



AAQEP Annual Report for 2024

Provider/Program Name:	College of St. Scholastica
End Date of Current AAQEP Accreditation Term (or “n/a” if not yet accredited):	June 30, 2026

PART I: Publicly Available Program Performance and Candidate Achievement Data

1. Overview and Context

This overview describes the mission and context of the educator preparation provider and the programs included in its AAQEP review.

The College of St. Scholastica is an independent private college located in Duluth, Minnesota. The College was founded in 1912 and sponsored by the Benedictine Sisters, with a mission of providing intellectual and moral preparation for responsible living and meaningful work in a context of Catholic Benedictine values.

The College offers programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels grounded in the liberal arts, with excellent professional programs and a particularly strong focus and reputation in the health sciences and nursing. The General Education program provides students with a foundation in the liberal arts and sciences, cultivating a conscientious use of knowledge that prepares them for responsible living in a global community. Central to these efforts is our particular attention given to the individual student. The College aspires to be a diverse and inclusive academic community of excellence.

The School of Education was first established as the Education Department in 1912, the same year the College was founded. The College recently moved from six disciplinary schools to three: School of Health Professions, School of Arts and Sciences and the Stender School of Leadership, Business and Professional Studies, where the Education Department resides.

The Education Department's Mission: To prepare and support teachers who are firmly grounded in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to promote student learning.

The Education Department Vision: To be nationally recognized for developing skilled and caring professionals prepared to educate students in a diverse and changing world.

Education Programs

The Education Department offers the following AAQEP-approved programs:

- Undergraduate Teaching Licensure (*Initial Licensure*)
- Graduate Teaching Licensure (GTL) (*Initial Licensure*)
- Graduate Academic Behavior Strategist Licensure (*Additional Licensure*)
- Graduate K-12 Reading Teaching Licensure (*Additional Licensure*)
- Master of Education (MEd) (*Advanced Programs*)
- Doctorate in Educational Leadership (*Advanced Programs*)

Public Posting URL

Part I of this report is posted at the following web address (accredited members filing this report must post at least Part I):

Direct Link to Report:

Part I of the report is also housed in the Accreditation portion of the following program web pages:

<https://www.css.edu/academics/programs/undergraduate/ba-bs-middle-secondary-education/?ecopen=accreditation>
<https://www.css.edu/academics/programs/undergraduate/bachelor-of-science-elementary-education/?ecopen=accreditation>
<https://www.css.edu/academics/programs/certificates/graduate-special-education-licensure/?ecopen=accreditation>
<https://www.css.edu/academics/programs/certificates/graduate-teaching-licensure/?ecopen=accreditation>
<https://www.css.edu/academics/programs/graduate/master-of-education/?ecopen=accreditation>
<https://www.css.edu/academics/programs/doctorate/doctor-of-educational-leadership/?ecopen=accreditation>
<https://www.css.edu/academics/programs/certificates/graduate-reading-teacher-licensure/>

2. Enrollment and Completion Data

Table 1 shows current enrollment and recent completion data for each program included in the AAQEP review.

Table 1. Program Specification: Enrollment and Completers for Academic Year 2023/2024

Degree or Certificate granted by the institution or organization	State Certificate, License, Endorsement, or Other Credential	Number of Candidates enrolled in most recently completed academic year (12 months ending 08/24)	Number of Completers in most recently completed academic year (12 months ending 08/24)
<i>Programs that lead to initial teaching credentials</i>			
Bachelor of Science	Initial Certification: Elementary Education (Grades K-6)	50	20
Bachelor of Arts	Initial Certification: Biology (Grades 5-12)	1	0
	Initial Certification: Chemistry (Grades 5-12)	1	0
	Initial Certification: English (Grades 5-12)	6	1
	Initial Certification: Mathematics (Grades 5-12)	5	1
	Initial Certification: Social Studies (Grades 5-12)	18	1

	Initial Certification: Instrumental Music (Grades K-12)	3	1
	Initial Certification: Vocal Music (Grades K-12)	4	1
	Initial Certification: Spanish (Grades K-12)	2	1
Graduate Certificate	Initial Certification: Elementary Education (Grades K-6)	40	17
	Initial Certification: Biology (Grades 5-12)	11	3
	Initial Certification: Chemistry (Grades 5-12)	1	0
	Initial Certification: English (Grades 5-12)	13	7
	Initial Certification: Mathematics (Grades 5-12)	4	2
	Initial Certification: Social Studies (Grades 5-12)	17	4

