

# Vermont-NEA

## Modifying the Relicensing of Teachers Process in Vermont (prepared for the House Education Committee, January 28, 2014)

Joel D. Cook, Executive Director

**Objective:** Elimination of the State's mandate that licensed educators develop "individual professional learning plans" and "professional portfolios" simply to retain their license to teach. 90% of teachers responding to a January, 2014 survey support the elimination of these obligations.

- Whether an individual has the basic qualifications to become and remain a licensee is the sole province of the state (licensing)
- How well a licensed educator performs in a particular job is a matter solely between her and her employer (evaluation)
- **These obligations confuse qualifications to teach with specific job performance and do not contribute either to professional growth or to student growth.**

### **Legislation needed:**

As of July 1, 2014, the Vermont standards board for professional educators shall not require applicants for renewal of their license to engage in teaching or school administration to develop or submit either "individual professional learning plans" or "professional portfolios" as described in section 5432 of the standards board's current "Rules Governing the Licensing of Educators and the Preparation of Education Professionals." The standards board may require documentation of professional learning, so long as approval is no longer related to individual professional learning plan "goals."

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## **Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators: Background**

**Late 1980s.** Vermont-NEA sought the creation of an "*autonomous*" (that is, with decision-making authority) board to enable educators to govern their profession

**1991.** State Board of Education established the Standards Board for Professional Educators (PSB) to *advise* State Board of Education on matters relating to teacher quality.

Composition: 23 appointees of the Commissioner of Education, a majority of whom were teachers. Others included representatives of administrators and higher education

**2005.** Vermont-NEA proposed establishing the Standards Board as an *autonomous*, decision-making board, since teachers are part of a profession, and professions are self-regulating.

- Original proposal would move this function to the Office of Professional Regulation (Secretary of State), which administers almost all professions and occupations
- Vermont-NEA worked collaboratively with DOE and others, presenting the bill in 2006 (H.677) that set the current PSB in motion

**FY 2008.** PSB becomes *autonomous*, (Act 214 in 2006, 16 V.S.A. Chapter 51)

- Composition: 13 appointees of the Governor, a majority of whom are teachers. Others include representatives of administrators, higher education, school boards, and the general public (§1693(a))
- Remained attached, for administrative purposes, to the DOE licensing office (§1693(e))
- Adopted all of the former Standards Board's rules, including relicensing
- Purpose: to oversee the training, licensing, and professional standards of teachers and administrators

(This law also established hearing panels to determine compliance with professional standards – i.e., professional discipline (§1702))

## Vermont's current educator *relicensing* process

**The former – advisory – PSB created "local" and "regional" standards boards** (there are some 70 such boards now)

- Appointed variably (Rule 5620)
- Purpose: to "oversee the approval of individual professional development plans (IPDP)<sup>1</sup> and portfolios," parts of the process of relicensing teachers and administrators
- It developed a handbook, "The Vermont Re-Licensing Process: A Reflection of Ongoing Professional Growth," provided educators seeking renewal of their license.

Intention: **"that each educator view the re-licensure process as an opportunity for professional growth and the portfolio [and IPDP] as a celebration of his/her work as an educator."**

The handbook was 79 pages long (and reflected a great deal of thought).

**The process to obtain a renewed license requires** (Attachment A), at a minimum:

A recommendation from a local standards board (regional for administrators)

A "professional portfolio" including:

1. The current Individual Professional Learning Plan (IPLP)
2. Documentation of professional growth pursuant to IPLP goals including:
  - *Reflection* upon new learning
  - *Reflection* upon how practice has affected "learner performance"
  - *Linkages* between individual professional learning goals and activities and local "action plans" or improvement initiatives
  - *Demonstration* of growth in "Core Teaching and Leadership Standards"
  - A minimum of *135 hours of professional learning* per endorsement, in "activities" for which the local board "grants approval" based upon a presentation of a rationale by the teacher
  - *Evidence* of required additional credentials for particular endorsements
  - An *approved IPLP* that is "developed through analysis of professional practice and classroom data, and that articulates the educator's professional learning goals for the ensuing (7-year) licensing period.

**That is, to renew her license, the professional educator in Vermont is required to "*reflect*" on the past 7 years and to *anticipate* the next 7 years with a plan, approved, not by the state (licensing agency), but by local peers. This is in contrast to what every other profession requires of its practitioners.**

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<sup>1</sup> This term was recently changed to "Individual Professional Learning Plan" or "IPLP."

