



Licensing, Educator Advancement and Development

Information Bulletin

LEAD 25-001

June 2025

Monday, June 16, 2025

Date: School Districts, Educators Working Toward Licensure, Other Interested
To: Parties
From: Jennifer Kammerud, Director
LEAD Team (Licensing, Educator Advancement, and Development)
Subject: Reading and Language Arts Licensing Requirements (2023 Wisconsin Act 20)

This bulletin is meant to answer questions regarding licensure and the reading and language arts licensing requirements created in 2023 Wisconsin Act 20. Specific topics covered include:

- [What are the reading and language arts requirements contained in 2023 Wisconsin Act 20?](#)
- [What licenses require verification of completing the reading and language arts requirements?](#)
- [Does it matter what pathway to licensure I am pursuing to obtain one of the licenses listed?](#)
- [If I already hold a tier II or higher license, but I'm adding on one of the subjects that requires completion of the reading and language requirements, do those requirements apply to me?](#)
- [When do the reading and language arts requirements go into effect for licensure purposes?](#)
- [If I have obtained my licensure endorsement, but will submit my complete application and payment after June 30, 2025, will I have to verify I've completed the reading and language arts requirements?](#)
- [I graduated from my approved Wisconsin program but have not obtained my full license due to out-standing licensure requirements. Will I have to complete the reading and language arts requirements?](#)

- [I completed my Wisconsin program and met all licensure requirements at that time, but I never applied for my Wisconsin license. Do I have to complete the reading and language arts requirements?](#)
- [I'm currently working with an approved program headquartered out-of-state. Will I have to provide verification of completing the reading and language arts requirements?](#)
- [I'm currently working with an approved program headquartered out-of-state and will not complete my program by June 30, 2025. How do I complete the reading and language arts requirements?](#)
- [I'm currently working under a three-year license with stipulations \(LWS3\). Do I have to complete the reading and language arts requirements?](#)
- [I'm currently working under my third one-year license with stipulations \(LWS1\) in special education. Will I be given additional time to get the reading and language arts requirements completed?](#)
- [I'm currently working under a one-year license with stipulations \(LWS1\). How do the reading and language arts requirements affect me?](#)
- [My employing school district has provided professional development that is supposed to meet the reading and language arts requirements in 2023 Wisconsin Act 20. If I'm working under a one-year license with stipulations \(LWS1\) or board requested administrative license, does this meet the reading and language arts requirements?](#)
- [I'm pursuing the license via content test option to add early childhood. Do I have to meet reading and language arts requirements?](#)
- [I'm pursuing a charter school license. Do I have to verify completion of reading and language arts requirements in 2023 Wisconsin Act 20?](#)
- [I'm pursuing a Montessori license. Do I have to verify completion of reading and language arts requirements in 2023 Wisconsin Act 20?](#)
- [If I passed the Foundations of Reading Test \(FORT\) or completed the FORT alternative, does this meet reading and language arts requirements for licensure in 2023 Wisconsin Act 20?](#)
- [How do I verify that I have completed an approved course?](#)
- [Additional Resources.](#)

1. What are the reading and language arts requirements for licensure contained in 2023 Wisconsin Act 20?

[2023 Wisconsin Act 20](#) amended state law to require, among other things, that under Wisconsin State Statutes section [118.19\(12\)](#), "The department may not issue a license that authorizes the holder to teach reading or language arts to pupils in any prekindergarten class or in any of the grades from kindergarten to 6 unless the applicant has successfully completed instruction preparing the applicant to teach

reading and language arts...” This instruction must meet the requirements under Wisconsin Statutes section [118.015 \(1c\) \(b\)](#) and may not include three-cueing. The only instruction that meets these requirements is instruction approved by the department as part of an educator preparation program. Some educator preparation programs have made their approved courses available to those outside of those enrolled in their educator preparation. A list of those courses is [available](#).

2. What licenses require completion of the reading and language arts requirements?

Those applying for Tier II licenses that were authorized beginning in 2018.

- Birth to grade 3 regular education
- Birth to grade 3 special education
- K-9 elementary and middle school education
- K-12 cross-categorical special education
- K-12 reading teacher
- PK-12 reading specialist (administrative)

Tier II applications for completers of preparation programs authorized from 2004 to 2018.

- Early childhood elementary regular education
- Early childhood special education
- MC-EA regular education
- MC-EA cross-categorical special education (Emotional Behavioral Disability, Specific Learning Disability, Intellectual Disability, Cognitive Disability)
- EA-A cross-categorical special education (Emotional Behavioral Disability, Specific Learning Disability, Intellectual Disability, Cognitive Disability)
- EC-A reading teacher
- EC-A reading specialist (administrative)

Tier II applications for completers of preparation programs authorized prior to 2004.

- Early childhood PK-3
- Elementary grades 1-8 and 1-6
- Special education licenses including Early Childhood Exceptional Needs, Emotional Behavioral Disability, Specific Learning Disability, Intellectual Disability, and Cognitive Disability
- Reading teacher
- Reading specialist

3. Does it matter what pathway to licensure I am pursuing to obtain one of the licenses listed in [question number two](#)?

Yes. Those pursuing licensure via the American Board for the Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE) or license via reciprocity pathways do not have to verify completion of reading and language arts requirements per Wisconsin Statutes sections 118.197 and 118.193. Those pursuing licenses listed under question number two, via any other pathway, will need to verify completion of the reading and language arts requirements.

4. **If I already hold a tier II or higher license, but I'm adding on one of the subjects that requires completion of the reading and language requirements, do those requirements apply to me?**

Yes. If you are pursuing one of the [license areas impacted](#) through a pathway that is not via ABCTE or reciprocity, you will have to verify you have satisfied the reading and language arts requirements.

