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LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS
57th Legislature, 1st Session, 2025

Bill Number	<u>HM32</u>	Sponsor	<u>Pettigrew/Cullen</u>
Tracking Number	<u>.230088.2</u>	Committee Referrals	<u>HEC</u>
Short Title	<u>Study Means of Teacher Advancement</u>		
Analyst	<u>Armatage</u>	Original Date	<u>3/4/2025</u>
		Last Updated	<u></u>

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis of Memorial

House Memorial 32 (HM32) would require the Public Education Department (PED) to collaborate with teacher preparation programs at state universities to study the possibility of giving master's degree credit to level one teachers for the professional work required to move to a level two license, and to level two teachers for the professional work required to move to a level three license.

If HM32 is enacted, PED would be required to report their findings to LESC and transmit a copy to the secretary of public education by December 1, 2025.

FISCAL IMPACT

Legislative memorials do not carry appropriations.

SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Teacher Licensure Advancement. In 2022, PED issued a [memo](#) communicating changes made to [administrative code](#) to begin transitioning from the [dossier](#) system to requiring the completion of [five micro-credentials](#) for advancement from a level 1 to a level 2 teaching license; see **Table 1: Teacher Licensure Advancement from Level 1 to Level 2**. Alternatively, teachers may also now advance to a level 2 license by becoming national board certified. PED ceased accepting the dossier for licensure advancement in May 2024. The cost of PED's micro-credentials for level 1 to level 2 licensure advancement are slightly less expensive (\$300) than the submission price of the former dossier (\$320). Notably, teachers may resubmit master components of micro-credential courses that do not meet the required 85 percent pass rate, so long as the micro-credential course has not ended. By comparison, resubmitting a strand of the dossier that did not meet expectations could be costly, with a minimum fee of \$110.

PED launched advancement from a level 2 to level 3 teaching license [through micro-credentials](#) in 2023; this pathway also requires completion of a master's degree. Prior to this rule change, PED required either completion of a master's degree or national board certification to advance from a

level 2 to level 3 license—neither pathway required completion of micro-credentials. PED has retained the national board certification pathway, which still does not require completion of micro-credentials; see **Table 2: Teacher Licensure Advancement from Level 2 to Level 3**. The required micro-credentials to transition from level 2 to level 3 cost teachers a total of \$240. While the cost of becoming a national board certified teacher (NBCT) is an estimated \$1,900, teachers may apply to the [New Mexico National Board Certified Teacher Scholarship](#) to cover these costs. Likewise, while the tuition and fees associated with a master’s degree can be substantial, teachers may apply for the New Mexico [Teacher Preparation Affordability Scholarship](#), which may cover up to \$6,000 of approved educational expenses per year.

Table 1: Teacher Licensure Advancement from Level 1 to Level 2

	<u>Prior Requirements</u>	<u>Current Requirements</u>
Experience	3 years teaching	3 years teaching
Mentoring	Completed district mentoring program	Completed district mentoring program
Competency Demonstration/ Professional Learning	<u>Professional Development Dossier</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom data and reflections to demonstrate competency in five areas Must meet expectations in each area 	<u>Complete PED Micro-credentials</u> 1. Five micro-credential courses with a score of 85 percent or higher OR <u>Become National Board Certified</u>

Note: National Board Teacher Certification (NBCT).