## What Does Relicensing Look Like for Other Professions? For Teachers in Other States?

### Other Vermont Professions:

General requirements are limited to:

- Completion of a form
- Submission of a fee
- Attesting to obtaining sufficient continuing education

(See website of Office of Professional Regulation, within Secretary of State's Office, and examine any profession's or occupation's rules)

### Employed Teachers in States "Nearby":

State	Period	Requirements	
		Continuing education	Other
Vermont	7 years	135 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection on prior 7 years +</li> <li>• Portfolio documenting about prior 7 years +</li> <li>• IPLP (via analysis of "professional practice and classroom data" and articulating "professional learning goals" for next 7 years)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>All subject to LSB approval</i></p>
New Hampshire	3 years	75 hours	None
Maine	5 years	90 hours	Signature of licensing chair
Massachusetts	5 years	150 hours	Plan approved by supervisor (has some relationship to local goals) Supervisor's signature
Connecticut	5 years	18 hours/ year (provided by Dt.)	Statement of professional service
Rhode Island	5 or 7	0 - some	If ≥ "effective," simple application If < "effective," some "professional development" required
New York	5 years	175 hours	School approves/reports to state
New Jersey	Once		Standard certificate
Delaware	5 years	90 hours	None
Virginia	5 years	90 hours	None
North Carolina	5 years	75 hours	None

## **Vermont-NEA efforts to get relicensing process changed**

**FY 2005-06.** Changing the relicensing process was part of the effort to establish the autonomous board. Vermont-NEA agreed with Commissioner to establish the standards board as part of DOE (rather than Secretary of State) and then proceed to revising and simplifying the process.

**FY 2006.** Autonomous board created, but delayed until July, 2007, to allow for transition.

**FY 2007.** Commissioner Richard Cate charged the standards board to restructure the relicensing process.

His reasons (Attachment B):

1. "[T]he process had become more complicated than intended and some local (standards) boards are asking for more information/documentation from teachers than what may be necessary."
2. "[T]here is a lack of consistency within the local standards board structure."
3. "[T]here must be a better way to structure the relicensure process to use 'human capital' in a more efficient way."

The standards board worked for a year to develop a restructured process.

**July, 2007.** Standards board becomes autonomous.

**June 30, 2008.** Richard Cate resigned as Commissioner

**July, 2008.** The standards board distributed its proposal to restructure the relicensing process (also Attachment B). Its primary feature was:

**"to eliminate the Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)"**

and to replace it with a "reflective narrative" responding to a series of questions based on the prior 7 years of teaching and looking toward future professional growth needs during the next 7 years.

**July, 2008.** Vermont-NEA submitted comments on the proposal (Attachment C). Regarding IPDP and "reflection," we said:

IPDP. We predict the vast majority of educators will appreciate being relieved of the obligation to produce [IPDPs]. The vast majority of feedback we have received over the years is that this process is cumbersome, time-consuming, and insufficiently related to actual professional development to justify the effort involved in putting one together. In addition, it has become obvious that local standards boards, however well intended, by their very nature and number simply cannot be applying standards consistently across the state. There may be reasons related to local employment situations for different local standards boards to vary in their approach to gauging the quality of locally submitted

IPDPs. Local employment situations, however, have nothing to do with a person's qualifications to hold a state-issued professional license. On that basis, we believe eliminating IPDPs will actually enhance the standing of an educator license.

Personal reflection. If, as is apparent, you intend to retain the "recommending" function of the local standards board, we will have more to say as rulemaking proceeds. In short, our concern is about the substitution of a personal reflection for an IPDP and the remaining role of the local board. We are concerned about how to write a rule that would authorize a local group of educators to recommend against relicensing a peer based on the peer's "personal" reflection. In particular, we don't readily see how to establish a useful objective standard against which to measure a personal account.

Vermont-NEA also asked its members to submit comments of their own (Attachment D)

**NOTE:**

- **The standards board abandoned the proposal to eliminate the IPDP.**
- **Relicensing now also included personal reflection (Rule 5432.3.B.1-2)**

**FY 2009-10.** Vermont-NEA engaged in informal attempts to address relicensing concerns.

**FY 2011**

Vermont-NEA members, at their annual meeting, adopted an action item (Attachment E) calling on the Association to develop and advocate for a simplified teacher relicensing process

Vermont-NEA asked its members to comment on the relicensing process. Overwhelmingly, the responses were consistent with what Commissioner Cate had said about it.