	Initial Certification: Spanish (Grades K-12)	3	3
Total for programs that lead to initial credentials		179	62
<i>Programs that lead to additional or advanced credentials for already-licensed educators</i>			
Graduate Certificate	Academic and Behavioral Strategist Licensure (Grades K-12)	24	5
Graduate Certificate	K-12 Reading Teacher Licensure	32	3
Total for programs that lead to additional/advanced credentials		56	8
<i>Programs that lead to credentials for other school professionals or to no specific credential</i>			
Master of Education	Non-Licensure	74	29
Doctorate in Educational Leadership	Non-Licensure	27	0 (First cohort completes in May 2025)
Total for additional programs		101	29
TOTAL enrollment and productivity for all programs		336	99

Unduplicated total of all program candidates and completers	314	99
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Added or Discontinued Programs

Any programs within the AAQEP review that have been added or discontinued within the past year are listed below. (This list is required only from providers with accredited programs.)

We have paused enrollment in our undergraduate Elementary Education Degree Completion program. This pause will allow us to investigate the effectiveness of the exiting format.

3. Program Performance Indicators

The program performance information in Table 2 applies to the academic year indicated in Table 1.

Table 2. Program Performance Indicators

A. Total enrollment in the educator preparation programs shown in Table 1. This figure is an unduplicated count, i.e., individuals earning more than one credential may be counted in more than one line above but only once here.				
336				
B. Total number of unique completers (across all programs) included in Table 1. This figure is an unduplicated count, i.e., individuals who earned more than one credential may be counted in more than one line above but only once here.				
99				
C. Number of recommendations for certificate, license, or endorsement included in Table 1.				
75 total licensure recommendations.				
	Tier 4	Tier 3	Tier 2	Total
English (5-12)	1	7		8
Elementary Education (K-6)	3	27		30
Biology (9-12)		3		3

Chemistry (9-12)		1		1
Social Studies (5-12)		5		5
Vocal Music (K-12)		1		1
Mathematics (5-12)		4		4
Spanish (K-12)		3		3
General Science (5-8)*		4		4
Academic and Behavioral Specialist (K-12)**	1	5		6
K-12 Reading Teacher Licensure**	6	4		10
Total	11	64		75
<p>*General Science is offered in conjunction with Biology licensure.</p> <p>**Additional Licensure Completers will often wait until their licensure renewal date to add these fields. As such, the number of completers who are recommended for licensure in any given year does not necessarily correlate to the number of completers in that year.</p>				
<p>D. Cohort completion rates for candidates who completed the various programs within their respective program's expected timeframe and in 1.5 times the expected timeframe.</p>				
<p>Undergraduate: 100%</p> <p>GTL: 98%</p> <p>Literacy Instruction: 100%</p> <p>Academic Behavioral Specialist: 100%</p> <p>Master of Education: 93%</p>				
<p>E. Summary of state license examination results, including teacher performance assessments, and specification of any examinations on which the pass rate (cumulative at time of reporting) was below 80%.</p>				
<p>Minnesota no longer requires state licensure examinations, called MTLEs, for our initial licensure programs. Minnesota does require the edTPA. The results for the edTPA are shared below.</p> <p>edTPA Scores</p> <p>The aggregate edTPA scores for our elementary program completers show various results in meeting the 80% threshold. We are disaggregating the data by program level to better address the nuanced pass rates. Overall, our edTPA scores are positive. The GTL edTPA scores for Elementary Mathematics, English-language arts, and Secondary Science exceeded the pass rates.</p>				

Graduate and undergraduate elementary students took the Elementary Mathematics edTPA, with pass rates for Task 1, 2, and Task 3 exceeding the 80% pass rates. Two Graduate secondary mathematics students exceeded the pass rates for Task 2, and two undergraduate secondary mathematics students exceeded the pass rates for Task 3. Three graduate world language students exceeded the pass rate for task 1. Three undergraduate secondary history students exceeded the pass rate for Tasks 1 and 3.

Undergraduate and Graduate Teacher Licensure edTPA 2023-2024 pass rates below 80%

Undergraduate Teaching Licensure

- Secondary History: Task 2 66% (n=3)
- Secondary Mathematics: Task 1 50% (n=2)
- Secondary Mathematics: Task 2 50% (n=2)

Graduate Teaching Licensure

The GTL program had three elementary students who chose the literacy task.

