

Peer Review Two-Year Report 2020

Directions: Complete this template to submit your Two-Year Report. A completed submission of a Two-Year Report includes the following:

- A completed template and any accompanying documents referred to (or links to online versions of them)
- A letter from the License Officer
- A fee of \$500 (checks payable to State of Vermont)

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Introductory Narrative Description:

While the majority of teachers are licensed through a traditional education preparation program (EPP) through a college or University, Vermont offers an "alternate route to licensure" for qualified educational professionals to receive licensure through Peer Review. Every Peer Review candidate completes a Vermont Licensure Portfolio, which is reviewed by experienced teachers culminating in an interview. While it is not a replacement for a traditional EPP, Peer Review is an opportunity for qualified educators to receive recognition and licensure for their professional experiences in the classroom.

Another distinguishing factor of the Peer Review program is that it does not provide a candidate's preparation in the way an education preparation program does. A fundamental philosophy of Peer Review is that candidates can become competent through a

myriad of rich and diverse experiences outside of the college experience. Each candidate is free to present a variety of experiences as evidence to their panel, then make a case for themselves that their unique experiences has prepared them as a competent teacher. Panelists do not assess the candidate within a traditional preparation model, rather they assess the presented evidence, and make a determination if the candidate meets the Vermont Core Teaching Standards and Endorsement Specific Competencies. Peer Review relies on an inherent trust and respect for the professionalism of Vermont Educators, who evaluate the qualifications of an aspiring educator while holding them to the same standards as a traditional preparation program.

Because Peer Review is so different from a traditional university based EPP and does not provide preparation of candidates, it has consistently struggled to effectively harmonize with the ROPA evaluation process. It is Peer Review's rich diversity of candidates that creates uncertainty and difficulty in answering questions and concerns through the ROPA process. While always striving for a rigorous and effective process, the evidence below details how program staff have implemented continuous improvement measures that address the concerns of the 2018 ROPA report. Under the Guidance of the Peer Review Advisory Committee (PRAC), ROPA stipulations and concerns have been addressed by two approaches: an effort to improve and expand resources for candidates, and an effort to create data systems to evaluate and improve upon our program.

Much of the evidence below demonstrates the efforts of program staff and PRAC to provide resources and clarify expectations to ensure candidates are successful at demonstrating the standards and requirements of licensure. Resources like the Peer Review Handbook, and online clinics aim to ensure all potential applicants understand the scope of what will be required of them prior to applying. Documents such as the Mentor handbook, scoring rubrics, lesson plan templates, etc. are included in each candidate's acceptance packet, which is emailed at the time of acceptance. The bulk of these documents were created or expanded upon in direct response to concerns stemming from the 2018 ROPA report.

To address the stipulation and concerns regarding data collection and assessment (a crucial component of results-oriented thinking) the Peer Review program has put in place several data collection tools and assessments. These tools range from simple surveys, inter-rater assessments through panelist training, improved candidate data tracking, and increased use of available data through the online licensing software in collaboration with the AOE Data Team. These various tools and assessments have created dozens of data points that generate additional empirical information for programmatic action.

Most notably, the creation of an inter-rater assessment for FY2021 panelist training has been extremely helpful in setting a baseline understanding of panelist reliability. Since the 2018 ROPA review, program staff have been refining panelists scoring documentation to make determinations more data driven. That has allowed for data collection through the FY2021 panelists training; Panelists scored the same portfolio using the new scoresheets and entered their scores into a survey. While the results are preliminary and imperfect methods were used, initial results from this exercise has highlighted some variation in panelist scoring. This has been a valuable data point as we address Standard 1's Concern #4 and will be used to inform the work of program staff and panelists moving forward. Training of panelists is still ongoing, but the Peer Review Coordinator Plans to publish a report on the findings by the end of September.

Another discovery through the increased use of data, is that most Peer Review completers come into the program with current or previous teaching experience. After receiving the recommendation for licensure, candidates are asked to complete a survey which was created under the guidance of PRAC. According to self-reported data in the Candidate survey, 56.8% of Peer Review candidates who are given the recommendation for licensure met the 13-week field experience while working under a Vermont Provisional License. An additional 13.5% met this requirement through previous teaching experience, likely through a private/independent school or outside the state of Vermont. One can then extrapolate that 70% of Peer Review completers in fact have more than 13-weeks of professional, full-time teaching experience.

Percentages of program completers has also been calculated through better candidate tracking using an excel workbook (rather than hard copy tracking documents). The Peer Review Coordinator has identified that only about 74% of candidates since February 2020 received the recommendation for licensure at the time of the interview. Approximately 16% received the recommendation after providing additional evidence within 30 days, and 9.5% are currently on a longer-term Plan of Action. This shows that panelists are effectively identifying areas of concern through their standards-based assessment of the Portfolio and are developing rigorous additional requirements for these candidates.

In sum, the 2018 ROPA report provided valuable feedback that has been used to further increase the rigor and clarity of the Peer Review program. As time continues, program staff will continue to increase available resources for candidates to understand and meet expectations. Additionally, staff will continue to build data driven policies and assessments to demonstrate why Peer Review is an essential component of Vermont's Educational System.

