

Investigating the Impact of Teacher Licensure Policies

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Today's discussion is part of a larger project to understand, support, and improve the Arkansas teacher pipeline.

- The project is a collaboration between:
 - University of Arkansas's Department of Education Reform (EDRE) and Office for Education Policy (OEP);
 - Arkansas Department of Education (ADE);
 - ARData Team (i.e., the state data and analytics unit); and
 - TNTP, formerly known as The New Teacher Project.

Our goal is to help Arkansas use data and evidence to strengthen the teacher pipeline.

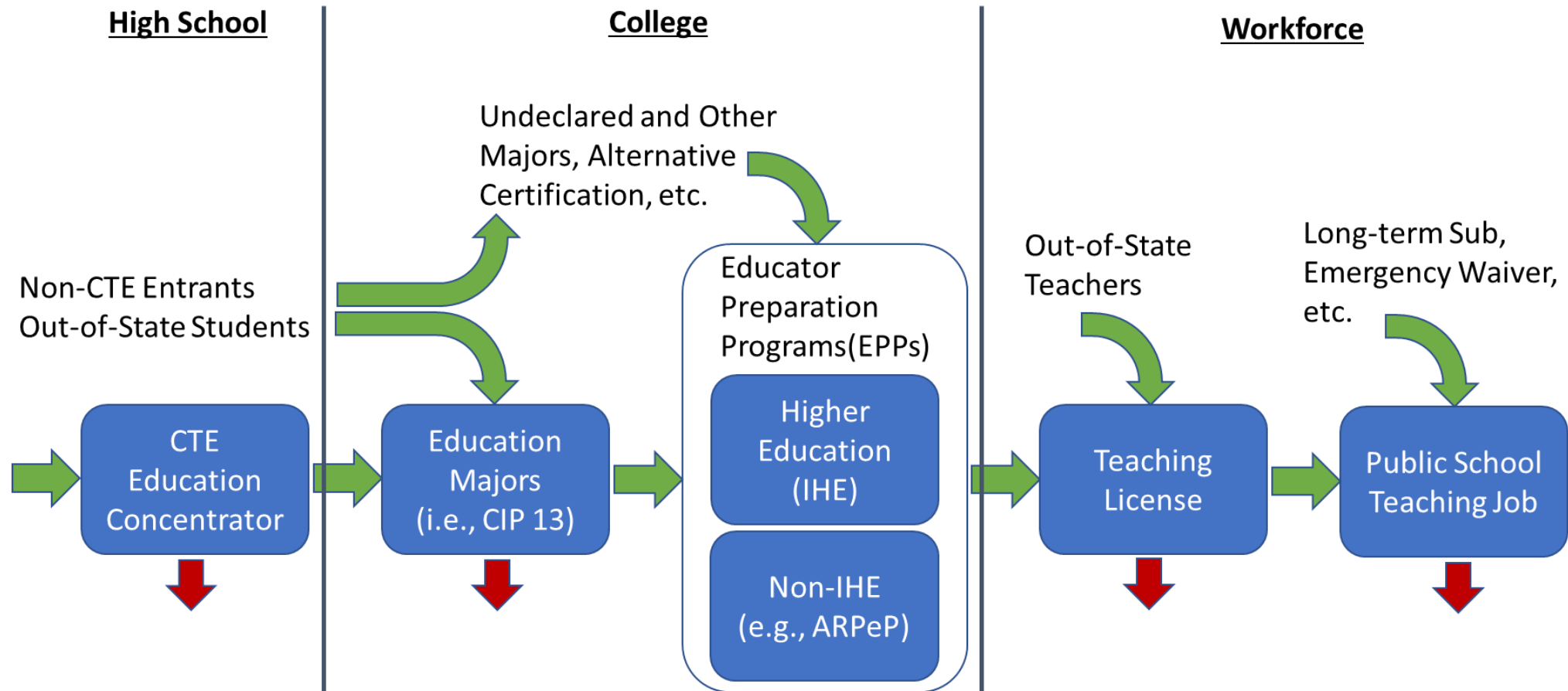
- Describe the teacher pipeline from high school through higher education and into the classroom;
- Explain how the pipeline has changed over time;
- Investigate how licensure policies influence quality and diversity;
- Highlight the leaks and potential barriers in the pipeline;
- Offer recommendations to strengthen the teacher workforce; and
- Help ADE set goals and monitor progress.

Newly linked state data will give us a more complete picture of the pipeline.

- We are using linked, longitudinal data from across state divisions to study the teacher pipeline.
- Arkansas has one of the most comprehensive datasets on the teacher pipeline in the country.
- ARData, the state data and analytics team, was instrumental in linking, deidentifying, and sharing these data.