- Secondary Mathematics: Task 1 50% (n=2)
- Secondary Mathematics: Task 3 50% (n=2)
- World Language: Taks 2 0 (n=3)
- World Language: Taks 3 66% (n=3)

All licensure students are provided with faculty support and a remediation plan that requires them to resubmit edTPA tasks that have not met the required threshold.

F. Narrative explanation of **evidence available from program completers**, with a characterization of findings.

Licensure Programs:

For initial licensure programs at the graduate and undergraduate levels, our 2023-2024 exit survey data indicates several strengths. Exit survey data was collected with a 30% response rate and is aggregated by programs. Licensure programs set a threshold minimum mean score of 3.0 (out of 4), and at least 90% of participants chose 3 or 4 on survey items.

Exit survey data is gathered using a four-point Likert Scale (4=very satisfied, 3=satisfied, 2=dissatisfied, 1=very dissatisfied) to assess various aspects of the program. The survey is divided into four categories that evaluate the students' satisfaction with different aspects of the teacher education program. These categories include their readiness to teach, work with diverse learners, preparation for the profession, and satisfaction with the college supervisor and cooperating teacher.

The completers of our licensure program who completed the survey in 2023-2024 expressed high satisfaction with the program across all areas. Several areas were particularly strong and are noted as follows: preparedness to teach subject matter, instructional planning, design and strategizing, the use of formative and summative assessments, utilizing digital and interactive technologies to achieve academic goals, effectively teaching students from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds, creating environments where all can learn and be respected, and the utilization of feedback to improve. 56 of 66 survey items met or exceeded 3.5 on the mean score for the survey data.

The 2023-2024 exit survey data also point to needed improvement for our students in the following areas. They met the mean score of 3.0 but fell below the 90% threshold:

- 1) Coherence between coursework and field experiences prior to student teaching
- 2) Quality of fieldwork prior to student teaching
- 3) Design long-range instructional plans to meet curricular goals
- 4). Differentiate for students that have mental health needs
- 5) Differentiate for students who are gifted and talented
- 6) Collaborate with parents and guardians to support student learning.

Our licensure programs have focused on differentiation, which has been and continues to be an important focus area. We believe the current comprehensive curriculum review and revision aligned to the new MN Standards of Effective Practices provides an opportunity to see how and where instruction, practice, and field experiences can be improved. Focus group feedback has consistently highlighted students value their time spent in classrooms prior to student teaching and believe it is an essential component of their success.

Additional Licensure

Special Education and K12 Reading Teacher Licensure

An analysis of the 2023-2024 Special Education program data is difficult due to a continued lower-than-desired response rate on the Exit Survey (n=1). Based on the single n, it would not be appropriate to report findings. The target is an 85% threshold on responses that meet or exceed the 3 or above mean score. Challenges persist in collecting this data. Though this program is a cohort model, students are not completing at the same time, making focus groups difficult. This last year was compounded by a

rare, small cohort size of 2. We changed our process for distributing the exit survey. Surveys are currently deployed to completers by our professional program advisor at the time of their conferral. We will continue to explore options to increase response rates.

Over the 2023-2024 academic year, we have implemented a new process for our K12 Reading Teacher Licensure completers. In the past, our K12 Reading Licensure completers were included in overall certificate program data, which didn't allow us to disaggregate certificate completion data for our advanced program. When students complete the program, the online program advisor has them complete a program exit survey. The target is an 85% threshold on responses that meet or exceed the 3 or above mean score.

Advanced Programs

Master of Education

In our analysis of the exit survey for the 2023-2024 academic year, we identified the following strengths and challenges of the program. The survey assesses three categories: the overall quality of the program, the quality of instruction provided by the Master of Education faculty, and questions aligned with the program outcomes. The goal is to achieve an 85% of scores achieving a mean score of 3 or above on a five-point Likert Scale survey (5=Very Satisfied, 4=Satisfied, 3=Neutral, 2=Dissatisfied, 1=Very Dissatisfied). Open-ended comments are also collected and analyzed to identify trends for continuous improvement efforts.

Overall, the results are impressive, with all scores achieving the 3-point mean score. The majority of survey results are in the range of 4.0-4.71. Top mean scores and program completer comments suggest that the program had a positive impact on the student's ability to 1) Apply current education theory to increase student learning(mean 4.71); 2) Apply new teaching strategies to increase student learning (mean 4.71); 3) Apply effective culturally responsive classroom strategies (mean 4.57); 4) Implement learner-centered technology in my practice (mean 4.57) and 5) Think critically about issues that impact schools (mean 4.57).