Vermont-NEA requested the standards board take up the issue. The standards board declined.

**FY 2012**

Vermont-NEA distributes "Useful ways to make teaching, and staying in teaching, attractive" (excerpts in Attachment F). It included an explanation for why the relicensing process should be changed, including it being overly burdensome, without relation to professional growth, and confusing "an individual's qualifications to hold a professional license with how well she is performing her employment."

Vermont-NEA raised "simplifying professional relicensing" as an election issue for the Fall, 2012 election. Its candidate's questionnaire (excerpt in Attachment G) included a statement about "simplifying professional relicensing," and asked candidates if they agreed with it.

## FY 2013

7900 Vermont teachers participated in the TELL Vermont Survey. The most obvious need they expressed was for more time to engage in useful professional activity. This contributed to Vermont-NEA's sense that the time had come, finally, to address the relicensing process issue.

Discussion also began anew regarding whether the standards board should become attached to the Secretary of State's Office.

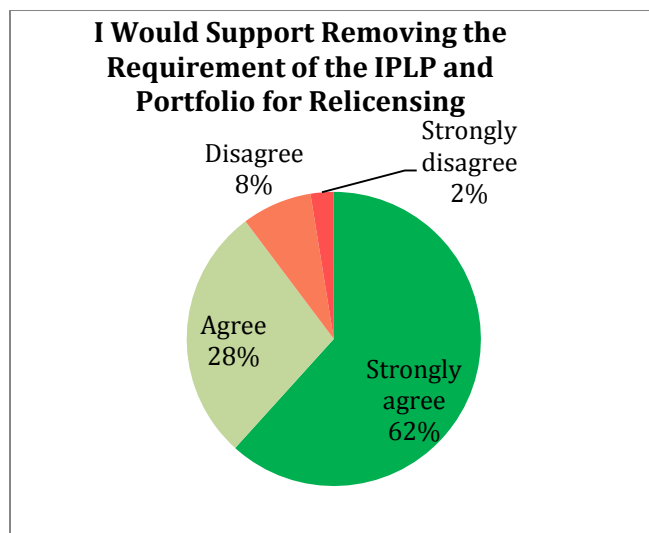
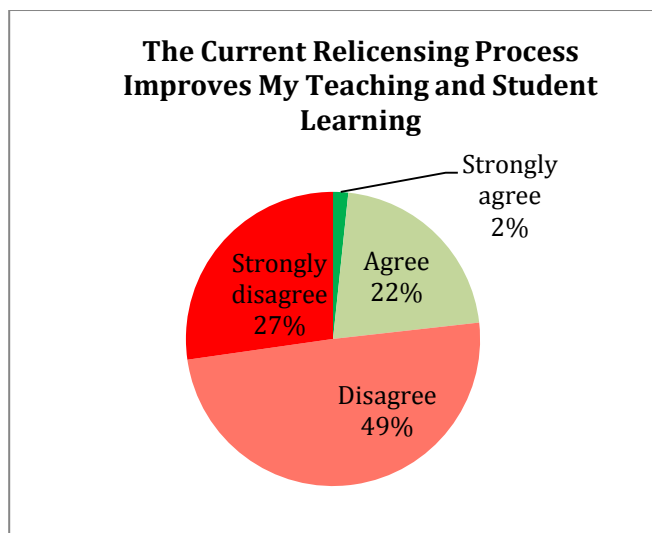
## FY 2014

In December, 2013, Vermont-NEA announced "What Educators Have to Say About Student Success." That document addresses relicensing as follows:

"We will ensure student success if we:...Simplify the overly complex and time-consuming process through which teachers are relicensed, so that it reduces unnecessary time away from teaching and focuses solely on an individual's qualifications to hold a professional license."

## January, 2014

Earlier this month, Vermont-NEA sent a simple request to members (Attachment H). More than 1000 respond. The vast majority, again, tell us (Attachment I) that the IPLP obligation does not serve them or students well and takes time away from activities that would.



**Vermont-NEA has asked for agenda time with the standards board. That is scheduled to occur in February.**

**Attachment A: Current Vermont Educator Relicensing Regulations**  
(Excerpts)

5432 Level II License Renewal

5432.1 Level II license holders shall seek a recommendation for renewal of their Level II license and endorsement(s) from their local or regional standards board or from the Office if the educator is employed by an entity not served by a local or regional board.