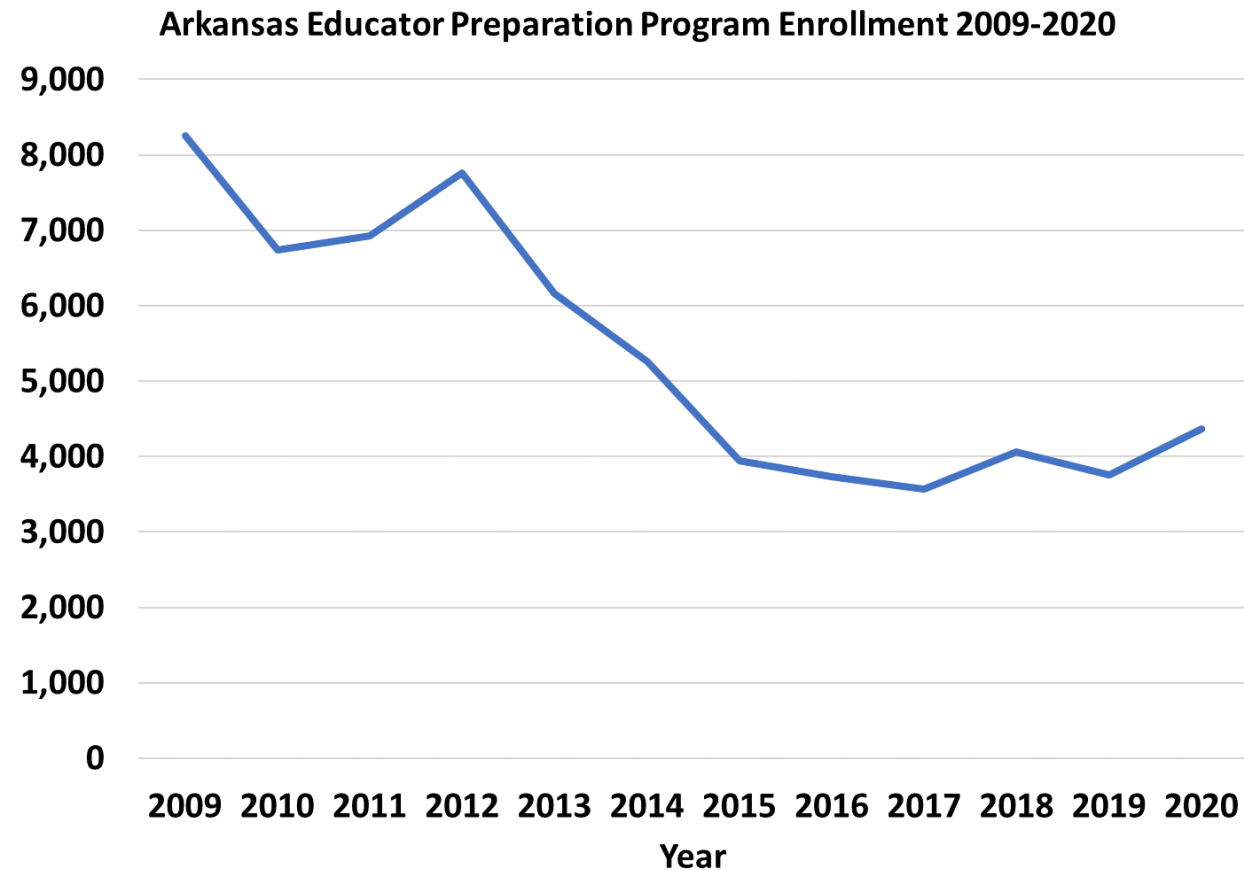
- Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
 - High School Records
 - Career and Technical Education
 - Educator Prep Programs
 - Teacher Licensure
 - Novice Teacher Survey
 - Employment
 - Salary and Benefits
 - Student Academic Performance
- Division of Higher Education
 - Enrollment
 - Financial Aid
 - Major
 - Degree Completion
- Division of Workforce Services
 - Quarterly Wages and Employment
 - Industry

The teacher pipeline is a complex system with many on- and off-ramps.



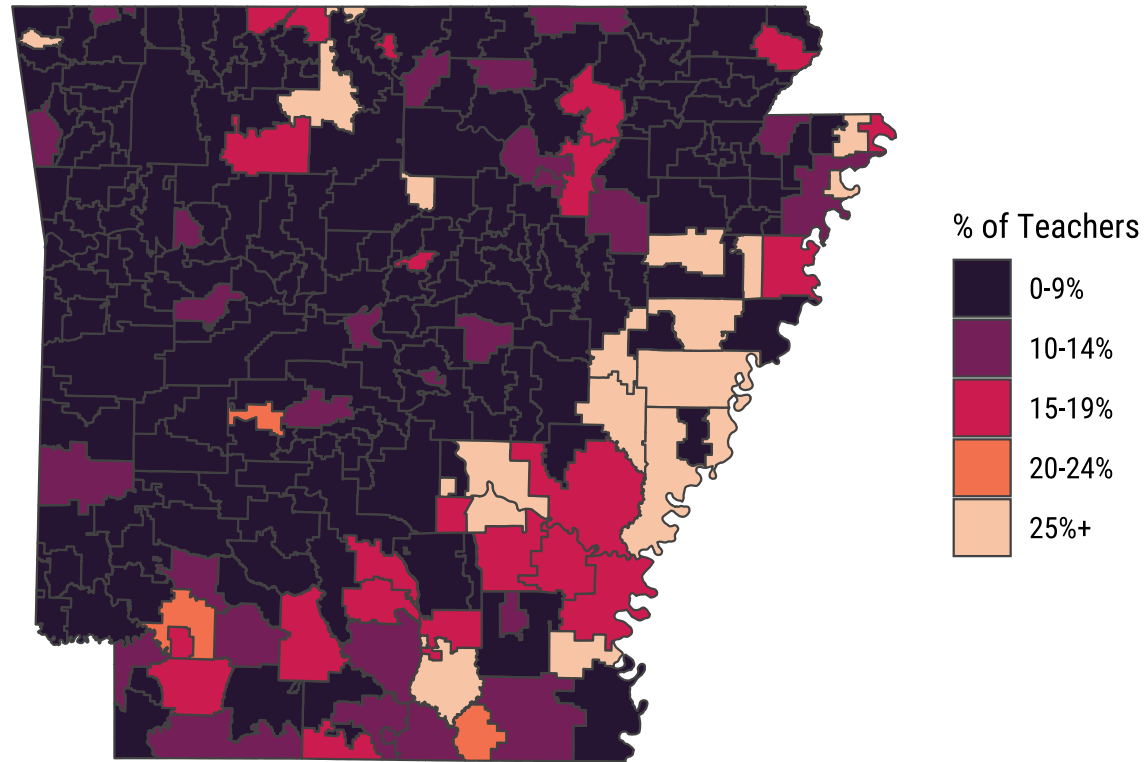
Arkansas's teacher pipeline faces challenges.

