a Tiered Licensure System</li> <li>• Next Steps to Build the Model</li> </ul>   |
| Tuesday,<br>January 17  | 3:30 – 6:00 | CCA<br>Room 14  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Induction Program Research</li> <li>• Debrief NCCC Report</li> <li>• Table Group Sharing</li> <li>• Feedback from Elements Survey</li> <li>• Next Steps</li> </ul>  |
| Tuesday,<br>January 31  | 3:30 – 6:00 | CCA<br>Room 14  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review outline of draft report; discussion and revisions</li> </ul>   |
| Tuesday,<br>February 7  | 3:30 – 6:00 | CCA<br>Room 14  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and Adopt Final Report</li> </ul>  |

Revised – January 12, 2012

## **APPENDIX C: Research Base and Resources**

The task force relied heavily on research and materials specific to our legislative charge and reviewed numerous research resources.

A list of the specific resources, with a brief summary of each, can be found below. These documents may also be viewed in their entirety on the Tiered Licensure Advisory Task Force website hosted by the Minnesota Department of Education:

<http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Welcome/AdvBCT/TierLicAdvTaskForce/index.html>

**1) 2011 Legislation: Chapter 11, Article 2, Section 48 (2011 Minn. Laws 67).**

This legislation designated the convening of an advisory task force to develop recommendations regarding a statewide tiered licensure system. The legislation further clarifies the premises on which the task force should base the licensure system, the membership of the task force, and the deadline for submitting the recommendations to the Legislature.

**2) Revisor of Statutes, State of Minnesota. (2009). *Current Minnesota rules and statutes related to professional development.***

This document includes the current rules and statutes in the state of Minnesota regarding the professional development of teachers.

**3) Minnesota Board of Teaching. (2000). *Statement of need and reasonableness in the matter of the proposed permanent rules related to continuing professional teacher license issuance and renewal: Minnesota rules, parts 8700.0900 to 8700.2300 and 8710.700 to 8710.2300 with the repeal of parts 8700.0900, 8700.1000, 8700.1200, 8700.2000, 8750.7000, 8750.7100, 8750.7200, 8750.7300, 8750.8000, 8750.8100, 8750.8200, 8750.8300, and 8750.8400.* Roseville, MN: Author.**

This report by the Minnesota Board of Teaching describes the need and reasonableness of the proposed rules related to continuing teacher license issuance and renewal. This document provides a detailed explanation regarding the rules and their basis in the experience of teachers within the state of Minnesota. It encompasses the current state of the rules for continuing professional teacher licensure in the state.

**4) Board of Teaching Rule Pre-2000 (Minn. R. 8700.0500 (1997)).**

The previous rule for the issuance and renewal of a continuing professional teacher license.

**5) Larson, L. (2010). *House research: State laws on teacher quality and effectiveness.* St. Paul, MN: Minnesota House Research Department.**

This brief covers the six areas of teacher quality and effectiveness currently governed by state law in Minnesota. The first of these areas is the approval of teacher preparation programs and institutions by the Minnesota Board of Teaching. The second is that teachers must satisfy preparation requirements (complete a board-certified teacher preparation program and pass a basic skills test) and continuing education requirements in order to receive or maintain a teacher license. Third, the brief describes a statutory requirement that new teachers must complete a three-year probationary period before becoming eligible for tenure. Fourth, continuing contract (tenured) teachers are granted employment-related protections as a result of their status. Fifth, districts may elect to participate in Q-Comp, which is a voluntary teacher advancement and compensation program. Finally, teachers may voluntarily pursue National Board certification.

- 6) **Minnesota Department of Education. (2011). *Implementation considerations: From design to impact*. Roseville, MN: Author.**

This brief describes some of the research available around the implementation of new education programs. This research states that the implementation process must be managed appropriately in order to achieve the desired effect of the new program. The research focuses on five stages of implementation: exploration, installation, initial implementation, full implementation, innovation/refinement, and sustainability. The research also addresses core implementation components to be considered when developing new programs: staffing, leadership, and coherent alignment of policies and practices.

- 7) **Hill, D., Jeffrey, J., McWalters, P., Paliokas, K., Seagren, A., & Stumbo, C. (2010). *Transforming teaching and leading: A vision for a high-quality educator development system* [Education Workforce White Paper]. Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers.**

In this white paper, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) outlines its vision for an educator development system. CCSSO would like such a system to include: practice standards, growth opportunities and supports, and performance review systems. The paper suggests that the InTASC standards may serve as an appropriate model for the state practice standards. Professional learning communities and job-embedded professional development are posed as potential growth opportunities for educators. The paper also outlines key components of a performance review system designed to improve educator effectiveness.

