

Integrating Kindergarten into the Elementary Education Endorsement Grade Band: Upcoming Changes and Timelines

July 10, 2025

Meeting Agenda

- Background
- Framing and Context
- Change for Current Educators Endorsed in 1-6 Elementary Education
- Changes for Preparation Programs and Prep Program Candidates
- Changes for Early Childhood Education
- Communication
- Timeline
- Questions

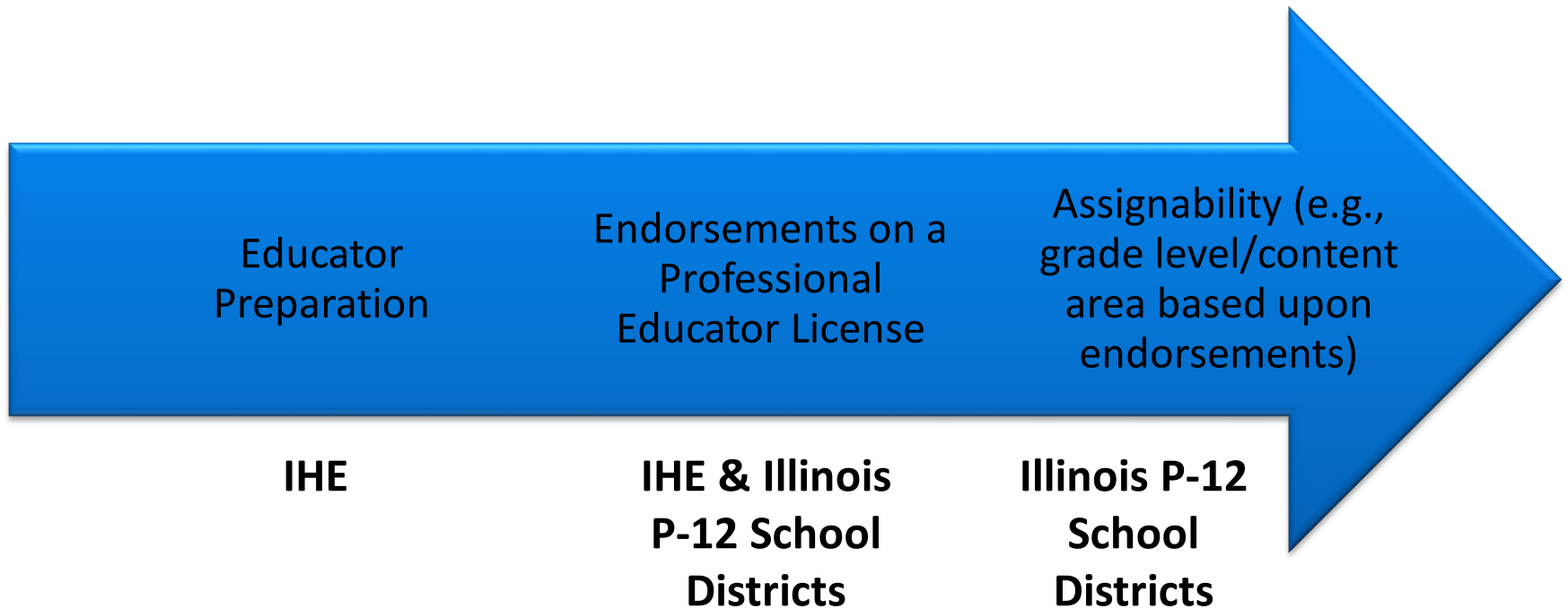
Background

- Elementary Education:
 - Endorsement awarded for K-9 (through January 31, 2018)
 - February 1, 2018: Grade range changed to 1-6
- Early Childhood Education
 - Endorsement awarded for Birth- Grade 3 through September 1, 2020
 - September 2, 2020: Grade range changed to B-2

Framing and Context

- Requests from field- difficulty assigning properly licensed teachers to kindergarten positions
- Could:
 - allow more flexibility in teacher assignability across grades
 - provide a greater pool of qualified potential applicants
 - increase applications in rural or hard-to-staff schools
 - reduce substitute teachers or other means of temporarily assigning educators to roles due to lack of qualified teachers

Preparation Leads to Assignability



Change for Current Educators

- Educators who hold a PEL endorsed for 1-6 Elementary Education
 - Immediate option: Can apply in ELIS for new Kindergarten approval
 - Application is planned to be available by **July 1, 2025** (due to changes needed in the ELIS system.)
 - Future Option: Can apply in ELIS for K-6 to receive new grade range. No additional requirements.*
 - Application will be available summer 2026*

*Conversations surrounding this endorsement are ongoing and requirements may change