Interest in becoming a teacher has declined.

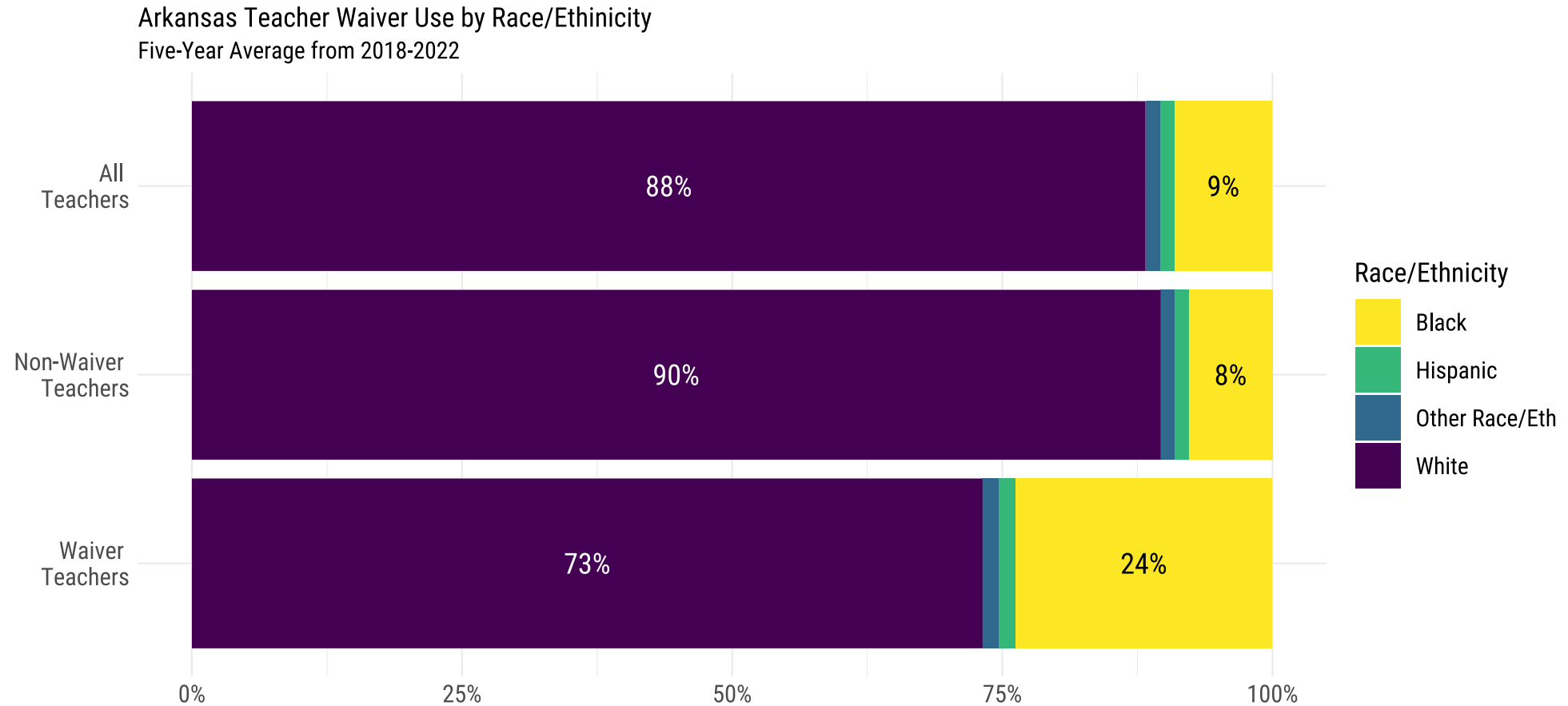


Many districts have a large percentage of waiver teachers.

