

3. System of Certification and Licensing (ESEA section 2101(d)(2)(B): Describe the State's system of certification and licensing of teachers, principals, or other school leaders.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction has a standards and performance-based system for educator preparation for the majority of prepared educators.¹

A candidate demonstrates performance-based proficiency in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions in Wisconsin Teacher, Administrator, and Pupil Services Standards during his or her preparation program. Once an educator has received endorsement by an educator preparation program (whether in a traditional institute of higher education or an approved alternate route program) they are issued a license upon completion of a background check.

Wisconsin's system of licensure is a tiered one that begins with a license with stipulations (for those who still need to complete certain requirements) or a provisional license (for those who have completed all state requirements and are considered to have met full certification requirements). Both provisional licenses and licenses with stipulations are renewable.²

If an educator has a license with stipulations, they can apply for a provisional license once all stipulations have been met. Those educators with a provisional license, once they have attained six semesters of successful teaching experience as certified by the school board(s) they worked for, can apply for a life license.

In order to maintain a life license an educator must not have a break in service of five or more years. When educators hold a valid life license and are employed by a school district, they are expected to stay current in their profession and advance their practice through the state's educator effectiveness system (see question number one under D. Title II, Part A: Supporting Effective Instruction for a description of this system).

Educators who successfully complete the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification (NBTS) or the Wisconsin Master Educator Assessment Process can obtain a master educator life license.

¹ Exceptions to this are delineated in state statute. Under Wis. Stats. 118.191(5) and (5m) there is a points-based system to achieve licensure for vocational and technical education. Additionally, under Wis. Stats. 118.193 the state awards teaching licenses based on reciprocity (e.g. they hold a license to teach in another state and worked for a year), and under Wis. Stats. 118.197 licenses must be issued to those who have a bachelor's degree and completed an alternative teacher certification program operated by a nonstock, nonprofit organization described under section [501](#) (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code that satisfies all of the following criteria:

1. The organization operates in at least 5 states.
2. The organization has been operating an alternative teacher certification program for at least 10 years.
3. The organization requires candidates to pass a subject area exam and the pedagogy exam known as the Professional Teaching Knowledge exam to receive a certificate under the alternative teacher certification.

² Special education licenses with stipulations can only be renewed as allowable under federal IDEA highly qualified requirements.