Source: PED Licensure Website and NMAC 6.60.6.9

Table 2: Teacher Licensure Advancement from Level 2 to Level 3

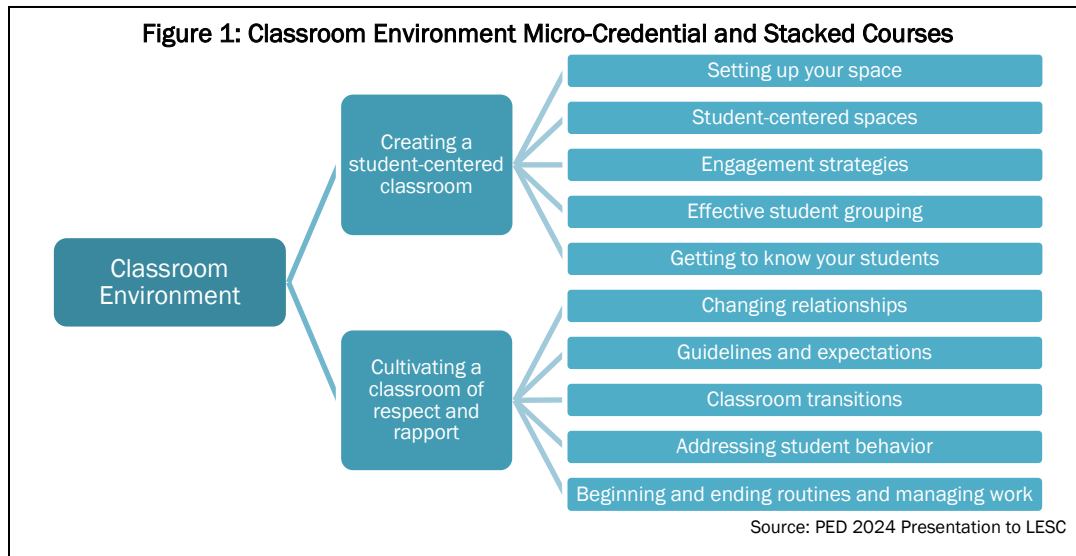
	<u>Prior Master’s Degree Pathway</u>	<u>Current Master’s Degree Pathway</u>	<u>National Board Certification Pathway (Unchanged)</u>
Experience	6 years teaching	6 years teaching	6 years teaching
Master’s Degree	✓	✓	
National Board Certification			✓
Micro-Credentials		Complete four micro-credential courses with a score of 85 percent +	

Note: National Board Teacher Certification (NBCT).

Source: PED Licensure Website and NMAC 6.60.6.9

PED Advancement Program Level Micro-Credentials PED’s shift to micro-credentials for licensure advancement can be seen as a shift from licensure advancement based on demonstrated competency to licensure advancement through skill acquisition. The dossier required teachers to provide classroom data and reflections to demonstrate their qualification to advance to a higher level of licensure. Micro-credentials are courses provided by PED designed to ensure every teacher has a solid foundation of professional learning before advancing to a higher level of licensure. PED micro-credential courses are facilitated by educators and content area experts who receive training on grading and coaching. Micro-credential courses were developed by PED in collaboration with Teach Plus, the National Center for Improvement of Educational Assessment, the Southwest Regional Education Cooperative, the New Mexico State Library, Albuquerque Public Schools, New Mexico State University, the University of New Mexico, and Santa Fe Community College.

Each micro-credential is made up of several small, “stacked” courses, each focusing on a discrete skill or area; see **Figure 1: Classroom Environment Micro-Credential and Mastery Components**. PED expects each micro-credential to require 10 to 15 hours of work to complete, however, some educators from the field report higher hourly commitments. Teachers are permitted to enroll in one micro-credential at a time; micro-credential courses are offered at the beginning of each calendar quarter.



To advance from a level 1 to level 2 teaching license, candidates must complete the following micro-credential courses:

1. Classroom environment;
2. Multi-layered systems of support;
3. Assessment literacy;
4. Culturally linguistically responsive instruction; and
5. Family engagement.

According to PED it takes at least 15 months to complete these micro-credentials.

At a June 2024 LESC meeting, PED presented an [update](#) on the Advanced Program Level (APL) micro-credentials program. At that time, a total of 2,355 educators had enrolled in, or requested enrollment in, level 1 to level 2 micro-credential courses, resulting in a total of 4,178 completed micro credential courses. The passing rate for these courses increased from 75 percent for the second quarter of 2023 to 92 percent for the fourth quarter of 2024.

To advance from a level 2 to level 3 teaching license, candidates must attain a master’s degree and complete the following micro-credentials:

1. Social emotional learning;
2. New Mexico Education Acts; and
3. Two electives chosen by the educator from a library of micro-credentials.

As of June 2024, a total of 1,308 educators had enrolled in, or requested enrollment in, level 2 to level 3 micro-credential courses.