Percent of Arkansas Teachers with a Waiver
Five-Year Average from 2018-2022

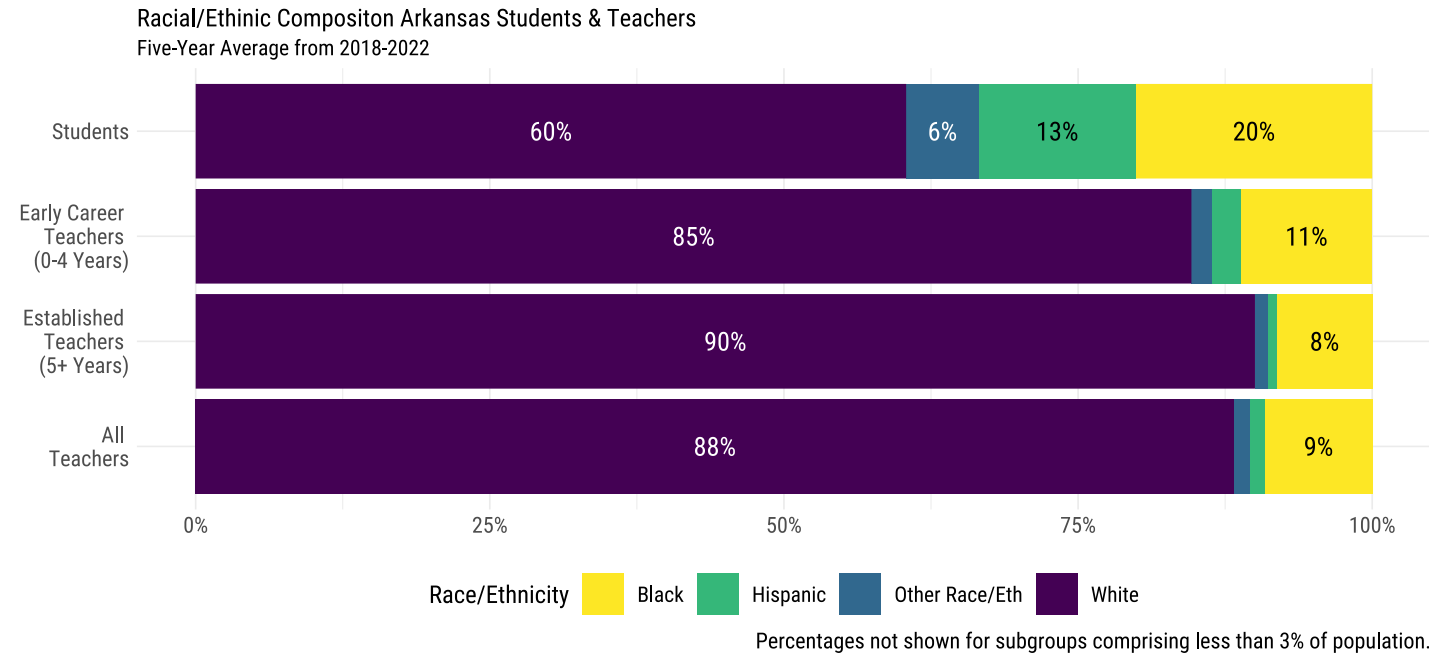


Waivers are disproportionately used by Black teachers.



Arkansas teachers are less diverse than their students.

- Arkansas teachers are much less likely to be Black or Hispanic than their students.
- Students of color benefit from having at least one teacher of the same race/ethnicity.
- These teachers serve as important role models and tend to have higher expectations for students of color.
- A diverse teacher workforce can benefit all students by exposing them to different backgrounds.

