

Testimony on the Credential Review Board

Sunset Review Committee
Representative Tim Brown, Chair
December 7, 2015

Chairman Brown and members of the Sunset Review Committee, I am Jessica Voltolini, director of the Office of Policy and Legislative Affairs at the Ohio Department of Education. Thank you for the opportunity to present you with information regarding the Credential Review Board.

Senate Bill 2 of the 125th General Assembly established the Credential Review Board. The board serves as a mechanism to assess alternative routes to educator licensure and to help candidates for alternative licensure develop individualized plans to earn a license.

The seven-member board consists of administrators with responsibility for human resources, other school or district administrators, classroom teachers, higher education representatives, and community and business leaders. Members are appointed through an open nomination process that seeks to ensure representation from across Ohio and from a plurality of viewpoints. Panels of board members representing these diverse viewpoints are convened on a monthly basis, or as needed, to review licensure requests. One Ohio Department of Education administrator spends one to two days preparing for each board meeting, while one support staff employee spends approximately 15 percent of work time on board-related activities.

The review panels utilize a holistic, flexible and solution-focused approach, taking into consideration such factors as an applicant's experience, academic qualifications and professional accomplishments that may serve as a basis for meeting licensure requirements through alternative means. Since its first meeting in June 2005, the board has reviewed nearly 970 individual cases. Based on the large number of cases reviewed, we believe that the current size of the board is suitable for efficient handling of the department's needs with regard to alternative educator licensing.

We respectfully recommend that the Credential Review Board be continued.

Thank you for your consideration. I'd be happy to address any questions that the committee may have.