The lowest mean score was 3.43 (LMS Course layout). The other two lower scores, with results of 3.86, are related to live synchronous sessions and archived webinar (Zoom) sessions. While the mean score meets the target of 3.0, the overall threshold is below desired at 75%. These three areas will require additional examination and discussion with faculty to address possible actions.

Doctorate of Educational Leadership (EdD)

The Education Doctorate (EdD) program will have program completers in the spring semester of 2025 and, therefore, does not have exit survey results. However, the program gathers feedback from key constituents in other ways to support its improvement

efforts. These key constituents include students, faculty, a dedicated program advisor, and dissertation chairs. The program employs various data collection methods, including individual and group meetings, course evaluations, formative surveys integrated into courses, and open forums known as "Conversation Cafe" sessions. Faculty members leverage college-created course evaluation surveys and informal feedback surveys to gather insights from students, enabling them to refine their courses and assignments for continuous improvement. Furthermore, the program director and advisor have established progress monitoring protocols to systematically collect data regarding student progress and program milestones.

Continuous Improvement Efforts: Based on feedback from constituents, we have revised the first and second year research and professional learning community courses to enhance students' writing and research skills. We created an updated set of ten program milestones to align with key signature assignments, which supports the concurrent dissertation model. In addition, we have built-in strategic scaffolding assignments to support student success.

We are now implementing these changes for Cohort 2 and are fully implementing these changes for Research III, which requires students to complete a robust draft of Section 1 of the dissertation. We continue to use informal and formal feedback and data from dissertation chairs and the review of student artifacts to help us understand how to best support students and make the appropriate changes.

G. Narrative explanation of **evidence available from employers of program completers**, with a characterization of findings.

Licensure Programs

The Employer Survey (also known as the Transition to Teaching (TTT) survey) provides information on how our students are transitioning into the profession. The TTT survey is aggregated to include the undergraduate and graduate programs. Like the exit survey data, licensure programs at St. Scholastica set a mean of 3.0 (out of 4) as the goal for each survey item.

Responses for 2022-2023 completers from the alumni and employers are still in process; as such, we do not have data to report. The survey was deployed with (1) reminder and yielded a total of two responses. We will redeploy again in January to solicit additional responses. Our Data Coordinator left the College, which impacted the timing of the survey. We have a plan in place to ensure future data collection that aligns with reporting timelines.

Advanced Programs

The Master of Education program, K12 Reading Teacher Licensure, and Special Education Programs do not collect data from employers. The EdD program does not have program completers yet and does not plan to collect employer data.

H. Narrative explanation of how the program investigates **employment rates for program completers**, with a characterization of findings. This section may also indicate rates of completers' ongoing education, e.g., graduate study.

We rely on a combination of student self-reporting, our alumni office, the CSS Office of Institutional Effectiveness, and annual public-school district employment data provided by PELSB for this information for our initial licensure candidates.

For advanced programs, we ask a survey question about their employment. Additionally, graduate and advanced program students are asked to share their current employment status and any promotions or career changes.

The following are the 2022-2023 undergraduate completer employment rates provided by the St. Scholastica's Office of Institutional Effectiveness. The College does not collect graduate employment rates at this time.

2022-2023	Count	Percentage
Total Survey Responses (Knowledge rate)	23	65.71%
Respondents who submitted	4	17.39%
Submissions from other sources	19	82.61%
Those Working (Working and continuing education combined)	23	100%
Total Undergraduate Education Graduates	35	

Within six months of graduation, 100%* of recent graduates are employed, pursuing continuing education, in the military or volunteering. Disclaimer: *Survey data reported 23 of 23 respondents out of 35 graduates.

4. Candidate Academic Performance Indicators

Tables 3 and 4 report on select measures of candidate/completer performance related to AAQEP Standards 1 and 2, including the program's expectations for successful performance and indicators of the degree to which those expectations are met.