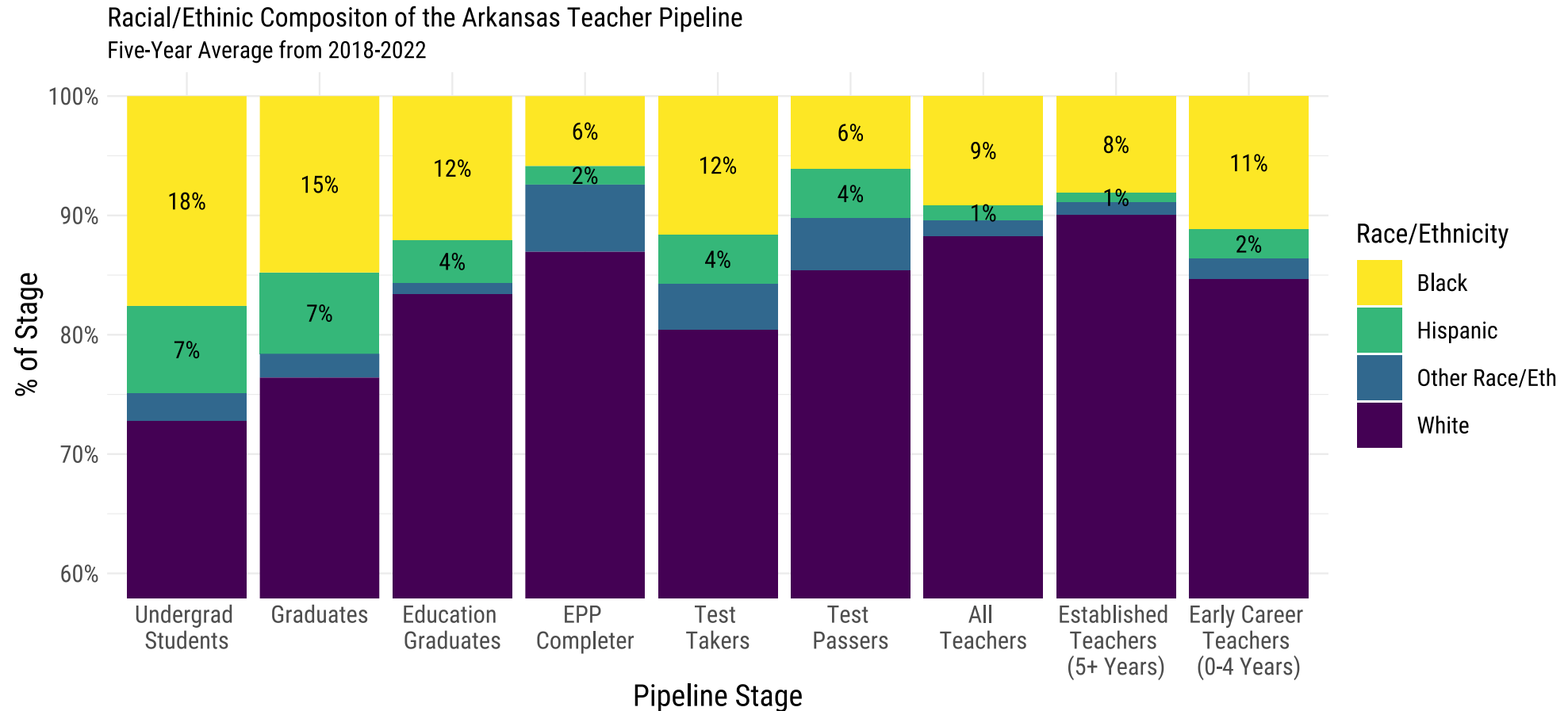


How do licensure policies influence teacher supply, quality, and diversity?

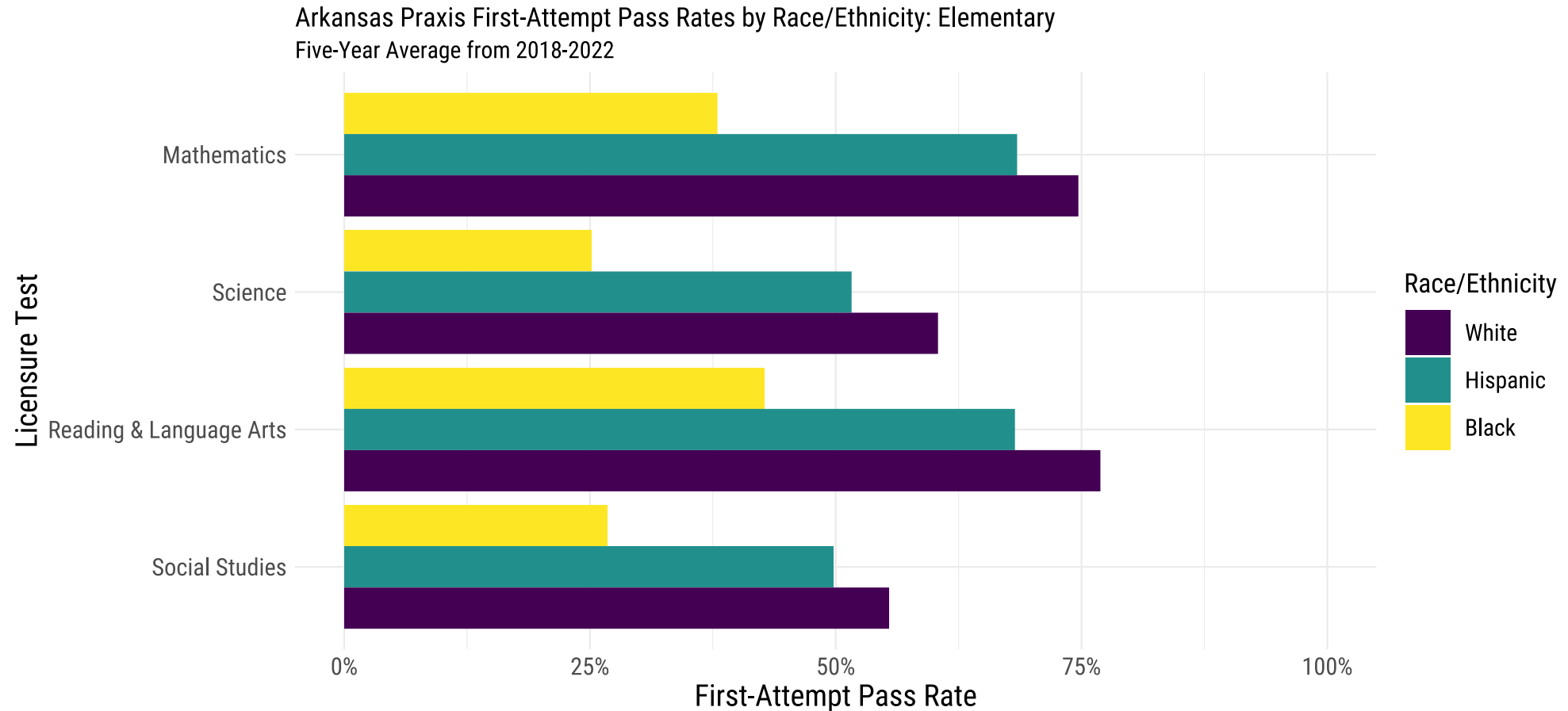
Evidence suggests that licensure requirements are not always well aligned with workforce goals.