PED reports high levels of teacher satisfaction with micro-credential courses based on feedback surveys; however, LESC has received mixed feedback from the field. Some educators feel the micro-credentials are burdensome, particularly in addition to the substantial hours elementary teachers are required to invest to complete the PED-mandated Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling ([LETRS](#)) training. Many teachers are also working to complete a master’s degree. Other educators suggest the required micro-credentials are too prescriptive, ignoring

variation in teacher expertise and need, and for some amount to repetition of their teacher preparation program. Some educators who completed micro-credentials to advance to level 3 licensure expressed appreciation for thoughtful coursework feedback, which they felt dossier reviews lacked.

University Credit for Micro-Credentials. Allowing educators to earn graduate-level credit hours for completion of micro-credentials provides educators valuable credentials recognized nationally and can help them progress toward attainment of post-baccalaureate degrees.

Some states, school districts, and micro-credential developers (for example, Digital Promise, Bloomboard, Educators Rising, and the National Education Association) around the country have partnered with higher education institutions to offer higher education credits to educators for completion of micro-credentials. For example, the Kansas National Education Association partnered with Baker University to offer one graduate-level college credit for each micro-credential subtopic at a cost of \$80 per credit hour. Around the country there are examples of states accepting micro-credential courses delivered by higher education partners, as well as examples of higher education institutions offering course credit hours for completion of micro-credential courses offered elsewhere.

In considering the possibility of state higher education institutions offering credit hours for the completion of PED micro-credentials, three primary issues would need to be addressed:

1. How would micro-credential courses align to both PED's priorities and those of teacher preparation programs?
2. Would PED be willing to complete higher education review processes to gain course approval from higher education institutions?
3. Who would pay the tuition fees required by higher education institutions?

OTHER SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The National Context of Micro-Credentials. [According](#) to the American Institute of Research (AIR), a nonprofit nonpartisan research organization, states and public school districts use micro-credentials as a resource to supplement traditional professional development. In a growing number of [states](#), micro-credentials can count as professional development credit toward requirements for retaining a teaching license. According to a 2020 [report](#) by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy, teachers in every state have earned micro-credentials, and 64 percent of states have micro-credential policies allowing them to be used toward some aspect of certification. However, New Mexico and Kentucky may be the only states implementing a model of micro-credential completion for teacher licensure advancement.

AIR notes that teachers in states allowing micro-credentials to count towards professional development requirements require teachers to choose from a selection of state education agency preapproved micro-credentials to personalize their own professional learning. Based on the experiences of states who implemented micro-credentials for teacher professional development, the AIR report noted the importance of:

- Deciding on the purpose of the micro-credentials and selecting appropriate micro-credentials that will help to guide the initial program design;
- Providing choice that allows teachers to personalize their professional learning;
- Understanding the scoring component to ensure validity and quality; and

- Ensuring communication with all relevant stakeholders in the design, implementation, and evaluation components of micro-credentials.

[Research](#) on micro-credentials for educator licensure advancement is thin and primarily based on teacher feedback on their own experience of micro-credentials. The field would benefit from studies of micro-credential design, implementation, and impacts, including how micro-credentials influence teachers' instructional practice and student learning.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

PED staff would be required to collaborate with state universities to study the possibility of awarding master's degree credit for completion of micro-credentials required by PED for teacher licensure advancement.

RELATED BILLS

Related to House Bill 297, School Personnel Computer Science Licensure, which would codify existing pathways to computer science teacher endorsement, reinstate two recently expired pathways to endorsement, and expand computer science endorsement eligibility to all kindergarten through 12th grade (K12) teachers who meet endorsement requirements.

Relates to Senate Bill 345, Teacher & Instructional Support Licensure, which would allow applicants for a level 1 teaching license to complete either a teacher portfolio or pass required teacher assessments, except for the teaching reading assessment.

Relates to House Bill 156, which would increase minimum teacher salaries by \$5 thousand at each licensure level, to \$55 thousand for a level 1 teacher, \$65 thousand for a level 2 teacher, and \$75 thousand for a level 3 teacher.

Related to House Memorial 47, Study Public School Employee Compensation, which would task LESC with studying compensation for public school employees, including how salary competitiveness, compaction and sustainability affect recruitment and retention.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- LESC Files
- New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (NMIMT)

AA/mca