5432.2 A Level II license holder employed by a Vermont independent school shall seek a recommendation for renewal from a local standards board designated by the Standards Board to serve independent schools, or may seek a recommendation for renewal from the local standards board for the school district in which the independent school is located if that board agrees to serve that independent school or educator.

5432.3 The local or regional standards board or the Office shall recommend renewal of a Level II endorsement if the applicant presents a professional portfolio that includes:

A. The current Individual Professional Learning Plan (IPLP);

B. Documentation of professional growth pursuant to the IPLP goals including:

1. reflection upon new learning and its impact upon professional practice;
2. reflection upon how changes in professional practice have impacted learner performance;
3. linkages between individual professional learning goals and activities, and school or district action plans or improvement initiatives, as appropriate;
4. demonstration of growth in the Core Teaching and Leadership Standards for Vermont Educators as described in 5421 C which are in effect at the time the IPLP is approved or amended; and
5. documentation of a minimum of nine (9) credits or 135 hours of professional learning per endorsement recommended for renewal. Professional learning should be related to the educator's IPLP goals. Certain professional learning activities may apply to more than one endorsement. However, at least three (3) credits or 45 hours must address the specific knowledge and performance standards of each endorsement recommended for renewal. In accordance with Standards Board policy, the local or regional standards board or the Office will determine the applicability of professional learning activities and grant approval based upon a presentation by the license holder of the rationale for applying certain credits and activities to particular endorsement areas and IPLP goals.

C. Evidence of any required additional licenses or credentials specific to a particular endorsement.

D. An approved IPLP that is developed through analysis of professional practice and classroom data, and that articulates the educator's professional learning goals for the ensuing licensure period. The IPLP goals shall address the knowledge and performance standards in effect at the time the endorsements are renewed, the Core Teaching and Leadership Standards for Vermont Educators as described in 5421 C, and the action plan or improvement initiatives of the school or district where the educator is employed, as appropriate.

E. A portfolio submitted by an educator for National Board Certification shall be considered as equivalent to a relicensure portfolio for renewing the comparable endorsement.



## **Attachment B: Commissioner Cate's perspective and Standards Board's 2008 proposal**



**State of Vermont**  
**Vermont Department of Education**  
120 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

Dear Vermont Educator,

The Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE) was charged by former Commissioner of Education Richard Cate to restructure the relicensure process. This charge was as a result of conversations the former Commissioner had with Vermont educators. Through these conversations, the Commissioner outlined to the Standards Board the main reasons to restructure the relicensure process.

First, the process has become more complicated than intended and some local boards are asking for more information/documentation from teachers than what may be necessary. Second, there is a lack of consistency within the local standards board structure. Third, the Commissioner stated that there must be a better way to structure the relicensure process to use “human capital” in a more efficient way. And last, the Commissioner stated that he would like to see a process that shows how relicensure leads to better outcomes for students.

The VSBPE worked to develop a restructured process throughout 2006-2007 school year. The Board investigated ways to make better use of resources and technology, looked at ways to reduce the amount of required documentation and discussed how to link professional development and relicensure to improved classroom performance and better outcomes for students. Attached you will find the proposed restructured process. This proposed process will be used by educators to renew a Level I license, move a Level I license to Level II and to renew a Level II license.

The VSBPE’s proposal is to eliminate the Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP). In its place, educators will complete a one to five page reflective narrative at the end of their relicensure cycle. Educators will be asked to respond to six questions within the context of their previous years of professional practice. The questions will address how professional development activities have influenced an educator’s practice and educators will reflect upon their growth in each of the Five Standards for Vermont Educators. Educators will also be asked to describe their role in local education initiatives. Finally, educators will be asked to look forward to their professional growth needs during their next relicensure cycle.

All Vermont educators will respond to the same questions. The Standards Boards will be looking at ways to use technology to create a document that all educators will be able to use to complete the reflective narrative. This document will contain the questions in the form of prompts to facilitate the writing of the narrative.

The VSBPE is also proposing the use of professional development hours when documenting professional development. There is no increase in the amount of professional development educators will need to renew a license. Rather, using hours instead of credits will make it easier for educators to document and use professional development activities towards relicensure. Educators will keep documentation of their LSB approved activities that will accompany the reflective narrative at the time of relicensure.

