



Illinois State Board of Education

Contact: IBHE [Melissa Hahn](#) 217-557-7354
ISBE [Jackie Matthews](#) 312-590-4327

May 7, 2020

GOVERNOR'S EO WILL HELP EDUCATOR CANDIDATES AND SCHOOLS

SPRINGFIELD – To address the educator shortage that Illinois faces, and a pandemic that has changed the educational experience for all students, Gov. JB Pritzker recently signed Executive Order 2020-31 to help teacher, paraprofessional, and other educator candidates gain licensure and join the workforce.

"This is a big move forward for students and for classrooms around the state that targets two sides of the problem," said Illinois Board of Higher Education Executive Director Ginger Ostro. "Illinois has more than 15,000 candidates in teacher, school support personnel, or administrator preparation programs. They, along with their colleges, requested flexibility now that the classroom experience is unavailable to them. IBHE was happy to work with the Illinois State Board of Education and Gov. Pritzker to resolve this."

This past October, Illinois schools faced more than 4,800 unfilled positions, including for teachers, social workers, administrators, and paraprofessionals.

"Governor Pritzker's executive order helps to ensure that all of Illinois' current and prospective educators will be able to support our students in the fall as planned," said State Superintendent of Education Dr. Carmen I. Ayala. "Our primary goal has been to minimize the educational impact to students during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. These changes make it possible for students to have the qualified teachers they need in the fall to continue learning and growing," said Ayala.

Executive Order 2020-31 involves two agencies. As recommended by IBHE and ISBE, it waives requirements for those educator candidates who cannot complete normal student teaching, internships, and other pre-licensure exams, including the edTPA, this spring because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Both agencies reached out to school districts and colleges for input and suggestions.

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Teacher candidates who are eligible for these exemptions have already undergone extensive coursework, pre-clinical fieldwork experiences, and a licensure content test to prepare them for the professional educator license. EO 2020-31 also waives certain requirements, such as the Constitution exam and physical fitness test, for eighth graders and high school seniors so they can graduate.

The educator licensure order only affects students who are completing program requirements during the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamations period and whose institution verifies that the student could not complete the requirement due to COVID-19. Institutions still have the authority to evaluate the students' progress in meeting program requirements. ISBE and IBHE will monitor the pandemic situation and make any recommendations for the fall semester as warranted.

Refunds are available through Pearson for educators who registered for but have not yet completed the edTPA.

View the [executive order](#), [emergency rules](#), and an [FAQ](#).

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