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**HOUSE BILL NO. 731**

Offered January 10, 2024

Prefiled January 9, 2024

*A BILL to amend and reenact § 22.1-298.1, as it is currently effective and as it shall become effective, of the Code of Virginia, relating to teachers; renewable licenses; requirements; assessments.*

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 Patron—Sewell
 

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 Referred to Committee on Education
 

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**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That § 22.1-298.1, as it is currently effective and as it shall become effective, of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

**§ 22.1-298.1. (For expiration date, see Acts 2022, cc. 549 and 550, cl. 2) Regulations governing licensure.**

A. As used in this section:

"Alternate route to licensure" means a nontraditional route to teacher licensure available to individuals who meet the criteria specified in the guidelines developed pursuant to subsection N or regulations issued by the Board of Education.

"Industry certification credential" means an active career and technical education credential that is earned by successfully completing a Board of Education-approved industry certification examination, being issued a professional license in the Commonwealth, or successfully completing an occupational competency examination.

"Licensure by reciprocity" means a process used to issue a license to an individual coming into the Commonwealth from another state when that individual meets certain conditions specified in the Board of Education's Board's regulations.

"Professional teacher's assessment" means those tests mandated for licensure as prescribed by the Board of Education.

"Provisional license" means a nonrenewable license issued by the Board of Education for a specified period of time, not to exceed three years, to an individual who may be employed by a school division in the Commonwealth and who generally meets the requirements specified in the Board of Education's Board's regulations for licensure, but who may need to take additional coursework, pass additional assessments, or meet alternative evaluation standards to be fully licensed with a renewable license.

"Renewable license" means a license issued by the Board of Education for 10 years to an individual who meets the requirements specified in the Board of Education's Board's regulations.

B. The Board of Education shall prescribe, by regulation, the requirements for the licensure of teachers and other school personnel required to hold a license. Such regulations shall include procedures for (i) the denial, suspension, cancellation, revocation, and reinstatement of licensure; (ii) written reprimand of license holders on grounds established by the Board, in accordance with law, notice of which shall be made by the Superintendent of Public Instruction to division superintendents or their designated representatives; and (iii) the immediate and thorough investigation by the division superintendent or his designee of any complaint alleging that a license holder has engaged in conduct that may form the basis for the revocation of his license. At a minimum, such procedures for investigations contained in such regulations shall require (a) the division superintendent to petition for the revocation of the license upon completing such investigation and finding that there is reasonable cause to believe that the license holder has engaged in conduct that forms the basis for revocation of a license; (b) the school board to proceed to a hearing on such petition for revocation within 90 days of the mailing of a copy of the petition to the license holder, unless the license holder requests the cancellation of his license in accordance with Board regulations; and (c) the school board to provide a copy of the investigative file and such petition for revocation to the Superintendent of Public Instruction at the time that the hearing is scheduled. The Board of Education shall revoke the license of any person for whom it has received a notice of dismissal or resignation pursuant to subsection F of § 22.1-313 and, in the case of a person who is the subject of a founded complaint of child abuse or neglect, after all rights to any administrative appeal provided by § 63.2-1526 have been exhausted. In the case of a teacher who is the subject of a founded complaint of child abuse or neglect and whose license has been revoked pursuant to this subsection, in the event that a court reverses such finding of abuse or neglect and the individual submits to the Department an application for the reinstatement of his license as a teacher, the Board shall consider and act upon such application no later than 90 days after the date of submission. Regardless of the authority of any other agency of the Commonwealth to approve

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59 educational programs, only the Board of Education shall have the authority to license teachers to be  
60 regularly employed by school boards, including those teachers employed to provide nursing education.

61 The Board of Education shall prescribe by regulation the licensure requirements for teachers who  
62 teach only online courses, as defined in § 22.1-212.23. Such license shall be valid only for teaching  
63 online courses. Teachers who hold a 10-year renewable license issued by the Board of Education may  
64 teach online courses for which they are properly endorsed.