The next step towards implementation of the restructured relicensing process is to gather input from the field. The VSBPE appreciates the time you take to review the draft relicensure proposal. Please submit your written comments and suggestions to Rebecca Otis, Vermont Department of Education, 120 State Street, Montpelier, Vermont 05620, [Rebecca.Otis@state.vt.us](mailto:Rebecca.Otis@state.vt.us). Comments should be received by August 1, 2008.

Sincerely,

Brian R. Howe, Chair  
Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators

**Attachment C: Vermont-NEA comments on 2008 Standards Board proposal**

July 11, 2008

Rebecca Otis  
Vermont Department of Education  
120 State Street  
Montpelier, Vermont 05620-2501

Re: Proposed New Relicensure Process for Educational Professionals

Dear Rebecca:

I am submitting these thoughts on behalf of Vermont-NEA as a preliminary response, pending rulemaking, to the proposed revisions to the relicensure process.

In short, we applaud the work of the Standards Board. We view it as an excellent start toward refining this process to make it more consistent with the needs and interests of the profession.

We are certain that making the request for comments from educators during the month of July will result in fewer comments than you might otherwise receive. Indeed, the tenor of some of our comments here may look different following greater input to us from more of our own members. Nevertheless, we appreciate the fact that you are soliciting comments before the formal rulemaking process itself.

IPDP. We predict the vast majority of educators will appreciate being relieved of the obligation to produce Individual Professional Development Plans. The vast majority of feedback we have received over the years is that this process is cumbersome, time-consuming, and insufficiently related to actual individual professional development to justify the effort involved in putting one together. In addition, it has become obvious that local standards boards, however well intended, by their very nature and number simply cannot be applying standards consistently across the state. There may be reasons related to local employment situations for different local standards board to vary in their approach to gauging the quality of locally submitted IPDPs. Local employment situations, however, have nothing to do with a person's qualifications to hold a state-issued professional license. On that basis, we believe eliminating IPDPs will actually enhance the standing of an educator license.

"Credits" to "hours." We also believe educators will appreciate converting the amount of required professional development from credits to hours. It remains more difficult in some locations in the state for educators to receive relicensing approval for attendance at obviously useful professional development workshops, apart from higher education coursework, because the hours of attendance sometimes don't readily translate into credits.

Number of hours. As I believe you know, regarding professional development hours, the draft of the proposal you distributed is inconsistent with your cover letter. The proposal converts the relicensure cycle from 7 to 5 years, but retains 135 hours (changed from 9 credits, each

representing 15 hours) during the cycle. We understand you intended to retain an average of 15 hours/year as the standard. If you reduce the licensing cycle to 5 years, therefore, the proposal should clarify that the required number of professional development hours during that cycle is reduced by 30 hours to 105. Beyond that, if you were to increase the average annual number of hours, there would be costs implications to local districts and property tax levels.

Fee. Professional license fees in Vermont are set by statute. We assume the Standards Board does not intend this proposal to affect the fee for licensees. We assume, therefore, that the proposal contemplates a 2/7 reduction in the fee for the licensing period. The Standards Board, though, cannot ensure that change will be made. We do not support reducing the licensing period without knowing that educators will not be required to pay more for their license as a result. We would appreciate your considering the likelihood of a fee modification before concluding to move to a 5-year cycle.

Personal reflection. If, as is apparent, you intend to retain the "recommending" function of the local standards boards, we will have more to say as rulemaking proceeds. In short, our concern is about the substitution of a personal reflection for an IPDP and the remaining role of the local board. We are concerned about how to write a rule that would authorize a local group of educators to recommend against relicensing a peer based on the peer's "personal" reflection. In particular, we don't readily see how to establish a useful objective standard against which to measure a personal account.

Level III. We understand the Standards Board considered establishing a Level III license that would relieve experienced licensees of the obligation to produce a "personal reflection" as well as the IPDP. We believe moving in that direction would be appropriate and more consistent with the manner in which other professions address relicensure.

Summary. These comments hit the bigger issues for us. We are particularly appreciative of the basic thrust of the proposal, the elimination of the IPDP as a requirement for relicensure every 7 years. We like the general direction in which you are taking the process, which has become more complicated than we understand anyone to have intended. We will, of course, likely have comments on specific wording once there is a draft of rules and look forward to working with the Standards Board to bring these significant and welcome changes to pass.