5. **When do the reading and language arts requirements go into effect for licensure purposes?**

July 1, 2025. Beginning on that date, educator preparation programs will no longer endorse candidates for licensure unless they have completed these requirements.

Those who completed an educator preparation program prior to July 1, 2025 in one of the [license areas impacted](#) must verify that they have met the reading and language arts requirements if they are submitting an application July 1, 2025 or later. Applications must be complete, including with payment prior to July 1, 2025, or the reading and language arts requirement will apply.

All out-of-state applicants for a license in one of the [license areas impacted](#), except for those pursuing a license via reciprocity, must verify that they have met the reading and language arts requirement beginning with applications received on July 1, 2025. Applications must be complete, including with payment prior to July 1, 2025, or the reading and language arts requirement will apply.

6. **If I have obtained my licensure endorsement, but will submit my complete application and payment after June 30, 2025, will I have to verify I've completed the reading and language arts requirements?**

Yes. If you are pursuing a [license that is impacted by this requirement](#), and submit an application on July 1, 2025, or later, you will have to verify you have completed the reading and language arts requirements contained in Wisconsin Act 20.

7. **I graduated from my approved Wisconsin educator preparation program but have not obtained my full license due to outstanding licensure requirements. Will I have to complete the reading and language arts requirements?**

Yes. You will need to reach out to your approved educator preparation program to determine what the additional requirements are and your options to satisfy them.

If your Wisconsin approved educator preparation program is no longer operating (e.g. Cardinal Stritch, Silver Lake College/Holy Family, Northland College), you can complete the reading and language arts requirement by enrolling in an [approved course](#).

8. **I completed my Wisconsin program and met all licensure requirements at that time, but I never applied for my Wisconsin license. Do I have to complete the reading and language arts requirements?**

For those pursuing an [impacted license](#), you will need to reach out to your approved program to determine what the additional requirements are and your options to satisfy them.

- 9. I'm currently working with an approved program headquartered out-of-state. Will I have to provide verification of completing the reading and language arts requirements?**

Yes, if you are pursuing licensure in a [license area impacted](#) by 2023 Wisconsin Act 20, you will need to provide verification of completing an approved reading and language arts course if you submit your complete application with payment after June 30, 2025.

- 10. I'm currently working with an approved program headquartered out-of-state and will not complete my program by June 30, 2025. How do I complete the reading and language arts requirements?**

If you do not complete your out-of-state program and submit a complete application with payment by June 30, 2025, you will have to complete an [approved course](#).

- 11. I'm currently working under a three-year license with stipulations (LWS3). Do I have to complete the reading and language arts requirements?**

Yes, if you are pursuing one of the [licenses impacted](#), you will need to provide evidence of completing an [approved course](#) if submitting your complete application with payment after June 30, 2025.

- 12. I'm currently working under my third one-year license with stipulations (LWS1) in special education. Will I be given additional time to get the reading and language arts requirements completed?**

No. Federal law under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) allows temporary licensure in special education for no more than three years.

- 13. I'm currently working under a one-year license with stipulations (LWS1). How do the reading and language arts requirements affect me?**

Those working under a LWS1 typically have until August 31st to complete their chosen pathway to licensure or meet renewal requirements. If you are pursuing one of the [licenses impacted](#), and are not using the ABCTE or reciprocity pathways, then you will be required to complete the reading and language arts requirements when applying for the full Tier II license with a complete application and payment submitted after June 30, 2025. If you are working with an approved educator preparation program in Wisconsin, please reach out to your program. If you are completing an out-of-state program, you will have to complete an [approved course](#).

- 14. My employing school district has provided professional development that is supposed to meet 2023 Wisconsin Act 20 requirements. If I'm working under a one-year license with stipulations (LWS1) or board requested administrative license, does this meet the reading and language arts requirements for licensure contained in the act?**

No. The professional development requirement is a different requirement in the law than the instruction that must be provided under the law for licensure purposes.

If you are working with a Wisconsin approved educator preparation program, you will need to reach out to your program to inquire what you will need to complete.

If you are 1) working with an out-of-state program and pursuing a license based on endorsement; 2) working to complete the three-year license with stipulations; 3) have outstanding licensure testing requirements from a Wisconsin program that is now closed; or 4) working to obtain an early childhood license via a content test, then you can complete an [approved course](#) to meet the requirements.

15. I'm pursuing the license via content test option to add early childhood. Do I have to meet reading and language arts requirements?

Yes. Early childhood regular education requires verification of the reading and language arts requirements contained in 2023 Wisconsin Act 20.

16. I'm pursuing a charter school license. Do I have to complete reading and language arts requirements contained in 2023 Wisconsin Act 20?

No. The charter school license is a Tier I license and therefore the reading and language arts requirements for licensure do not need to be completed.

17. I'm pursuing a Montessori license. Do I have to verify completion of reading and language arts requirements in 2023 Wisconsin Act 20?

No. Per Wisconsin Statutes section 118.194, the Montessori pathway does not have to verify this requirement.

18. If I passed the Foundations of Reading Test (FORT) or completed the FORT alternative, does this meet reading and language arts requirements for licensure in 2023 Wisconsin Act 20?

No. The FORT requirement for licensure is a distinct and separate requirement in state law from the reading and language arts requirements for licensure contained in 2023 Wisconsin Act 20.

19. How do I verify that I have completed an approved course?

You will need to reach out to the certification officer where you completed the approved course to get a completed PI-1626 reading and language arts verification form.

20. Additional Resources.

- [Submitting licensing questions](#)
- [PI 34 Administrative Code on licensure](#)
- [2023 Wisconsin Act 20](#)
- [Department of Public Instruction Act 20 FAQ](#)