- Licensure exam scores are only partially predictive of classroom effectiveness.
- Exams can be a significant barrier to aspiring teachers, especially those from underrepresented communities.
- We are working to investigate the relationship between Arkansas licensure exam scores and classroom effectiveness.
- We currently know a bit more about diversity.

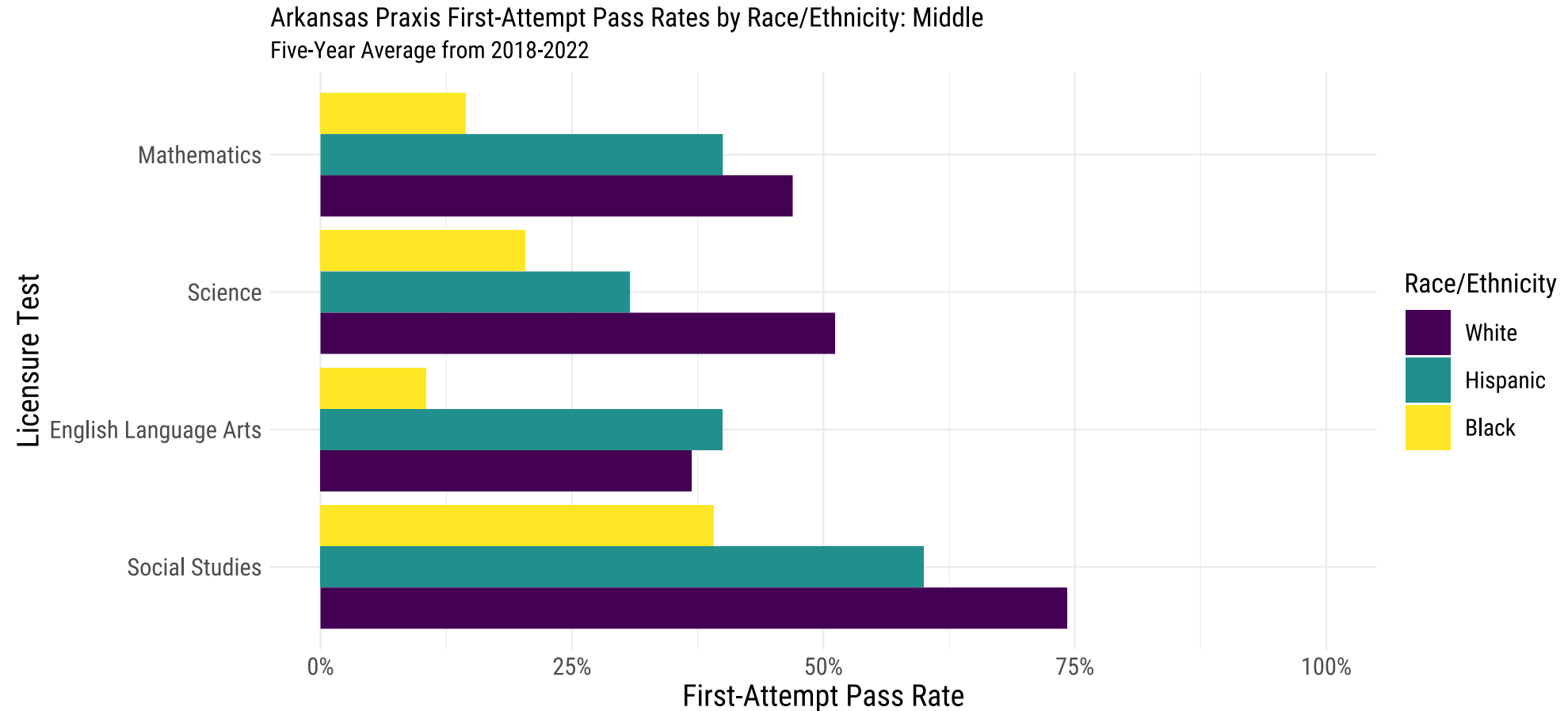
The Arkansas teacher pipeline loses diversity at almost every step.