65 C. The Board of Education's Board's regulations shall include requirements that a person seeking  
66 initial licensure:

67 1. Demonstrate proficiency in the relevant content area, communication, literacy, and other core skills  
68 for educators by achieving a qualifying score on professional assessments or meeting alternative  
69 evaluation standards as prescribed by the Board;

70 2. Complete study in attention deficit disorder;

71 3. Complete study in gifted education, including the use of multiple criteria to identify gifted  
72 students; and

73 4. Complete study in methods of improving communication between schools and families and ways  
74 of increasing family involvement in student learning at home and at school.

75 D. In addition, such regulations shall include requirements that:

76 1. Every person seeking initial licensure and persons seeking licensure renewal as teachers who have  
77 not completed such study shall complete study in child abuse recognition and intervention in accordance  
78 with curriculum guidelines developed by the Board of Education in consultation with the Department of  
79 Social Services that are relevant to the specific teacher licensure routes;

80 2. Every person seeking renewal of a license shall complete all renewal requirements, including  
81 professional development in a manner prescribed by the Board, except that no person seeking renewal of  
82 a license shall be required to satisfy any such requirement by completing coursework and earning credit  
83 at an institution of higher education;

84 3. Every person seeking initial licensure or renewal of a license shall provide evidence of completion  
85 of certification or training in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the use of  
86 automated external defibrillators. The certification or training program shall (i) be based on the current  
87 national evidence-based emergency cardiovascular care guidelines for cardiopulmonary resuscitation and  
88 the use of an automated external defibrillator, such as a program developed by the American Heart  
89 Association or the American Red Cross, and (ii) include hands-on practice of the skills necessary to  
90 perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation. The Board shall provide a waiver for this requirement for any  
91 person with a disability whose disability prohibits such person from completing the certification or  
92 training;

93 4. Every person seeking licensure with an endorsement as a teacher of the blind and visually  
94 impaired shall demonstrate proficiency in reading and writing Braille;

95 5. Every teacher seeking an initial license in the Commonwealth with an endorsement in the area of  
96 career and technical education shall have an industry certification credential in the area in which the  
97 teacher seeks endorsement. If a teacher seeking an initial license in the Commonwealth has not attained  
98 an industry certification credential in the area in which the teacher seeks endorsement, the Board may,  
99 upon request of the employing school division or educational agency, issue the teacher a provisional  
100 license to allow time for the teacher to attain such credential;

101 6. Every person seeking initial licensure or renewal of a license shall complete awareness training,  
102 provided by the Department, on the indicators of dyslexia, as that term is defined by the Board pursuant  
103 to regulations, and the evidence-based interventions and accommodations for dyslexia;

104 7. Every person seeking initial licensure or renewal of a license with an endorsement as a school  
105 counselor shall complete training in the recognition of mental health disorder and behavioral distress,  
106 including depression, trauma, violence, youth suicide, and substance abuse;

107 8. Every person seeking initial licensure as a teacher who has not received the instruction described  
108 in subsection D of § 23.1-902 shall receive instruction or training on positive behavior interventions and  
109 supports; crisis prevention and de-escalation; the use of physical restraint and seclusion, consistent with  
110 regulations of the Board of Education; and appropriate alternative methods to reduce and prevent the  
111 need for the use of physical restraint and seclusion;

112 9. Every person seeking initial licensure or renewal of a license shall complete instruction or training  
113 in cultural competency;

114 10. Every person seeking initial licensure or renewal of a license with an endorsement in history and  
115 social sciences shall complete instruction in African American history, as prescribed by the Board; and

116 11. Every person seeking renewal of a license as a teacher shall complete training in the instruction  
117 of students with disabilities that includes (i) differentiating instruction for students depending on their  
118 needs; (ii) understanding the role of general education teachers on the individualized education program  
119 team; (iii) implementing effective models of collaborative instruction, including co-teaching; and (iv)  
120 understanding the goals and benefits of inclusive education for all students.