Changes for Preparation Programs

- Each IHE must at minimum, complete an analysis of its program and notify ISBE that it will be making changes or will not be making changes. This notification is due **December 1, 2025.** *
- If changes are made, the IHE must submit documentation showing aligning to elementary standards by **February 1, 2029.***
- Candidates may earn the K-6 endorsement after notification of no changes, or after submission showing changes is submitted to ISBE, beginning **July 1, 2026 ***
- By **July 1, 2029**, all new and existing programs will be valid for K-6 (any changes to programs must be in place by this date)*
- By **July 1, 2030**, all 1-6 entitlement recommendations must be completed by the EPP*

***Conversations surrounding this endorsement are ongoing and requirements or timelines may change**

CAEP Elementary Education Standards

- ISBE will delay elementary education preparation program alignment to the CAEP elementary education standards to February 1, 2029 (rather than September 2025) to ensure reasonable alignment between deadlines for any program redesign needed.
- All approved elementary education programs are already aligned to national elementary education standards that cover the K-6 grade span.

Changes for Early Childhood Education

- ISBE will expand the Early Childhood Education endorsement from Birth through Grade 2 to Birth through Grade 3*
- Endorsement will be ready for application summer 2026*
- Educators who hold the B-2 endorsement can earn the B-3 endorsement by applying in ELIS. No additional coursework or testing is required.*
- B-3 in place prior to 2020

*Conversations surrounding this endorsement are ongoing and requirements may change

Changes for Preparation Programs

- Each IHE must at minimum, complete an analysis of its ECE program and notify ISBE that it will be making changes or will not be making changes. This notification is due **December 1, 2025.***
- If changes are made, the IHE must submit documentation by **February 1, 2029.***
- Candidates may earn the B-3 endorsement after notification of no changes, or after submission showing changes is submitted to ISBE, beginning **July 1, 2026***
- By **July 1, 2029**, all new and existing programs will be valid for B-3 (any changes to programs must be in place by this date)*
- By **July 1, 2030**, all B-2 entitlement recommendations must be completed by the EPP*

***Conversations surrounding this endorsement are ongoing and requirements may change**

Rule

- Changes will be memorialized in applicable Parts of Illinois Administrative Code (rule)
- Public comment period for stakeholder comment

Communication

- New website with Q&A, informational document, webinar deck: <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/New-Elementary-Education-Grade-Range.aspx>
- Two informational webinars for districts, EPPs, ROEs on June 10, 2025, and June 24, 2025
- Website will be updated with ECE changes; additional communication will be planned

Timeline

Date	Milestone for Educators	Applicable Stakeholders
July 1, 2025	Kindergarten approval will be available for application in ELIS	Educators who hold the 1-6 elementary education endorsement and seek to teach K in the 2025-26 school year
July 1, 2026 <i>(anticipated)</i>	<p>Elementary Education (K-6) will be available for application in ELIS. *</p> <p>Kindergarten approval will no longer be available for application</p> <p>Early Childhood Education (B-3) will be available for application in ELIS. *</p>	<p>Educators who hold the 1-6 elementary education endorsement or the B-2 early childhood education endorsement</p> <p>New license seekers who were not prepared through an approved Illinois elementary or early childhood program</p> <p>Educators already endorsed in a teaching field who seek to add a subsequent elementary or early childhood education endorsement</p> <p>Candidates in Illinois approved elementary or early childhood education programs that have already submitted notification of no changes or have received ISBE approval of program changes</p> <p>*Conversations surrounding this endorsement are ongoing and requirements may change</p>

Date	Milestone for Prep Programs	Applicable Stakeholders
December 1, 2025	Program analysis and notification of changes/no changes due to ISBE*	Illinois Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education Preparation Programs
February 1, 2029	<p>Program Changes due to ISBE*</p> <p>Programs may begin entitling for K-6 (at their discretion) as soon as program changes are approved *</p>	Illinois Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education Preparation Programs that declared they will make program changes
February 1, 2029	Program alignment to CAEP Elementary Education Standards due to ISBE	All Illinois Elementary Education Preparation Programs
July 1, 2029	<p>Any candidate who enrolls in an elementary education program on or after this date shall receive the K-6 endorsement. *</p> <p>Any candidate who enrolls in an ECE program on or after this date shall receive the B-3 endorsement.*</p>	<p>All Illinois Elementary Education Preparation Programs</p> <p>All Illinois Early Childhood Education Preparation Programs</p>
July 1, 2030	All candidates must be entitled for 1-6 and B-2 endorsements. *	All Illinois Elementary and Early Childhood Education Preparation Programs

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Questions