Table 3. Expectations and Performance on Standard 1: Candidate and Completer Performance

Provider-Selected Measures	Explanation of Performance Expectation	Level or Extent of Success in Meeting the Expectation
Entrance and Exit Mean GPA	<p>Undergraduate Admission Minimum GPA: 2.8 Undergraduate Program Continuation Minimum GPA: 2.8</p> <p>Graduate Admission Minimum GPA: 2.8 Graduate Program Continuation Minimum GPA: 3.0</p>	<p>Mean GPA for Completer Cohorts in each program:</p> <p>Undergraduate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entrance: 3.68 Exit: 3.63 <p>GTL Certificate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entrance: 3.95 Exit: 3.93 <p>ABS Certificate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entrance: 3.93 Exit: 3.94 <p>Literacy Certificate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entrance: 3.94 Exit: 3.97 <p>MEd</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entrance: 3.99 Exit: 3.98
Key Assessment Attainment	Initial Licensure	Initial Licensure

	<p>100% attainment of standards was evaluated in the Key Assessments for UND and GTL Program.</p> <p>Additional Licensure SPED 90% will score 86% or better on key assessments for Academic and Behavioral Strategist Program</p> <p>Advanced Programs 90% will score 86% or better on key assignments</p>	<p>For initial licensure, 78% of courses where key assessments were measured 100% of the standards were attained. Those courses that did not meet 100% were measured at 83%, 94%, 96%, and 97%. Those who did not earn 100% are provided the opportunity to revise with 1:1 faculty support and resubmit.</p> <p>Additional Licensure SPED 100% of students scored 86% or better on key assessments for Academic and Behavioral Strategist Program. One key assessment is placed within a course that has the potential to transcend across multiple semesters, so this data is collected and reviewed regularly.</p> <p>Advanced programs Master of Education</p> <p>A review of the key assessment data shows only that 100% of students scored 86% or better on the capstone key assessment. The course was offered six times over the past academic year. All other key assessment data exceeded the threshold criteria.</p>
Professional Behavior Forms	90% of responses for each question will be a 3 or higher, meaning the behavior was observed most of the time	<p>Undergraduate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elem Ed Completers exceeded the 90% threshold in all areas.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary Completers exceeded the 90% threshold in all areas. <p>GTL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elem Ed Completers exceeded the 90% threshold in all responses received • Secondary Completers exceeded the 90% threshold in all areas.
Performance Assessment: edTPA	<p>70% or more of program completers are expected to meet the passing scores on each of the three tasks.</p> <p>Established minimum scores for Task 1- Planning (13), Task 2- Instruction (13), and Task 3- Assessment (12).</p> <p>Spanish:</p> <p>Established minimum scores for Task 1- Planning (10), Task 2- Instruction (13), and Task 3- Assessment (9).</p>	<p>This expectation was successfully met with the following edTPA scores that exceed 70% passing scores on specific edTPA tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elementary Mathematics Task 1=93% • Elementary Mathematics Task 2= 93% • Elementary Mathematics Task 3= 93% • Secondary English Language Arts Task 1= 100% • Secondary English Language Arts Task 2 = 100% • Secondary English Language Arts Task 3= 100% • Secondary History/ Social Studies Task 1 = 100% • Secondary History/ Social Studies Task 2 = 88% • Secondary History/ Social Studies Task 3 = 100% • Secondary Science Task 1= 100% • Secondary Science Task 2=100% • Secondary Science Task 3 = 100%

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K-12 Performing Arts Task 1=100% • K-12 Performing Arts Task 2=100% • K-12 Performing Arts Task 3=100% • Secondary Mathematics Task 1= 50% • Secondary Mathematics Task 2=75% • Secondary Mathematics Task 3= 75% • K-12 World Language Task 1 =100% • K-12 World Language Task 2 =0% • K-12 World Language Task 3 =66%
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Table 4. Expectations and Performance on Standard 2: Completer Professional Competence and Growth

Provider-Selected Measures	Explanation of Performance Expectation	Level or Extent of Success in Meeting the Expectation
Student Teacher Final Evaluations	85% of responses for each question will be a 3 or higher. The rating is completed by the cooperating teacher.	<p>Undergrad:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Elem Ed cohort (n=14) met or exceeded the 85% goal • *3% of the Secondary Ed cohort (n=7) met or exceeded the 85% goal <p>GTL:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 71% of The Elem Ed cohort (n=15) met or exceeded the 85% goal • The Secondary Ed cohort (n=18) met or exceeded the 85%
Employer Survey – sent to employers of previous year’s completer cohort	85% of responses for each question will be a 3 or higher	Data collection in progress, noted above.

