• What is purpose of the standard teaching certificate assessment?

The purpose of licensure is to help the state execute its public responsibility to ensure that teachers are given full professional certification only when they have demonstrated their ability to support student learning at a level consistent with state standards and their stage of professional preparation (initial vs. standard). This licensing function is primary. It defines and enforces a standard of performance for the profession.

The premise is that we are in a standards based system and we want teachers to demonstrate what they know and are able to do.

The second stage certificate was put in place because teaching is a performance-based profession. That “performance” component cannot be assessed at the initial licensure because the teacher candidate is not yet practicing. The standard teaching certificate assessment, therefore, gives the state an opportunity to assess a teacher’s classroom practice and award certification responsibly, on the basis of classroom performance.

The plan calls for the following components to process:

- A mentor or support group;
- Professional growth opportunities;
- Summative evaluation process to document specific outcomes;
- Pilot of a portfolio review as the summative evaluation.
PLAN B
THE PLAN

Year One

· **Mentor or support team**
  Advisors meet with new teachers in their classrooms to observe, coach and offer support. They assist with planning, classroom management, classroom resources and any other needs identified by the novice teacher.

· **Formative Assessment**
  The relationship between the mentor and the novice teacher is guided by an ongoing cycle of formative assessment. The self-assessment tool will be developed based on the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards. (an example of a formative assessment tool used in California is attached). Results of the formative assessment tool will be the basis for developing a professional growth plan, and serve as a catalyst for professional reflection, dialogue and development.

· **Professional Development Plan**
  The plan is developed with input from the mentor. It is approved jointly by the mentor and the principal. The principal adds value to the process by encouraging connection between individual teacher development, school and district goals.

· **Professional Development Activities**
  A strand of professional development activities, tailored to the needs of the beginning teacher should be developed in collaboration with the local school district, or approved by the local school district. This professional development must be based on the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards and focused on mastering the essentials of the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards. A key focus of the development will focus on the issues that beginning teachers struggle with, including,
  - classroom management,
  - instruction,
  - assessment,
  - discipline specific content and pedagogy to further effective teaching practice in a given discipline, and
  - other activities based on the results of the self-assessment.

**Job Embedded Professional Development Activities**
Just as in the teaching and learning process, the **what** of the professional development is as important as the **how**. One of the most promising new approaches to professional growth in education is job-embedded learning, learning that occurs as teachers and administrators engage their daily work activities. Job embedded learning results when educators share what they have learned from their teaching experiences; reflect on specific work experiences to uncover new understanding; and listen to colleagues share best practices they have discovered while trying out new programs or planning and implementing a project. A number of formal structures can be created within the school to promote job embedded learning.
Year Two

· **Reflective Practice Professional Development Activities**
These sessions should continue to build on the professional development from year one. The development must make use of the portfolio development process to strengthen application of the Illinois Professional Teaching standards to teaching practice.

Sessions must focus on application of standards and reflective analysis to the teacher’s school and classroom context. They should focus on analyzing data related to student outcomes, evaluating teacher practice, evaluating the instructional plan and activities, all using the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards, with the objective of improving student outcomes.

· **Formative Assessment**
The formative assessment tool can be used to gauge a teachers’ growth and to prepare them for the summative assessment in year three.

Year Three

· **Professional Development Activities**
Professional development activities, should be continued to strengthen teaching practice. They should continue to focus on improving a teacher’s classroom practice using analysis and reflection.

· **Summative evaluation**
This will be conducted at the end of the third year. This summative evaluation will be retrospective, document achievement, habits, and specific outcomes.

One possibility is to use the Charlotte Danielson framework for teaching to construct the assessment instrument. Teachers should also be required to submit a reflective writing piece.

The evaluation will be reviewed by the two accomplished teachers (if there is not agreement it is adjudicated by a third teacher), using a region-based structure to issue a recommendation to the State Board of education and Teacher certification Board for the award of a Standard Teaching Certificate.

*The second stage certificate was put in place because teaching is a performance-based activity. That “performance” component cannot be assessed at the initial licensure because the teacher candidate is not yet practicing. The standard teaching certificate assessment, therefore, gives the state an opportunity to assess a teacher’s classroom practice and award certification responsibly, on the basis of classroom performance. The summative evaluation instrument must be focused on classroom performance.*
In pilot districts:

**Portfolio Development**
New teachers develop a professional portfolio that documents their professional growth and helps to direct ongoing self-assessment and reflection. The portfolio artifacts will be accompanied by reflective and analytical writing on the importance of each artifact and how it meets the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards.

**Portfolio submission and review**
The novice teacher portfolio is submitted to a regional structure which makes use of two accomplished teachers to evaluate the portfolio (if there is no agreement it is adjudicated by a third teacher). A recommendation is issued to the State Board of education and Teacher certification Board for the award of a Standard Teaching Certificate.

The pilot of the portfolio process will be conducted over a three-year period, with an evaluation at the end of each year. During the course of the third year, information gathered should be used to inform a planning process for statewide implementation.

**Year Four**

- **Professional Development**
All novice teachers should continue to receive professional development. Teachers who did not achieve an appropriate level of assessment on the summative assessment or on the portfolio should receive intense mentoring and professional development to help them address areas of concern.

- **Summative assessment repeat**
This is a second chance for teachers to pass the assessment and demonstrate their skills, knowledge and classroom performance in meeting the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards.

- **Portfolio re-submission**
This is a second chance for teachers to pass the assessment and demonstrate their skills, knowledge and classroom performance in meeting the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards.
PLAN B

Key steps to the implementation process:

1. Develop a formative assessment tool using the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards.

2. Develop a summative assessment tool according to the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards.


4. Plan and implement training of mentors and assessors.

5. Identify urban, suburban and rural districts for piloting the portfolio evaluation process.

6. Pilot the portfolio assessment.

7. Use information from pilot to develop a scale-up plan to go statewide.

8. Develop state and district capacities for:
   - program administration;
   - data management;
   - portfolio evaluation.