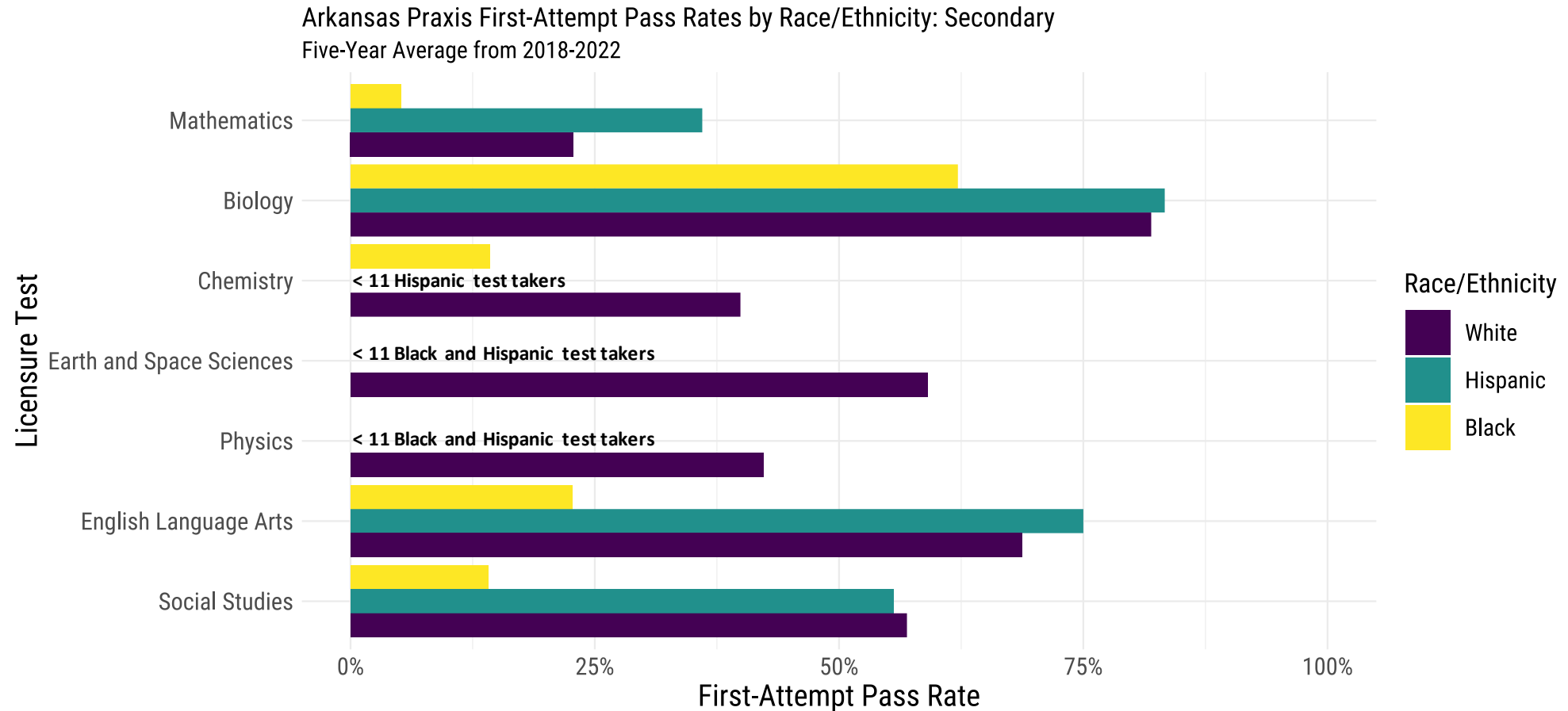
Licensure exam pass rates are lower for aspiring Black and Hispanic teachers.



Pass rates are lower for the middle school exams with significant race/ethnicity gaps.



Secondary licensure exams exhibit similar gaps and a small number of Black and Hispanic test takers in some subjects.



Arkansas is working to address the challenges related to teacher licensure policy.

Alternative Assessment Plan

- Alternative Assessment Plans allow aspiring teachers to work toward a standard license if they score within minus two (-2) standard error of measurement (SEM) of the passing score on the content area assessment.
- To be granted a standard license, aspiring teachers must complete:
 - An approved micro-credential or performance-based content assessment **and**
 - Three years of successful teaching experience in their content area.
- Aspiring teachers have been using this pathway:
 - 2021 – 64 provisional licenses
 - 2022 – 178 provisional licenses
 - 2023 – 29 provisional licenses, so far
 - Total – 271
 - 32 provisional licenses have been converted to standard licenses.

Licensure Assessment Ready

- Licensure Assessment Ready is designed help aspiring teachers prepare for licensure exams.
- The program provides tutoring sessions taught by an expert in the various content areas.
- Last year, DESE provided \$120,000 in funding for this program and hundreds of aspiring teachers attended tutoring sessions.

Provisional License Proposed Rule Change

- Aspiring teachers can receive a one-year provisional license that is renewable for up to three years if they show yearly progress.
- To receive a provisional license, an aspiring teacher must:
 - Hold a Bachelor's degree; **and**
 - Provide an official score report evidencing passing scores on the state required assessment for the licensure content area in which the applicant seeks to teach; **or**
 - If an applicant did not receive a passing score, provide an official score report evidencing the score received, in addition to evidence that the applicant has obtained:
 - A degree in the content area in which the applicant seeks to teach; **or**
 - Eighteen (18) college credit hours in the content area in which the applicant seeks to teach; **or**
 - Documented successful, relevant work experience in the content area in which the applicant seeks to teach.
- Applicants may also be eligible for the Alternate Assessment Plan.
- The above qualifications satisfy the Arkansas Qualified Teacher Requirements but provide flexibility around when the state required licensure assessment must be passed.
- 113 applicants would be able to receive a provisional license today under the new option.