E. No teacher who seeks a provisional license shall be required to meet any requirement set forth in subdivision D 1, 3, 6, or 8 as a condition of such licensure, but each such teacher shall complete each such requirement during the first year of provisional licensure.

F. The Board shall issue a license to an individual seeking initial licensure who has not completed professional assessments as prescribed by the Board, if such individual (i) holds a provisional license that will expire within three months or, at the discretion of the school board and division superintendent, within six months if the individual has received a satisfactory mid-year performance review in the current school year; (ii) is employed by a school board; (iii) is recommended for licensure by the division superintendent; (iv) has attempted, unsuccessfully, to obtain a qualifying score on the professional assessments as prescribed by the Board; (v) has received an evaluation rating of proficient or above on the performance standards for each year of the provisional license, and such evaluation was conducted in a manner consistent with the Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Teachers, Principals, and Superintendents; and (vi) meets all other requirements for initial licensure.

G. Each local school board or division superintendent may waive for any individual whom it seeks to employ as a career and technical education teacher and who is also seeking initial licensure or renewal of a license with an endorsement in the area of career and technical education any applicable requirement set forth in subsection C or subdivision D 2, 4, or 6.

H. The Board's regulations shall require that initial licensure for principals and assistant principals be contingent upon passage of an assessment as prescribed by the Board.

I. The Board shall establish criteria in its regulations to effectuate the substitution of experiential learning for coursework for those persons seeking initial licensure through an alternate route as defined in Board regulations. Such alternate routes shall include eligibility for any individual to receive, notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, a renewable one-year license to teach in public high schools in the Commonwealth if he has:

1. Received a graduate degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education;
2. Completed at least 30 credit hours of teaching experience as an instructor at a regionally accredited institution of higher education;
3. Received qualifying scores on the professional teacher's assessments prescribed by the Board, including the communication and literacy assessment and the content-area assessment for the endorsement sought; and
4. Met the requirements set forth in subdivisions D 1 and 3.

J. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the Board (i) may provide for the issuance of a provisional license, valid for a period not to exceed three years, pursuant to subdivision D 5 or to any person who does not meet the requirements of this section or any other requirement for licensure imposed by law; (ii) shall provide for the issuance of a provisional license, valid for a period not to exceed three years, to any former member of the Armed Forces of the United States or the Virginia National Guard who has received an honorable discharge and has the appropriate level of experience or training but does not meet the requirements for a renewable license; and (iii) may provide for the issuance of a provisional license, valid for a period not to exceed three years, to any individual who has held within the last five years a valid and officially issued and recognized license or certification to teach issued by an entity outside of the United States but does not meet the requirements for a renewable license if the individual's license or certification to teach has been evaluated and verified by an entity approved by the Department.

K. The Board's licensure regulations shall also provide for licensure by reciprocity:

1. With comparable endorsement areas for those individuals holding a valid out-of-state teaching license and national certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards or a nationally recognized certification program approved by the Board of Education. The application for such individuals shall require evidence of such valid licensure and national certification and shall not require official student transcripts;

2. For any spouse of an active duty or reserve member of the Armed Forces of the United States or a member of the Virginia National Guard who has obtained a valid out-of-state license, with full credentials and without deficiencies, that is in force at the time the application for a Virginia license is received by the Department. Each such individual shall establish a file in the Department by submitting a complete application packet, which shall include official student transcripts and an official copy of the military permanent assignment orders of the individual's spouse. No service requirements or licensing assessments shall be required for any such individual. The Department shall determine and communicate such individual's eligibility for licensure by reciprocity within 15 business days of receipt of the complete application packet; and

3. For individuals who have obtained a valid out-of-state license, with full credentials and without deficiencies, that is in force at the time the application for a Virginia license is received by the

182 Department. Each such individual shall establish a file in the Department by submitting a complete  
183 application packet, which shall include official student transcripts. No service requirements or licensing  
184 assessments shall be required for any such individual.