Sincerely,

Joel D. Cook  
Executive Director/General Counsel

c: Board of Directors, Vermont-NEA

**An Affiliate of the National Education Association**

**Attachment D: Vermont-NEA's 2008 message to members about Standards Board's proposal**

**Standards Board considering lifting IPDP obligation**

In a far-reaching proposal to change the process of renewing a teacher's license, the Professional Standards Board has issued a draft plan, the centerpiece of which would relieve teachers of the obligation to produce "Individual Professional Development Plans."

The Standards Board, thanks to the advocacy of Vermont-NEA, is now a free-standing body with direct authority to oversee the teaching profession. The law elevating its stature went into effect in July, 2007. In its first year, it has now produced a draft code of ethics for the education profession in Vermont, and it has now issued this forward-thinking proposal.

We are attaching a link to the proposal and the cover letter soliciting comments on it. We are also attaching our 2-page letter of comments.

We would like to hear from any of our members with specific thoughts about this proposal, which will be subject to a more formal period of public comments some months from now.

**Attachment E: Vermont-NEA's FY 2012 "action item"**  
(Adopted April, 2011)

**The current relicensing system at the local level is both subjective and arbitrary and places an undue burden on teachers. The VT-NEA is instructed to develop a more reasonable and responsive proposal to streamline the relicensing process and the VT-NEA shall bring this proposal to the relicensing board.**

**Attachment F: Vermont-NEA's "Useful ways to make teaching,  
and staying in teaching, attractive"**

December, 2011 (Excerpts)

2. Changing the relicensing system. Licensing is between the individual and the state: employment is between the individual and her employer. Like every profession, teaching offers state licenses to practitioners and requires them periodically to be renewed. The relicensing process for Vermont teachers, however, is, without question, the most cumbersome, time-consuming, and non-objective process of any profession in Vermont. Teachers report to us that, more than anything else, it does not serve the purpose of their professional growth. It is a source of great cynicism among Vermont teachers generally. In large part, that is because the process itself confuses an individual's qualifications to hold a professional license with how well she is performing her employment.

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**Changing the Relicensing System**

The current process for a licensed teacher to renew her license involves, like virtually every other professional, continuing education credits and the payment of a licensing fee. Unlike virtually every other profession in Vermont (and most other states), teacher relicensing here involves the development of an "individual professional development plan," a portfolio of evidence to document what the teacher has done consistent with that plan, a personal "reflection" on the attachment of the plan to the teacher's on-the-job performance, evidence of "growth" related to a set of standards, all subject to the recommendation of a "local standards board," whose members, while well-respected teachers, are not appointed by any authority and are not adequately overseen to ensure reasonably uniform application of licensing standards. This process costs money, it costs time, it takes up enormous resources of everyone involved that could instead be used for other matters, and it breeds cynicism within the profession itself.

A professional license is an authorization by the state – through the Professional Standards Board – to engage in specific professional activity. By its very nature, it measures whether an individual is a professional. It has nothing to do with whether a qualified professional does his or her job well. In Vermont (and, we acknowledge, in a few other states), the teacher relicensing process has become confused with our teachers' job performance. It is our employer, not the state, that should be determining if the nature of professional development meets job requirements.

We propose significant changes to simplify Vermont's teacher relicensing process, to make it useful to beginning teachers, and to remove those components that take up unnecessary time, breed cynicism among professionals, and do not contribute commensurately to their professional growth...

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Renewed license. We would renew Level II licenses, using the existing 7-year cycle, for any educator who meets continuing education requirements and pays the licensing fee. To the extent the state imposes other requirements, they should address what the state considers a baseline obligation for a professional licensee, rather than what the state considers an employee obligation. We would dispense with all other components of the current relicensing system.

**Attachment G: Vermont-NEA's 2012 Candidate's Questionnaire**  
(Excerpt)

**Teaching Profession: Simplifying Professional Relicensing**

Licensing is between the individual and the State: employment is between the individual and her employer. Like every profession, teaching offers state licenses to practitioners and requires them periodically to be renewed. The relicensing process for Vermont teachers, however, is, without question, the most cumbersome, time-consuming, and non-objective process of any profession in Vermont. Teachers report that, more than anything else, it does not well serve the purpose of their professional growth and is a source of discontent by many. In large part, that is because the process itself confuses an individual's qualifications to hold a professional license with how well she is performing in her place of employment. **Vermont-NEA believes the relicensing process for teachers should be simplified.**

**Attachment H: Vermont-NEA teacher survey questions regarding  
relicensing process**

January, 2014

**The current relicensing process improves my teaching and student learning**

**Strongly agree  
Agree  
Disagree  
Strongly disagree  
Undecided**

**I would support removing the requirement of an IPDP (now IPLP) and portfolio as a requirement for relicensing**

**Strongly agree  
Agree  
Disagree  
Strongly disagree  
Undecided**

...