Program Stipulations from 2018 ROPA Review

Stipulation	Update	Evidence
<p><i>"An assessment system should be put in place to provide continuous review and improvement of the PR program within the next two years. We recommend that the Peer Review Advisory Committee be a part of this process."</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PRAC - Surveys for Completers, employers and panelists -inter-rater assessment through panelists training (ongoing) - Update scoring from "Adequate/inadequate" to 3-point proficiency-based rubrics - Require panelists to include justifications in scoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PRAC Meeting Minutes – All - Candidate Survey Results - Panelists Training Resources- FY2020 FY2021 - Score Sheets with Scoring Rubrics and justifications
<p><i>"Compliance with the requirement of candidates having completed an undergraduate degree in the liberal arts and sciences should be in effect immediately for any new candidates entering the program. (see Rule 5231 and Policy N8)"</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The minimum of a bachelor's degree is required for all candidates and always has been. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Peer Review Webpage - Clinic Slideshow -Slide 13 - Recorded Clinic 19:25 - PR Handbook Page 3 and 7

Progress Addressing Concerns

ROPA Standards	Concerns from ROPA Visit	Action Steps Taken	Evidence Note: This section should consist of links to documentation. Please include any narrative in "Action Steps Taken."
<p>1 Content Knowledge Pedagogy and Professional Dispositions</p>	<p>Concern 1.1 Professional Attributes Dispositions form training on how to use rubric. <i>"The "Peer Review Attributes and Dispositions Verification" is used inconsistently. It can be a mechanism for checking off boxes in the process rather than ensuring that candidates are meeting all of the items on the document. Training is needed to ensure that the form is being used rigorously and consistently. Mentor teachers should be provided with examples of evidence that they might look for in determining whether a candidate has adequately met each item on the form."</i> <i>"No policy for when candidates are scored low by their mentor".</i></p> <p>Concern 1.2 Lesson Plans <i>"There is no formal process to ensure that candidates have to write a minimum number of their own authentic lesson plans"</i></p> <p>Concern 1.3 Technology use. <i>"There is no process to ensure that candidates know how to guide learners to use technology in a safe and effective way."</i></p> <p>Concern 1.4 Panelist training for</p>	<p>1.1 - Panelist Training - Mentor Resources created - Low scoring mentorship policy on page 5 of PR Handbook</p> <p>1.2 - Revisions to PR materials to reemphasize this requirement - Created Lesson Plan Template</p> <p>1.3 - Standard 9 required essays</p> <p>1.4 - Panelist training -inter-rater assessment through panelists training (ongoing)</p>	<p>1.1 - Panelists Training Resources- FY2020 FY2021 - Mentor Observation Form - Mentor Handbook - Prof Attributes Form - PR Handbook p. 3-5 - PRAC Meeting Minutes – All</p> <p>1.2 - PR Handbook p. 18 - Clinic Slide slides 26 and 43 - Recorded Clinic 37:52 -39:33; 1:14:58 -1:15:30 - PR Lesson Plan Template - Sample acceptance packet - PRAC Meeting Minutes- Jan 2019</p> <p>1.3 - PR Handbook p. 18 - Clinic Slideshow Slide 43 - PRAC Meeting Minutes- April 2019, Aug 2019</p> <p>1.4 - Panelist Training Resources - FY2020 FY2021 - PRAC Meeting Minutes- Aug 2019</p>

ROPA Standards	Concerns from ROPA Visit	Action Steps Taken	Evidence Note: This section should consist of links to documentation. Please include any narrative in "Action Steps Taken."
	<p>scoring the new VLP and consistency of scoring portfolios.</p> <p><i>"Panelists have not been trained on the use of the VLP to score candidate work; the inconsistent scoring is a concern and was also noted as a concern in the 2013 ROPA report. In addition, panelists should be required to write comments when scoring a candidate portfolio. Some panelists consistently wrote in justifications, some wrote little to nothing. This would then be information that could be gathered for programmatic assessment and improvement."</i></p>		
<p>2 Systems of Assessment</p>	<p>Concern 2.1 <i>"There is no evidence to show that candidates are informed that they have to have an undergraduate degree in the liberal arts or sciences, or in the content area of the endorsement sought (Rule 5231)."</i></p> <p>Concern 2.2 Panelists interrater reliability <i>"Reliability (consistency when scoring portfolios) among the panelists continues to be a concern."</i></p>	<p>2.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rejoinder submitted to VSBPE - Candidates are informed via the website, clinic and handbook <p>2.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Panelist Training - Panelists Scoring documents revised to create more data 	<p>2.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - VSBPE Rule 5332 - Rejoinder page 2-3 - PR Handbook Page 3 and 7 - Website - Clinic Slideshow -Slide 13 <p>2.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Panelist Training Resources - FY2020 FY2021 - Scoring Documents - PRAC Meeting Minutes- Aug 2019