185 L. The Board shall include in its regulations an alternate route to licensure for elementary education  
186 preK-6 and an alternate route to licensure for special education general curriculum K-12. Each such  
187 alternate route to licensure shall require individuals to (i) meet the qualifying scores on the content area  
188 assessment prescribed by the Board for the endorsements sought and (ii) complete an alternative  
189 certification program that provides training in the pedagogy and methodology of the respective content  
190 or special education areas prescribed by the Board. The curriculum of any such alternative certification  
191 program shall be approved by the Board. Nothing in this subsection shall preclude the Board from  
192 establishing other alternate routes to licensure.

193 M. The Board, in its regulations providing for licensure by reciprocity established pursuant to  
194 subsection K, shall (i) permit applicants to submit third-party employment verification forms and (ii)  
195 grant special consideration to individuals who have successfully completed a program offered by a  
196 provider that is accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation.

197 N. The Board shall develop guidelines that establish a process to permit a school board or any  
198 organization sponsored by a school board to petition the Board for approval of an alternate route to  
199 licensure that may be used to meet the requirements for a provisional or renewable license or any  
200 endorsement. Any such alternate route may include alternatives to the regulatory requirements for  
201 teacher preparation, including alternative professional assessments and coursework. The petitioner may  
202 proffer or the Board may impose conditions in conjunction with the approval of such petition.

203 O. *The Board shall not include in its regulations governing the award of a renewable license as a*  
204 *teacher any requirement that an individual take and receive a passing score on any national or*  
205 *state-based communications and literacy assessment as a condition of the initial award or renewal of*  
206 *such a license. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to preclude the Board from requiring any*  
207 *such individual to take and receive a passing score on any other assessment as a condition of the initial*  
208 *award or renewal of such a license.*

209 **§ 22.1-298.1. (For effective date, see Acts 2022, cc. 549 and 550, cl. 2) Regulations governing**  
210 **licensure.**

211 A. As used in this section:

212 "Alternate route to licensure" means a nontraditional route to teacher licensure available to  
213 individuals who meet the criteria specified in the guidelines developed pursuant to subsection N or  
214 regulations issued by the Board of Education.

215 "Industry certification credential" means an active career and technical education credential that is  
216 earned by successfully completing a Board of Education-approved industry certification examination,  
217 being issued a professional license in the Commonwealth, or successfully completing an occupational  
218 competency examination.

219 "Licensure by reciprocity" means a process used to issue a license to an individual coming into the  
220 Commonwealth from another state when that individual meets certain conditions specified in the Board  
221 of Education's Board's regulations.

222 "Professional teacher's assessment" means those tests mandated for licensure as prescribed by the  
223 Board of Education.

224 "Provisional license" means a nonrenewable license issued by the Board of Education for a specified  
225 period of time, not to exceed three years, to an individual who may be employed by a school division in  
226 the Commonwealth and who generally meets the requirements specified in the Board of Education's  
227 Board's regulations for licensure, but who may need to take additional coursework, pass additional  
228 assessments, or meet alternative evaluation standards to be fully licensed with a renewable license.

229 "Renewable license" means a license issued by the Board of Education for 10 years to an individual  
230 who meets the requirements specified in the Board of Education's Board's regulations.

231 B. The Board of Education shall prescribe, by regulation, the requirements for the licensure of  
232 teachers and other school personnel required to hold a license. Such regulations shall include procedures  
233 for (i) the denial, suspension, cancellation, revocation, and reinstatement of licensure; (ii) written  
234 reprimand of license holders on grounds established by the Board, in accordance with law, notice of  
235 which shall be made by the Superintendent of Public Instruction to division superintendents or their  
236 designated representatives; and (iii) the immediate and thorough investigation by the division  
237 superintendent or his designee of any complaint alleging that a license holder has engaged in conduct  
238 that may form the basis for the revocation of his license. At a minimum, such procedures for  
239 investigations contained in such regulations shall require (a) the division superintendent to petition for  
240 the revocation of the license upon completing such investigation and finding that there is reasonable  
241 cause to believe that the license holder has engaged in conduct that forms the basis for revocation of a  
242 license; (b) the school board to proceed to a hearing on such petition for revocation within 90 days of  
243 the mailing of a copy of the petition to the license holder, unless the license holder requests the

