

First Regular Session of the 124th General Assembly (2025)

PRINTING CODE. Amendments: Whenever an existing statute (or a section of the Indiana Constitution) is being amended, the text of the existing provision will appear in this style type, additions will appear in **this style type**, and deletions will appear in ~~this style type~~.

Additions: Whenever a new statutory provision is being enacted (or a new constitutional provision adopted), the text of the new provision will appear in **this style type**. Also, the word **NEW** will appear in that style type in the introductory clause of each SECTION that adds a new provision to the Indiana Code or the Indiana Constitution.

Conflict reconciliation: Text in a statute in *this style type* or ~~this style type~~ reconciles conflicts between statutes enacted by the 2024 Regular Session of the General Assembly.

SENATE ENROLLED ACT No. 255

AN ACT to amend the Indiana Code concerning education.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:

SECTION 1. IC 20-28-5-12, AS AMENDED BY P.L.243-2023, SECTION 10, AND BY P.L.245-2023, SECTION 9, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2025]: Sec. 12. (a) Subsection (b) does not apply to an individual who:

- (1) held an Indiana limited, reciprocal, or standard teaching license on June 30, 1985; or
- (2) is granted a license under section 12.5, **16.5**, or 18 of this chapter.

(b) Except as provided in ~~section~~ **sections 12.5 and 16.5** of this chapter, the department may not grant an initial practitioner license to an individual unless the individual has:

- (1) **met the requirements of section 12.3 of this chapter; and**
- (2) demonstrated proficiency in the following areas on a written examination or through other procedures prescribed by the department:

(1) ~~(A)~~ **(A)** Pedagogy.

(2) ~~(B)~~ **(B)** Knowledge of the areas in which the individual is required to have a license to teach.

(3) ~~(C)~~ **(C)** If the individual is seeking to be licensed as an elementary school teacher, comprehensive scientifically based reading instruction skills aligned to the science of reading.

(c) An individual's license examination score may not be disclosed



by the department without the individual's consent unless specifically required by state or federal statute or court order.

(d) Subject to section 22 of this chapter, the state board shall adopt rules under IC 4-22-2 to do the following:

- (1) Adopt, validate, and implement the examination or other procedures required by subsection (b).
- (2) Establish examination scores indicating proficiency.
- (3) Otherwise carry out the purposes of this section.

(e) Subject to section 18 of this chapter, the state board shall adopt rules under IC 4-22-2 establishing the conditions under which the requirements of this section may be waived for an individual holding a valid teacher's license issued by another state.

SECTION 2. IC 20-28-5-16.5 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2025]: **Sec. 16.5. (a) The department shall grant an initial practitioner license to an individual who meets the following requirements:**

(1) The individual holds a bachelor's degree with a grade point average of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale from an accredited postsecondary educational institution with a major in any combination of the following:

- (A) Science.**
- (B) Technology.**
- (C) Engineering.**
- (D) Mathematics.**

(2) The individual successfully completes a total of at least nine (9) academic credits in courses that include instruction on the following:

(A) High impact practices in:

- (i) lesson planning;**
- (ii) instructional design;**
- (iii) instructional activities;**
- (iv) integrating learning modalities; and**
- (v) developing laboratory experiments.**

(B) The use of:

- (i) digital media;**
- (ii) learning management software; and**
- (iii) technology to maximize learning.**

(C) Teaching:

- (i) inductive and deductive reasoning;**
- (ii) metacognition;**
- (iii) problem framing;**



