

## ILLINOIS BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

431 EAST ADAMS STREET, 2ND FLOOR  
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62701-1404

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Governor

March 26, 2013

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Chicago  
Chairwoman

Dear Colleagues:

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Dr. Harry J. Berman

This joint letter from the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Board of Higher Education is intended to address the issue of students completing degree requirements in a course of study leading to a degree in education, but not completing the necessary requirements leading to completion of an approved teacher preparation program.

Under 105 ILCS 5/21B-30, passage of the APT is required for completion of an approved Illinois teacher preparation program and, beginning on September 1, 2015, the edTPA will also be required.

For students unable to successfully complete these requirements, an institution may issue a degree provided all required credits have been earned and graduation requirements have been met. However, the issuing institution must clearly designate that the student has completed the degree, but has not met the requirements leading to completion of an approved teacher preparation program. An institution may consider a variety of approaches in making this designation.

Examples of such approaches include but are not limited to:

- Designating on the transcript or degree that a candidate has completed an approved teacher preparation program or has not completed an approved teacher preparation program.
- Adopting a written policy and process for keeping and checking graduation records for all candidates in order to verify and sign off on program completion for any in-state or out-of-state requests. This process must be approved by the president and dean of the institution verifying support of the process, and requiring that training regarding the policy and process would be ongoing for current and new staff working with teacher licensing.
- Awarding an alternative degree (e.g., BA in Elementary Education with Entitlement Recommendation vs. BA in Elementary Education without Entitlement Recommendation) or placing student in an alternative major (e.g., BA in Spanish Education vs. BA in Spanish Language and Literature) may be an approach.

Whatever approach your institution develops, the plan for communicating degree completion and completion of requirements leading to teacher licensure should be clearly articulated. Review of each institution's plan will be a factor considered in degree program approval and licensure program approval or continued approval. Fundamental to this issue is the nature of institutions' responsibilities to all students. In some cases, a baccalaureate degree is issued prior to a student meeting all requirements for completion of an approved teacher preparation program; the institution maintains an obligation to provide such candidates the opportunity and support necessary to complete the program requirements leading to licensure.

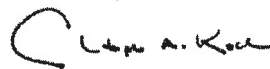
Your assistance will help to ensure that graduates who have not yet demonstrated the proficiencies deemed necessary for completion of an approved educator preparation program are not inadvertently placed into the field due to miscommunication, but that those who have completed all degree requirements are not denied their earned baccalaureate. It will also ensure that such graduates continue to receive the opportunity from their degree-granting institutions to pursue completion of their educator preparation program post graduation. We thank you for your continued support in reaching our shared goal—the development of highly prepared and effective teachers.

Sincerely,



Harry J. Berman, Ph.D.  
Interim Executive Director

Sincerely,



Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent of Education