cancellation of his license in accordance with Board regulations; and (c) the school board to provide a copy of the investigative file and such petition for revocation to the Superintendent of Public Instruction at the time that the hearing is scheduled. The Board of Education shall revoke the license of any person for whom it has received a notice of dismissal or resignation pursuant to subsection F of § 22.1-313 and, in the case of a person who is the subject of a founded complaint of child abuse or neglect, after all rights to any administrative appeal provided by § 63.2-1526 have been exhausted. In the case of a teacher who is the subject of a founded complaint of child abuse or neglect and whose license has been revoked pursuant to this subsection, in the event that a court reverses such finding of abuse or neglect and the individual submits to the Department an application for the reinstatement of his license as a teacher, the Board shall consider and act upon such application no later than 90 days after the date of submission. Regardless of the authority of any other agency of the Commonwealth to approve educational programs, only the Board of Education shall have the authority to license teachers to be regularly employed by school boards, including those teachers employed to provide nursing education.

The Board of Education shall prescribe by regulation the licensure requirements for teachers who teach only online courses, as defined in § 22.1-212.23. Such license shall be valid only for teaching online courses. Teachers who hold a 10-year renewable license issued by the Board of Education may teach online courses for which they are properly endorsed.

C. The Board of Education's Board's regulations shall include requirements that a person seeking initial licensure:

1. Demonstrate proficiency in the relevant content area, ~~communication, literacy,~~ and other core skills for educators by achieving a qualifying score on professional assessments or meeting alternative evaluation standards as prescribed by the Board. ~~The literacy assessment~~ *Such assessments* for any individual seeking initial licensure with an endorsement in early/primary education preschool through grade three, elementary education preschool through grade six, special education general curriculum kindergarten through grade 12, special education deaf and hard of hearing preschool through grade 12, or special education blindness/visual impairments preschool through grade 12 or as a reading specialist shall include a rigorous test of science-based reading research and evidence-based literacy instruction;

2. Complete study in attention deficit disorder;

3. Complete study in gifted education, including the use of multiple criteria to identify gifted students; and

4. Complete study in methods of improving communication between schools and families and ways of increasing family involvement in student learning at home and at school.

D. In addition, such regulations shall include requirements that:

1. Every person seeking initial licensure and persons seeking licensure renewal as teachers who have not completed such study shall complete study in child abuse recognition and intervention in accordance with curriculum guidelines developed by the Board of Education in consultation with the Department of Social Services that are relevant to the specific teacher licensure routes;

2. Every person seeking renewal of a license shall complete all renewal requirements, including professional development in a manner prescribed by the Board, except that no person seeking renewal of a license shall be required to satisfy any such requirement by completing coursework and earning credit at an institution of higher education;

3. Every person seeking initial licensure or renewal of a license shall provide evidence of completion of certification or training in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the use of automated external defibrillators. The certification or training program shall (i) be based on the current national evidence-based emergency cardiovascular care guidelines for cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the use of an automated external defibrillator, such as a program developed by the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross, and (ii) include hands-on practice of the skills necessary to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation. The Board shall provide a waiver for this requirement for any person with a disability whose disability prohibits such person from completing the certification or training;

4. Every person seeking licensure with an endorsement as a teacher of the blind and visually impaired shall demonstrate proficiency in reading and writing Braille;

5. Every teacher seeking an initial license in the Commonwealth with an endorsement in the area of career and technical education shall have an industry certification credential in the area in which the teacher seeks endorsement. If a teacher seeking an initial license in the Commonwealth has not attained an industry certification credential in the area in which the teacher seeks endorsement, the Board may, upon request of the employing school division or educational agency, issue the teacher a provisional license to allow time for the teacher to attain such credential;

6. Every person seeking initial licensure or renewal of a license shall complete awareness training, provided by the Department, on the indicators of dyslexia, as that term is defined by the Board pursuant to regulations, and the evidence-based interventions and accommodations for dyslexia;

