• Who is entering teaching?
  ▪ first career (mid-twenties).
  ▪ mid-career (late thirties – early forties).

• What is their preparation experience?
  ▪ They are prepared in a variety of ways in programs which are required to
    meet the NCATE 2000 Standards, which include use of portfolios to meet
    the requirement for performance-based assessment.

  ▪ They are encountering new challenges and learning new things

• What do they want/need?
  ▪ Collegial support
    - team work and support from mentors, colleagues and principals
  
  ▪ Professional opportunities for:
    - developing skills and expertise;
    - assuming leadership roles;
    - sharing what they know.
  
  ▪ Fair pay and differential pay structure
    - rewards for good teaching and the acquisition of new skills;
    - assuming new roles and responsibility;
    - good pay to live comfortably.
  
  ▪ Seek and expect satisfaction.
PLAN B

- 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 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.

- What is the recommended performance based assessment?

After four years of teaching, candidates must demonstrate
  o growth as a student of the subjects they teach;
  o growth as a teacher who thinks about best practices in instructional methods and assessment strategies; and
  o growth as a person who maintains the disposition and personal skills that characterize effective teachers.

This is an opportunity for teachers to show themselves as reflective practitioners who think systematically about how to integrate content and sound pedagogical practices, as well as how to adapt content and methodology according to the experiential levels of their students.
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The assessment should consist of a portfolio which reflects a teacher’s development of a teaching philosophy and knowledge of content, and demonstrates the use of planning, instructional methods, student assessment and professional relationships that help students achieve and surpass the Illinois Learning Standards.

A portfolio is a deliberate collection of classroom evidence submitted in response to a set of questions and prompts that elicit the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to illustrate that a teacher is:

- purposeful in making instructional decisions;
- uses the appropriate activities, materials and methods to meet the instructional goals and meet the learning needs of the particular groups of students;
- creates an environment for productive learning, taking into consideration the cultural context of students; and
- reflects on teaching practice.

The portfolio should include:

- a full unit of instruction, with emphasis on two specific lessons within that unit. This should be supported by lesson plans, classroom resources, assignment sheets, exams and samples of student work and any other relevant artifacts. The artifacts will be accompanied by a written analysis of the teaching reflected and how it meets the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards.

- A video of a classroom teaching session with a written analysis of the teaching reflected.

A panel review team of two assessors will review each portfolio. The assessment team should be from a different school district.

Recommended model:

- Connecticut Beginning Educator Support and Training Program.
- INTASC Performance Assessment Development Project.
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- Why a portfolio?

1) Colleges of education across the state are now required to use a performance-based assessment to assess teacher candidates. This means that when beginning teachers develop a portfolio for the standard teaching certificate assessment, it will not be their first time “experiencing” this instrument. They will already have developed a metacognitive framework for developing a portfolio. The difference is that they will now be using personal, longer-term experience and work from students for whom they have primary responsibility. The portfolio at this stage also allows teachers to develop the types of skills that will prepare them to be successful candidates for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification process. The portfolio makes sense, then, when taken in the continuum of teacher development.

2) The portfolio is situated, that is, it elicits the performance within the work context and therefore does not require the teacher to create new materials to meet the assessment requirement. This is more authentic than simulated assessments, which ask teachers to react to a prompt, rather than show what they know based on their experiences in the classroom with students.

3) Unlike standardized assessment candidates are provided with the assessment materials and scoring criteria well in advance of submission deadlines.

4) The portfolio-based assessment requires the active involvement on the part of the participant. The process promotes reflection and self-evaluation that leads to improved teaching practice.

5) A portfolio-based assessment provides a more in-depth analysis of teaching practices since participants have an opportunity to draw upon personal knowledge of staff, students and community in the demonstration of their knowledge, skills and dispositions.

6) Portfolio evidence allows for a wide range of data sources including student work, teacher and administrator commentaries, and parent interactions. This kind of information has the potential to provide a much broader picture of performance than might be derived from other assessments. It allows for a richer personal development than a “one shot” deal in an one time observation.
7) Due to the portfolio exercise being closely connected to the daily practice of the individual, there is greater opportunity for long-term impact of assessment on practice than might be expected from a one or two-day standardized assessment.

8) The portfolio has the capacity to assess abilities which are best exhibited over a period of time, such as how instructional plans are implemented and how teaching is adapted based on diagnosis and evaluation of student learning.

9) A portfolio has the capacity to accommodate and to encourage collaboration with other education professionals. Teachers are encouraged to work with colleagues, veteran teachers, mentors, administrators and other professionals.

10) The standards focus of the portfolio assessment provides professional development which impacts far more than the teachers being assessed. It has potential systemic impact by the use of other teachers in their involvement as mentors and assessors.

**Challenges:**

There is no doubt that the portfolio system represents the most sophisticated assessment instrument and presents the highest potential to impact teaching practice. The are, however, a number of obvious challenges to the implementation of a portfolio assessment system. These logistics, however, are not insurmountable and should not be seen as reason to refrain from using portfolios. Given the time and involvement of people who have the expertise in this work, the issues can be successfully addressed. Illinois also has opportunity to learn from those who have experience in this process and in building such a system. Illinois does not have to start from “scratch” but can adapt from existing portfolio models.

The most obvious of these challenges include:

- Cost of assessment.
- Portfolio evaluation logistics.
- The need for a strong induction program.