- 8) **Council of Chief State School Officers. (2011, April). *Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Model Core Teaching Standards: A resource for state dialogue*. Washington, DC: Author.**

Also developed by the CCSSO, this document is an update to the 1992 InTASC standards. The standards are no longer focused on beginning teachers, but are intended to serve as professional practice standards. The paper is intended to build on the *Education Workforce* white paper referenced above. The updated standards are designed to align with other national and state standards documents, including the Common Core State Standards. The standards outline what teachers should know and be able to do to prepare students for college. The standards describe effective teaching and learning in the current public education system.

- 9) **Council of Chief State School Officers. (2011, April). *The InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards (April 2011): At a glance*. Washington, DC: Author.**

This document provides a list of the standards proposed in the InTASC document. Each standard is followed by a brief explanatory paragraph.

- 10) **Alexander, G. (2011). *Review of renewal requirements for other professions* [PowerPoint presentation]. Roseville, MN: Minnesota Tiered Licensure Advisory Task Force.**

A PowerPoint presentation prepared by the Minnesota Board of Teaching at the request of the task force examining the renewal requirements for licenses in other professions. The presentation addresses optometry and medicine at a broad level and also examines other professional licenses in Minnesota. The requirements are listed for the renewal of state licenses in behavioral therapy, social work, and nursing.

- 11) **North Central Comprehensive Center. (2011). *Requirements for level 2 and 3 teaching certificates in 50 states and the District of Columbia*. Denver: Author. (2 documents)**

These documents, which were prepared by the North Central Comprehensive Center, present information on the teacher credentialing requirements for 50 states and the District of Columbia.

The first document synthesizes the requirements across the states and highlights several states that are implementing distinctive requirements for advanced teacher certification. This document also includes a matrix with a brief summary of initial and advanced license requirements for all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The second document pulls out key language from the first document to serve as discussion points for the task force meeting, specifically highlighting the states with distinctive requirements for advanced teacher certification.

**12) Teacher Support Partnership. (2009). *Minnesota educator induction guidelines*. Retrieved from <http://teachersupportpartnershipmn.org/pdf/TSP%20guidelines%20final%203%2031%2009.pdf>**

The guidelines presented in this brief provide a framework for the development of induction systems for all educators in Minnesota. The system should include learning opportunities, networks of peer support, seminars and workshops, and mentoring focused on professional practice standards and continual professional growth. Induction should be a multi-year process targeted at a career transition. An induction system should improve the quality of Minnesota's educators. Before outlining the guidelines, this document also highlights the relevant research supporting the development of an induction program. This research shows that induction programs improve instructional practices, enhance student achievement, promote supportive professional cultures in schools, align school and district improvement priorities, and increase teacher retention in the district and in the profession. The guidelines are intended to apply to all educators, not just teachers, and may also be applicable to individuals new to a district who may not be new to the profession.

**13) *Teacher Support Partnership [Overview]*. (2011). Retrieved from <http://teachersupportpartnershipmn.org/about/>**

This document provides a brief explanation of the membership of the Teacher Support Partnership (TSP) and the basis for its development of the guidelines for developing an induction program.

**14) Teacher Support Partnership. (2011). *Induction matters: Enhancing student learning through educator induction*.**

This document provides a distilled version of the TSP induction guidelines to serve as a quick reference tool.

**15) Hoogstra, L. (2011). *Tiered teacher certification and performance-based assessment*. Naperville, IL: REL Midwest.**

This brief, which was prepared by the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Midwest, identifies and summarizes the available research on tiered teacher certification systems, state policies on teacher certification, and the criteria used to determine movement from one tier to the next. The brief also summarizes recent research on teacher performance-based assessment as it relates to teacher certification. An overview of teacher certification requirements in states in the Midwest region and states that have been awarded grants through the Race to the Top Fund is presented in an appendix.

**16) The Colorado Department of Education. *Educator licensing—Renewal applicant*. Retrieved November 29, 2011, from [http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprof/Licensure\\_RenewalApp.asp](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprof/Licensure_RenewalApp.asp)**

This document printed from the Colorado Department of Education website provides a brief explanation of the various teacher licenses available in Colorado including the requirements for renewal.

**17) North Central Comprehensive Center. (2012). *Teacher induction: An examination of six states' approaches to supporting high quality teaching among new teachers*. Denver: Author.**

This brief was also prepared by the North Central Comprehensive Center. First, the document provides a summary of the research and policy considerations that have led states to focus on induction systems as part of improving educator quality. The document then provides detailed information and points of comparison for the induction programs in six states: California, Colorado, Massachusetts, Missouri, Utah, and Washington.