**Comments (optional, but valuable)**

**Vermont-NEA is interested in your comments regarding relicensure. These comments will be shared with the AOE, legislators, and other interested folks.**

**Explain how much time it takes you to complete the current relicensing process and the value, if any, it has on your teaching and student learning.**

**How would you benefit from a relicensing process that required, like other licensed professionals, only the documentation of credits and/or hours of professional learning?**



**ATTACHMENT I: VERMONT-NEA TEACHER RELICENSING SURVEY**  
January 10-24, 2014

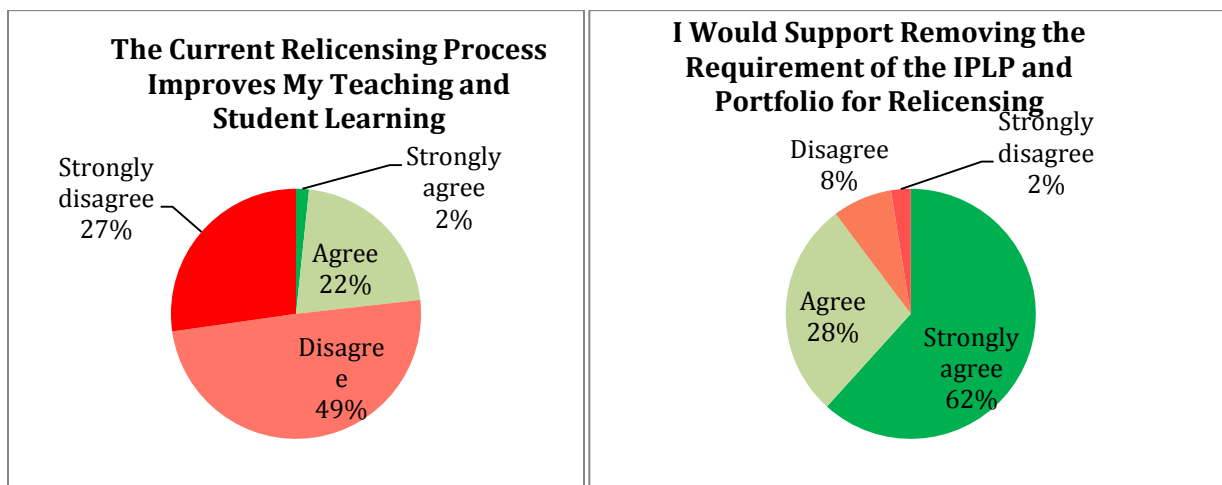
**INTRODUCTION:**

Vermont-NEA members have long questioned the value of the current teacher relicensing process, for them or their students.

The process involves writing 7-year goals (now called an "Individual Professional Learning Plan," or "IPLP") and creating a comprehensive portfolio to document the achievement of the prior 7-year goals, as well as engaging in more standard continuing education courses and workshops. The IPLP and portfolio components are both redundant and time-consuming. Vermont teachers write yearly professional goals as part of their employment. These goals guide professional learning, and teachers reflect on them with their administrators. The evidence of professional learning occurs on the job, as teachers reflect on their effectiveness regarding student learning. In the TELL Vermont Survey, Vermont educators cited sufficient *time* consistently as lacking to enable them to do their best work. The teaching profession demands a high level of skill, time, and professionalism. It is also wrought with new initiatives that focus on personalizing learning, integrating new and rigorous standards, and an evaluation system that holds them even more accountable for their students' learning.

Vermont-NEA asked its members earlier this month what they think about the current relicensing process.

**RESULTS** (1141 responses as of January 24):



**DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS:**

Vermont teachers overwhelmingly support the removal of the time-consuming and redundant process of creating an IPLP and portfolio for relicensing. Their hundreds of comments cited the amount of time it takes, the stark contrast of the relicensing process between teachers and other licensed professionals in the state, the lack of consistency between local standards boards, and the lack of value of the process in their professional lives. The most compelling sentiment is that the process is disrespectful of their professionalism.

Removing the IPLP and the professional portfolio is a small, but necessary step to help improve teaching and student learning in Vermont public schools.