- (iv) interpreting results; and
- (v) data based decision making.
- (D) Best practices to evaluate student learning through:
 - (i) diagnostic assessment;
 - (ii) direct and indirect assessment; and
 - (iii) formative and summative assessment.
- (E) Creating feedback loops.
- (F) Fostering engagement and using peer to peer learning and other small group strategies.
- (G) Providing constructive feedback and preventing disruptive behavior.
- (H) Early intervention strategies and professional standards.
- (I) Teaching students with disabilities.
- (3) The individual demonstrates proficiency through a written examination in the knowledge of the areas in which the individual is required to have a license to teach, as described in section 12(b)(2) of this chapter.
- (4) The individual has completed the training described in section 12.3 of this chapter.
- (5) The individual participates in one (1) or more of the following, as determined by the department:
 - (A) Job shadowing.
 - (B) Field experiences.
 - (C) Teaching cooperatives.
 - (D) Full-term student teaching.
- (b) An individual who receives an initial practitioner license under this section:
 - (1) may only teach in any combination of grades 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, or 12, as determined by the department;
 - (2) shall be treated in the same manner as an individual who receives an initial practitioner license after completing a traditional teacher preparation program; and
 - (3) must be treated in the same manner as a traditional teacher preparation program graduate during the transition from an initial practitioner license to a practitioner license.
- (c) The state board may adopt rules under IC 4-22-2 to administer this section.

SECTION 3. IC 20-28-5-29 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE AS A NEW SECTION TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2025]: **Sec. 29.** (a) Notwithstanding any other law, the department may grant a license to teach:



(1) a high school level course; or
(2) in grades 5 through 9;
to an individual who completes a licensure pathway established by the department.

(b) A licensure pathway established by the department under subsection (a)(1) must be aligned to a course content area that is part of student diploma requirements established by the state board under IC 20-19-2-21.

SECTION 4. IC 20-33-2-19, AS AMENDED BY P.L.138-2024, SECTION 1, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2025]: Sec. 19. (a) When the parent of a student who is enrolled in a public school provides written notice, the principal shall allow the student to attend a school for religious instruction that is conducted by a church, an association of churches, or an association that is organized for religious instruction and incorporated under Indiana law.

(b) After receiving notice under subsection (a) **and subject to subsection (c)**, the principal shall work in a collaborative manner with the parent or entity offering religious instruction to provide assistance in determining a period or periods ~~not to exceed one hundred twenty (120) minutes in total in any week~~, for the student to receive religious instruction. An entity offering religious instruction to a student as described in this subsection shall, as applicable, work in a collaborative manner with the principal to ensure the period or periods in which the student receives religious instruction are the least disruptive to the instructional time (as defined in IC 20-30-2-1) of the student. The notice is valid only for the school year in which it is provided.

(c) The period or periods that a student receives religious instruction under this section may not exceed the following:

(1) For students in elementary school, one hundred twenty (120) minutes in total in any week.

(2) For students in public secondary school, the amount of time that is equivalent to attending one (1) elective course at the public secondary school during the week.

~~(d)~~ **(d)** An entity providing religious instruction that receives students under this section:

(1) shall maintain attendance records and allow inspection of these records by attendance officers; and

(2) may not be supported, in whole or in part, by public funds.

~~(d)~~ **(e)** A student who attends a school for religious instruction under this section shall receive the same attendance credit that the student would receive for attendance in the public schools for the same length



of time.

~~(e)~~ **(f)** A public secondary school may award academic credit to a student who attends religious instruction under this section if the following conditions are met:

(1) The entity that provides religious instruction to a student of a school corporation under this section agrees to do the following:

(A) Conduct an expanded criminal history check and expanded child protection index check regarding each employee or contractor of the entity who is likely to have direct, ongoing contact with students of the school corporation who are children within the scope of the individual's employment or contract services.

(B) Hold liability insurance coverage for services or transportation provided outside school property (as defined in IC 20-33-8-5).

(2) The governing body of the school corporation adopts a policy that allows the awarding of credit. A policy adopted under this subsection must provide the following:

~~(1)~~ **(A)** Classes in religious instruction are evaluated on the basis of purely secular criteria in substantially the same manner as similar classes taken by a student at a nonpublic secondary school who transfers to a public secondary school are evaluated to determine whether the student receives transfer credit for the classes. Secular criteria may include the following in addition to other secular criteria established by the governing body:

~~(A)~~ **(i)** The number of hours of classroom instructional time.

~~(B)~~ **(ii)** A review of the course syllabus that reflects the course requirements and materials.