ROPA Standards	Concerns from ROPA Visit	Action Steps Taken	Evidence Note: This section should consist of links to documentation. Please include any narrative in "Action Steps Taken."
		<p>driven determinations using VLP rubrics</p> <p>-inter-rater assessment through panelists training (ongoing)</p>	
<p>3 Field Experiences</p>	<p>Concern 3.1 Efficacy of Field Experience <i>"There is not a process for ensuring that student teachers have received observations and feedback. The Team understands that PR does not have any responsibility for the Student Teaching experience, but is concerned that there is not enough information for a panelist to evaluate if the field experiences were effective."</i></p> <p>Concern 3.2 Time and impartiality <i>"A student teaching experience can occur years before the rating form is given to a mentor teacher to complete. Also, since candidates are responsible for finding their own mentor teacher, there is no assurance of impartiality."</i></p> <p>Concern 3.3 Policy for poor mentor feedback <i>"There is not a policy or procedure for evaluating candidates who have been rated as less than "meets standard" on the Student Teacher scoring form."</i></p>	<p>3.1, 3.2, & 3.3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Required Mentor Observations - Created Mentor Handbook - Training of Panelists - Revisions to handbook and Clinics - PR has been working with AOE staff in NIC process. The objective is to bolster Peer Review Field Experience while providing support to districts and mentors around the state. This work will resume a regular pace as we adjust to COVID-19 work changes. See 	<p>3.1, 3.2, & 3.3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mentor Observation Form - Mentor Handbook - Prof Attributes Form - Panelist Training Resources- FY2020 FY2021 - PR Handbook p. 3-5 - Clinic Slide Slide 31 - Sample acceptance packet - PRAC Meeting Minutes- Aug 2019, Nov 2019

ROPA Standards		Concerns from ROPA Visit	Action Steps Taken	Evidence Note: This section should consist of links to documentation. Please include any narrative in "Action Steps Taken."
			PRAC Minutes Nov 2019.	
4	Resources and Practices	<p>Concern 4.1 Program Capacity <i>"As the PR program continues to grow- or even at its current number of candidates- one person may not be sufficient to run it."</i></p> <p>Concern 4.2 Program Continuity <i>"A plan should be developed for sustaining the program and continuing to work towards the goals in the 7-Year Plan even if there is staff turnover."</i></p>	<p>4.1 & 4.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cross Trained Licensing specialist - Created Peer Review Manual 	<p>4.1 & 4.2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cross Training plan - PR Manual - PRAC Meeting Minutes- Aug 2019

The table below demonstrates how considerations were used do address concerns. The Process has been self-reflective and has led to a quality improvement overall. This table is formatted to show how all considerations have been, or will be, implemented to address concerns.

ROPA Standards		Considerations from ROPA Visit implemented by Peer Review
1	Content Knowledge Pedagogy and Professional Dispositions	<p>A more robust lesson plan template that includes an explanation of lesson plan components would allow candidates to think more deeply about how they construct lesson plans. – See evidence for concern 1.2</p> <p>All candidates could be required to write a certain number of authentic lesson plans that are evaluated based on a rubric to ensure consistency in evaluating them. – See evidence for concern 1.2</p> <p>Candidates could be required to design a lesson that is aimed at helping their students understand how to use technology in a safe, effective way. . – See evidence for concern 1.2</p>

		<p>Candidates and panelists could be provided with examples of what would be “adequate” to fulfill the requirements. – See Clinic Slides and 2020 Panelist Training</p> <p>Candidates could be required to provide a full, sequential unit of study that they have implemented in a classroom. – See evidence for concern 1.2</p> <p>In the essay that candidates write for the portfolio on the topic of “What does ethical teaching look like in the classroom,” there should be specific prompting to include legal responsibility. – See evidence for concern 1.3</p>
2	Systems of Assessment	<p>Devise a system to ensure that candidates have read/watched, and understood the information about the program’s assessment system, including its policies and criteria for entrance to the program, continuing in the program, entrance to student teaching, and exit from the program (e.g. exit survey, procedural quiz, confirmation statement). – See Candidate survey and Clinic</p> <p>Some examples of using data to drive programmatic improvements: How many PRAC meetings produced consequential decisions? What was the level of impact of these decisions? What are the long-term trends in the Title II data? How has the increased volume of interviews “informed” program decisions? What are the patterns for those who need a Plan of Action? What are the common types of recommendations within the Plans of Action? – See narrative</p>
3	Field Experiences	<p>The Peer Review Program could require a series of documented observations to occur in the student teaching experience for those who student teach during their enrollment in the program. For candidates whose life experience constitutes their student teaching, multiple phone interviews of former placement contacts could occur (e.g. colleagues, supervisors, cooperating teachers). – See evidence for concern 3.1 – 3.3</p>
4	Resources and Practices	<p>Consider cross-training another member of the EQ staff on PR to ensure consistency in the event of staff turnover – See evidence for concern 4.1 & 4.2</p> <p>Focused efforts to address issues of diversity among panelists should be established within the Peer Review Program to ensure that indicator 4.3 is being met. – This is still an identified goal and we continue to identify ways to improve the panelists recruitment process. See - PRAC Meeting Minutes Nov 2019</p>