5. Notes on Progress, Accomplishment, and Innovation

This section describes program accomplishments, efforts, and innovations (strengths and outcomes) to address challenges and priorities over the past year.

Program Accomplishments

Overall Licensure Program Accomplishments

In the 2023-2024 academic year, all initial licensure programs successfully implemented a new edTPA policy focusing on performance expectations and retake guidance. Implementing this policy allowed for the development of an edTPA support structure that empowers and gives teacher candidates direct control over meeting the expectations of the performance assessment. We are pleased to report that elementary and secondary program completers' performance on most of the three edTPA tasks *exceeded* the 70% requirement set by PELSB and the 80% performance expectation set by AAQEP. We believe the changes to our edTPA support structure impact the improved scores on this performance assessment (See Table 4 above).

- In all of our licensure programs, the completion rates for candidates who completed the various programs and within their respective timeframes continue to be strong, as evidenced in the Performance indicator data in response to prompt D above. We can attribute this accomplishment to our individualized academic advising and student support structures at CSS.

Undergraduate Licensure programs' unique accomplishments.

- Partnership with area school district to provide online tutoring support: From 9/1/2023-6/30/2024, provided 432 tutoring sessions to approximately 63 different K-12 students

Graduate Special Education Licensure unique accomplishments

- Established partnerships with Regions 9 & 10 school districts; eligibility of our institution to participate as an IHE Special Education Teacher Pipeline Grant preparation partner.
- Continued participation in the IHE Collaborative with a statewide focus on recruiting and retaining special education teachers

Graduate Teaching Licensure (GTL) unique accomplishments.

Online Delivery:

- Continued work on improving the adopted graduate education program standard online course design and applying the Regular Substantive Interactions (RSI) policy required of online programs. The GTL program's implementation of increased time allocated for synchronous course meetings from 90 minutes to 150 minutes each week is in its 2nd year of success.
- Adjusted the schema to offer the first clinical experience, EDU 5250, upon entry into the program due to an increased number of GTL students teaching on a Tier II license. The initial clinical course places a strong emphasis on teaching competencies, including classroom management, instructional planning, and effective instructional strategies. Field clinical experiences have been extended from 8 to 16 weeks. These changes provide students with increased schedule flexibility to complete their clinical hour requirements and more time to complete course assignments.
- Addressing the challenge of course content density. Previous iterations of GTL courses are perceived as overly demanding. The program is working to align with the College's Workload calculator requirements. The primary objective is to create a more balanced and manageable learning experience for GTL students, almost all working adults. These adjustments reflect the program's commitment to supporting graduate students.

These schedule and workload changes are part of ongoing continuous improvement efforts informed by policy, student focus group sessions, survey results, and faculty feedback.

Efforts to Address Challenges

The Education Department faces several challenges that require innovative and strategic solutions. Our teacher licensure programs are experiencing declining enrollment, which mirrors a nationwide decline in interest in teaching careers. Additionally, our six education programs are experiencing reduced full-time faculty resources and the loss of a data coordinator due to his resignation last year. We have been unable to replace this position, which requires several people to address the data requirements for licensure and non-licensure programs. Three of our programs, the Master of Education, Special Education, and Graduate Teaching Licensure, rely heavily on adjunct faculty, which adds additional oversight burdens on those program directors. In general, our full-time faculty has decreased to nearly half of what it was five years ago, creating additional operational and program oversight pressures.

In response, we have initiated a curriculum realignment strategy for the initial teacher licensure programs. This curriculum approach streamlines course offerings to meet the new Standards of Effective Practice while ensuring consistency across undergraduate and

graduate licensure programs. A key component of this curriculum initiative involves restructuring course credits, particularly in the Graduate Teacher Licensure (GTL) program, where most courses are currently two-credit offerings. These two credit courses create unsustainable workload challenges for both students and faculty. Additionally, we aim to reduce the number of courses to help with course oversight.

Over the last year, we have implemented a significant administrative reorganization to address oversight and management challenges. The department transitioned from three chairs to two, with a strategic consolidation of teacher licensure oversight under a new Chair of Teacher Licensure role. This structural change has created a more systematic approach to program management, including establishing a new program director for undergraduate education programs.

While this reorganization has required staff to assume additional responsibilities, it represents an effort to enhance programmatic coherence and oversight. By aligning curriculum, standardizing key assessments, and creating more parallel progression across undergraduate and graduate programs, we hope to address the challenges impacted by our reduced faculty capacity.