305 7. Every person seeking initial licensure or renewal of a license with an endorsement as a school  
306 counselor shall complete training in the recognition of mental health disorder and behavioral distress,  
307 including depression, trauma, violence, youth suicide, and substance abuse;

308 8. Every person seeking initial licensure as a teacher who has not received the instruction described  
309 in subsection D of § 23.1-902 shall receive instruction or training on positive behavior interventions and  
310 supports; crisis prevention and de-escalation; the use of physical restraint and seclusion, consistent with  
311 regulations of the Board of Education; and appropriate alternative methods to reduce and prevent the  
312 need for the use of physical restraint and seclusion;

313 9. Every person seeking initial licensure or renewal of a license shall complete instruction or training  
314 in cultural competency;

315 10. Every person seeking initial licensure or renewal of a license with an endorsement in history and  
316 social sciences shall complete instruction in African American history, as prescribed by the Board;

317 11. Every person seeking renewal of a license as a teacher shall complete training in the instruction  
318 of students with disabilities that includes (i) differentiating instruction for students depending on their  
319 needs; (ii) understanding the role of general education teachers on the individualized education program  
320 team; (iii) implementing effective models of collaborative instruction, including co-teaching; and (iv)  
321 understanding the goals and benefits of inclusive education for all students; and

322 12. Every person seeking initial licensure with an endorsement in early/primary education preschool  
323 through grade three, elementary education preschool through grade six, special education general  
324 curriculum kindergarten through grade 12, special education deaf and hard of hearing preschool through  
325 grade 12, or special education blindness/visual impairments preschool through grade 12 or as a reading  
326 specialist shall complete study in science-based reading research and evidence-based literacy instruction.

327 E. No teacher who seeks a provisional license shall be required to meet any requirement set forth in  
328 subdivision D 1, 3, 6, or 8 as a condition of such licensure, but each such teacher shall complete each  
329 such requirement during the first year of provisional licensure.

330 F. The Board shall issue a license to an individual seeking initial licensure who has not completed  
331 professional assessments as prescribed by the Board, if such individual (i) holds a provisional license  
332 that will expire within three months or, at the discretion of the school board and division superintendent,  
333 within six months if the individual has received a satisfactory mid-year performance review in the  
334 current school year; (ii) is employed by a school board; (iii) is recommended for licensure by the  
335 division superintendent; (iv) has attempted, unsuccessfully, to obtain a qualifying score on the  
336 professional assessments as prescribed by the Board; (v) has received an evaluation rating of proficient  
337 or above on the performance standards for each year of the provisional license, and such evaluation was  
338 conducted in a manner consistent with the Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and  
339 Evaluation Criteria for Teachers, Principals, and Superintendents; and (vi) meets all other requirements  
340 for initial licensure.

341 G. Each local school board or division superintendent may waive for any individual whom it seeks to  
342 employ as a career and technical education teacher and who is also seeking initial licensure or renewal  
343 of a license with an endorsement in the area of career and technical education any applicable  
344 requirement set forth in subsection C or subdivision D 2, 4, or 6.

345 H. The Board's regulations shall require that initial licensure for principals and assistant principals be  
346 contingent upon passage of an assessment as prescribed by the Board.

347 I. The Board shall establish criteria in its regulations to effectuate the substitution of experiential  
348 learning for coursework for those persons seeking initial licensure through an alternate route as defined  
349 in Board regulations. Such alternate routes shall include eligibility for any individual to receive,  
350 notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, a renewable one-year license to teach in public  
351 high schools in the Commonwealth if he has:

352 1. Received a graduate degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education;

353 2. Completed at least 30 credit hours of teaching experience as an instructor at a regionally  
354 accredited institution of higher education;

355 3. Received qualifying scores on the professional teacher's assessments prescribed by the Board,  
356 including the communication and literacy assessment and the content-area assessment for the  
357 endorsement sought. ~~The literacy assessment~~ *Such assessments* for any individual seeking initial  
358 licensure through an alternate route with an endorsement in early/primary education preschool through  
359 grade three, elementary education preschool through grade six, special education general curriculum  
360 kindergarten through grade 12, special education deaf and hard of hearing preschool through grade 12,  
361 or special education blindness/visual impairments preschool through grade 12 or as a reading specialist  
362 shall include a rigorous test of science-based reading research and evidence-based literacy instruction;  
363 and

364 4. Met the requirements set forth in subdivisions D 1 and 3.