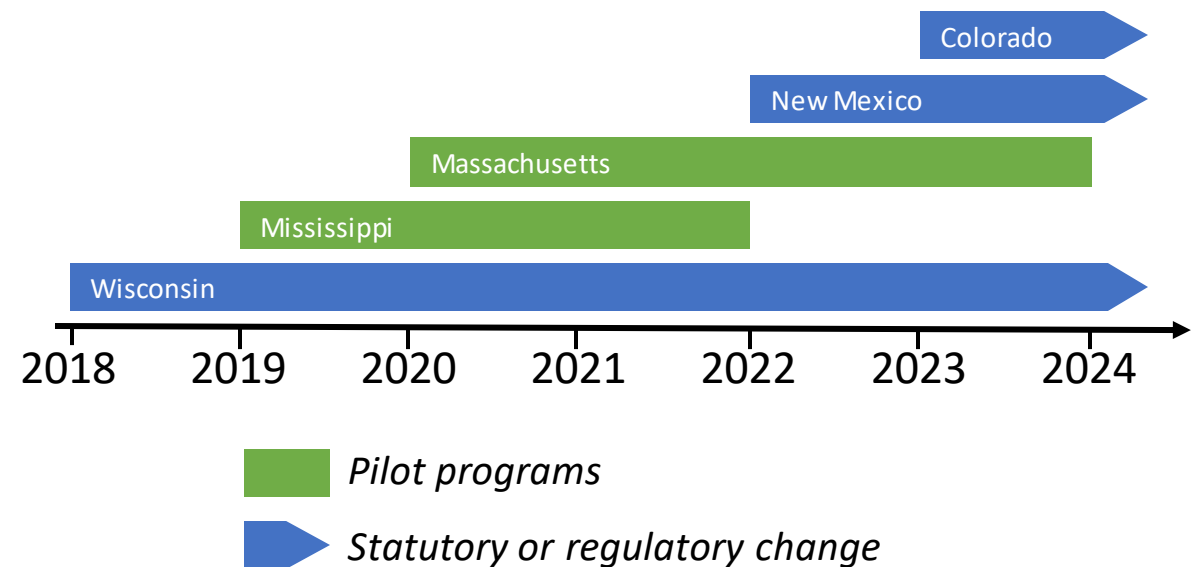
What can we learn from other states' approaches to licensure?

We are examining how states are reimagining pathways to teacher licensure.

- Many other states are grappling with the same challenges Arkansas faces.
- Some states have developed licensure pathways that allow teacher candidates to demonstrate their content knowledge and/or pedagogical skills through performance-based measures, in lieu of exams.
- These performance-based measures vary from state to state (e.g., portfolios, coursework, student academic growth data).

Several states have already adopted or are piloting performance-based measures for teacher licensure.

- **Mississippi:** Performance-Based Licensure pilot
- **Massachusetts:** Regulatory pilot: Alternatives to Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure
- **New Mexico:** Replacing Praxis with a portfolio requirement which will be implemented by educator preparation programs
- **Colorado:** Portfolio option (capped at 1,000 candidates a year)
- **Wisconsin:** In addition to tests, candidates can demonstrate subject area competency through GPA or content portfolio



Evidence suggests that true performance-based assessments are accurate predictors of future teacher performance.

- “Any number of phenomenal teachers that I encountered in the Delta experienced challenges with licensure exam passage and yet were getting **incredible results with their students** while leading really positive and **culturally affirming classrooms**.”
- “We find that candidates’ performance on the CAP **predicts their in-service summative performance evaluations in their first 2 years** in the teaching workforce and provides a signal of these ratings beyond what is already captured by the state’s traditional licensure tests, but is not predictive of their value added to student test scores.”
- “Such assessments have been found to be **stronger predictors of teachers’ contributions to student learning gains** than traditional teacher tests.”

Garcia, A. & Muniz, J. (2020) [Mississippi’s Multifaceted Approach to Tackling Teacher Shortages](#). New America.

Chen B., Cowan J., Goldhaber D., Theobald R. (2019). [From the Clinical Experience to the Classroom: Assessing the Predictive Validity of the Massachusetts Candidate Assessment of Performance](#). CALDER Working Paper No. 223-1019-2

Darling-Hammond, L. (2010) [Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness: How Teacher Performance Assessments Can Measure and Improve Teaching](#). Center for American Progress

Learning Agenda

What's next?

- With guidance from the State Board of Education and ADE, we will pursue a learning agenda to help inform state policy.
- Specifically, we plan to spend the next few months:
 - Digging into Arkansas specific data to better understand where things currently stand and how well new approaches have worked;
 - Looking more deeply into what other states have done and what lessons they might offer Arkansas; and
 - Developing a set of data-driven policy recommendations.

Our learning agenda is comprised of the following policy-relevant questions.

- What is the impact of current licensure exams and cut scores on teacher recruitment and diversity?
- Are exam scores, particularly around pass/fail thresholds, related to teachers' classroom effectiveness?
- What are the benefits and drawbacks of using performance-based assessments as an alternative to traditional content exams for alternative certification pathways?
 - How has the Alternate Assessment Plan (AAP) pathway impacted recruitment, diversity, and effectiveness?
 - What lessons can be drawn from other states taking this approach?
- What alternatives to licensure exams should Arkansas consider?

Questions

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