Efforts to Address Challenges (Additional Licensure and Advanced Programs)

The K12 Reading Teacher Licensure program developed a new curriculum that better aligned with the Minnesota Science of Reading Standards. Through several rounds with key constituents, we designed a program that meets state requirements and educational standards. We recruited highly qualified faculty, both full-time and adjunct, to develop a comprehensive curriculum, completing a thorough state approval process for new curriculum and syllabi. Additionally, the faculty collaborates with the instructional design team to develop Brightspace courses and prepare for full program implementation in spring 2025. The K12 Reading Teacher Licensure and Master in Education programs will continue collaborating across online education graduate programs to ensure improved online program quality and synchronous Zoom sessions.

Graduate Special Education Licensure

The Graduate Special Education Licensure program struggles with a small “n” in completer surveys. This may be attributed to the variation in time when students complete the program. A new system was implemented in Fall 2023. The program advisor sends the completer survey at the end of each term when certificates are conferred to ensure all completers are captured, and the completers have the name of the survey sender recognized. The SpEd program will continue collaborating with other online education graduate programs on piloting an open-source rubric to ensure a high-quality online course experience.

Priorities in the Current Agenda (Licensure Programs)

Our focus for the 2023-2024 academic year was to reimagine licensure programs that align with the newly established Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice (SEPs). To achieve this goal, the education program chairs developed a curriculum revision process incorporating Design Thinking and Project Management components. This process has included working groups and listening sessions to understand our constituents' needs and expectations.

We have begun to implement the following:

- Create streamlined undergraduate and graduate courses that parallel each other as much as possible. Where possible, seek opportunities to cross-list courses to provide better oversight of program management and quality.
- Create program scope and sequence of the new SEPs that provide opportunities for common learning experiences and key assessments.
- Provide professional development for faculty to better understand and address the intent and vision of the new MN SEPs in their courses.
- Assigned faculty leads to develop course prototypes.
- Create course prototypes and syllabi that reflect the new SEPs
- Engage with key constituents to address the needs of the schools and K12 students we serve.
- Review our program licensure formats to better address the needs of potential students.
- Acknowledge and integrate AI in the teacher preparation space.

Innovations (Licensure Programs)

As we move forward, we seek meaningful partnerships to tackle the growing demand for a knowledgeable and skilled educator workforce and the current teacher shortage. Our focus is on achieving these goals through a revamped curriculum offering various innovative solutions.

- Collaborations to support "Grow Your Own" initiatives,
- Enhanced partnerships with community colleges to enable degree completion programs
- Exploring opportunities to address the needs of rural schools
- Creating paid residency programs
- Expanding our Educational Studies programs.

Innovations (Additional and Advanced Programs)

The Education Department launched an online Doctorate of Educational Leadership program in June 2021. The program represents an intentional new approach to doctoral education, with the first and second cohorts currently in progress and a third cohort set to begin in June 2025. The program has demonstrated its commitment to innovative educational practices through its design and strategic initiatives. The program welcomes students from diverse social sector backgrounds and has worked to create an inclusive learning environment that draws strength from professionals' varied experiences in education, healthcare, nonprofit leadership, community development, and public service. Central to the program's approach is an innovative concurrent dissertation model, structured in four sections, that emphasizes the scholarly-practitioner perspective and communicating for impact. This model prioritizes equity principles and practical application, challenging traditional dissertation formats. The program prepares social sector leaders to develop solutions to organizational issues by integrating scholarly research with leadership strategies.

In addition, the program has been accepted into the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED), a critical affiliation that provides guiding principles grounded in equity, social justice, and collaborative opportunities. The CPED membership offers faculty and students access to a national professional development network, scholarly resources, and innovative educational practices. Education faculty attend an annual convening meeting where members share strategies and practices.

Master of Education

The MEd launched the newly designed research courses and offered the classes each semester during the 2023-2024 academic year. Not only were the courses redesigned, but also the placement of when we offered the courses changed so that they followed each other in sequence. Students are now finishing the research block courses in two semesters versus four. Over the last year, we have seen a dramatic increase in student completion rates with our new model. In comparison, many M.Ed. students carried incompletes and in-progress grades due to our program's prior research course design.

We are in the process of developing a study abroad program designed explicitly for Education students. Historically, study abroad options have posed challenges for our Education students due to when study abroad experiences were offered. Feedback from students indicates that a summer program may be more beneficial.