365 J. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the Board (i) may provide for the issuance  
366 of a provisional license, valid for a period not to exceed three years, pursuant to subdivision D 5 or to

any person who does not meet the requirements of this section or any other requirement for licensure imposed by law; (ii) shall provide for the issuance of a provisional license, valid for a period not to exceed three years, to any former member of the Armed Forces of the United States or the Virginia National Guard who has received an honorable discharge and has the appropriate level of experience or training but does not meet the requirements for a renewable license; and (iii) may provide for the issuance of a provisional license, valid for a period not to exceed three years, to any individual who has held within the last five years a valid and officially issued and recognized license or certification to teach issued by an entity outside of the United States but does not meet the requirements for a renewable license if the individual's license or certification to teach has been evaluated and verified by an entity approved by the Department.

K. The Board's licensure regulations shall also provide for licensure by reciprocity:

1. With comparable endorsement areas for those individuals holding a valid out-of-state teaching license and national certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards or a nationally recognized certification program approved by the Board of Education. The application for such individuals shall require evidence of such valid licensure and national certification and shall not require official student transcripts;

2. For any spouse of an active duty or reserve member of the Armed Forces of the United States or a member of the Virginia National Guard who has obtained a valid out-of-state license, with full credentials and without deficiencies, that is in force at the time the application for a Virginia license is received by the Department. Each such individual shall establish a file in the Department by submitting a complete application packet, which shall include official student transcripts and an official copy of the military permanent assignment orders of the individual's spouse. No service requirements or licensing assessments shall be required for any such individual. The Department shall determine and communicate such individual's eligibility for licensure by reciprocity within 15 business days of receipt of the complete application packet; and

3. For individuals who have obtained a valid out-of-state license, with full credentials and without deficiencies, that is in force at the time the application for a Virginia license is received by the Department. Each such individual shall establish a file in the Department by submitting a complete application packet, which shall include official student transcripts. No service requirements or licensing assessments shall be required for any such individual.

L. The Board shall include in its regulations an alternate route to licensure for elementary education preschool through grade six and an alternate route to licensure for special education general curriculum kindergarten through grade 12. Each such alternate route to licensure shall require individuals to (i) meet the qualifying scores on the content area assessment prescribed by the Board for the endorsements sought and (ii) complete an alternative certification program that provides training in the pedagogy and methodology of the respective content or special education areas prescribed by the Board. The curriculum of any such alternative certification program shall be approved by the Board. Nothing in this subsection shall preclude the Board from establishing other alternate routes to licensure.

M. The Board, in its regulations providing for licensure by reciprocity established pursuant to subsection K, shall (i) permit applicants to submit third-party employment verification forms and (ii) grant special consideration to individuals who have successfully completed a program offered by a provider that is accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation.

N. The Board shall develop guidelines that establish a process to permit a school board or any organization sponsored by a school board to petition the Board for approval of an alternate route to licensure that may be used to meet the requirements for a provisional or renewable license or any endorsement. Any such alternate route may include alternatives to the regulatory requirements for teacher preparation, including alternative professional assessments and coursework. The petitioner may proffer or the Board may impose conditions in conjunction with the approval of such petition.

*O. The Board shall not include in its regulations governing the award of a renewable license as a teacher any requirement that an individual take and receive a passing score on any national or state-based communications and literacy assessment as a condition of the initial award or renewal of such a license. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to preclude the Board from requiring any such individual to take and receive a passing score on any other assessment as a condition of the initial award or renewal of such a license.*