~~(C)~~ **(iii)** Methods of assessment used in the course.

~~(D)~~ **(iv)** Whether the course is taught by a licensed teacher.

~~(2)~~ **(B)** The decision of whether to award academic credit is neutral as to, and does not involve any test for, religious content or denominational affiliation.

~~(3)~~ **(C)** A provision that a student who attends religious instruction under this section shall first seek to use a time period during a student instructional day (as defined in IC 20-30-2-2) that is not devoted to student instructional time to attend religious instruction. If a student is not able to attend religious instruction at a time other than during student instructional time, the student may not be released to attend



religious instruction for an amount of time per week that exceeds the amount established in subsection ~~(b)~~: **(c)**.

A student may be awarded a total of not more than two (2) elective academic credits under this subsection.

SECTION 5. IC 20-33-8-13.5, AS AMENDED BY P.L.238-2023, SECTION 1, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2025]: Sec. 13.5. (a) Discipline rules adopted by the governing body of a school corporation under section 12 of this chapter must:

- (1) prohibit bullying; and
- (2) include:
 - (A) provisions concerning education, parental involvement, and intervention;
 - (B) a detailed procedure for the expedited investigation of incidents of bullying that includes:
 - (i) appropriate responses to bullying behaviors, wherever the behaviors occur;
 - (ii) provisions for anonymous and personal reporting of bullying to a teacher or other school staff;
 - (iii) provisions that require a school to prioritize the safety of the victim;
 - (iv) timetables for reporting **the conclusion of a bullying incidents investigation** to the parents of both the targeted student and the alleged perpetrator in an expedited manner that is **not later than five (5) business days before the end of the next school day** after the **incident is reported; conclusion of the investigation;**
 - (v) timetables for reporting of bullying incidents to school counselors, school administrators, the superintendent, or law enforcement, if it is determined that reporting the bullying incident to law enforcement is necessary;
 - (vi) discipline provisions for teachers, school staff, or school administrators who fail to initiate or conduct an investigation of a bullying incident; ~~and~~
 - (vii) discipline provisions for false reporting of bullying; and
 - (viii) provisions to make a reasonable attempt to notify both the parent of a targeted student and the parent of an alleged perpetrator that the school is investigating a possible incident of bullying or similar misconduct before the end of the next school day after the school becomes aware of the possible incident; and**
 - (C) a detailed procedure outlining the use of follow-up



services that includes:

- (i) support services for the victim; and
- (ii) bullying education for the alleged perpetrator.

(b) The discipline rules described in subsection (a) may be applied regardless of the physical location in which the bullying behavior occurred, whenever:

- (1) the individual committing the bullying behavior and any of the intended targets of the bullying behavior are students attending a school within a school corporation; and
- (2) disciplinary action is reasonably necessary to avoid substantial interference with school discipline or prevent an unreasonable threat to the rights of others to a safe and peaceful learning environment.

(c) The discipline rules described in subsection (a) must prohibit bullying through the use of data or computer software that is accessed through a:

- (1) computer;
- (2) computer system;
- (3) computer network; or
- (4) cellular telephone or other wireless or cellular communications device.

(d) The discipline rules described in subsection (a) must include policies to allow a parent of a child in the school corporation to review any materials used in any bullying prevention or suicide prevention program.

(e) The discipline rules described in subsection (a) may include provisions to determine:

- (1) the severity of an incident of bullying; and
- (2) whether an incident of bullying may warrant the transfer of the victim or the alleged perpetrator to another school in the school corporation.

(f) This section may not be construed to give rise to a cause of action against a person or school corporation based on an allegation of noncompliance with this section. Noncompliance with this section may not be used as evidence against a school corporation in a cause of action.

(g) A record made of an investigation, a disciplinary action, or a follow-up action performed under rules adopted under this section is not a public record under IC 5-14-3.

(h) The department shall periodically review each policy adopted under this section to ensure the policy's compliance with this section.



President of the Senate

President Pro Tempore

Speaker of the House of Representatives

Governor of the State of Indiana

Date: _____ Time: _____

