

Walden University

Reading K–12
Endorsement
Program

Candidate Guidebook

October 2012

WALDEN UNIVERSITY
A higher degree. A higher purpose.

Walden University

The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership

100 Washington Avenue South, Suite 900

Minneapolis, MN 55401

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Introduction

Welcome to The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership Reading K–12 Endorsement program at Walden University. This program helps candidates obtain the professional knowledge, experience, and clinical practice they need to become a well-informed and skilled educator of students. Upon completion of the requirements for the endorsement program, candidates have the option to complete the requirements for a M.S. in Education with a specialization in Reading and Literacy with a Reading K–12 Endorsement.

This guidebook helps candidates understand the procedures and requirements of the Reading K–12 endorsement program, with and without the M.S. in Education option. The guidebook will answer many questions, but candidates also need to stay in close touch with their contacts here at Walden, especially with the academic advisors and program directors, for specifics regarding the individual programs. Walden is here to build a relationship with candidates, to help them be successful through their coursework and clinical experiences.

Important note: This guidebook refers to the *Walden University Student Handbook* (accessible at www.WaldenU.edu/catalog) and the Walden University website (www.WaldenU.edu).

The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership

The following vision and mission statements represent the commitment of The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership at Walden University to pursue academic excellence, embrace the rich diversity of the community, value all of the university's stakeholders, and encourage civic responsibility through the promotion of positive social change. For graduates to cultivate habits of lifelong learning and continuous advancement of their knowledge, the university considers it essential that these statements guide Walden to ensure the quality and synergy of the programs.

Vision

The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership at Walden University fosters a dynamic and diverse network of educational leaders who seek to support learners globally by leveraging the power of teaching and technology and who are committed to the pursuit of positive social change through education.

Mission

The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership at Walden University provides access to high-caliber programs that prepare adult learners as scholar-practitioners and leaders who can inspire, influence, and impact their diverse communities by helping to meet the challenges and opportunities of education worldwide.

Conceptual Framework

Walden University has developed a conceptual framework in collaboration with the professional community that articulates the shared vision of the unit's efforts to prepare educators to work in P–12 schools. The conceptual framework provides the philosophical foundation for Walden and serves as a guide for decision making within the unit.



Critical Components

Eight critical components were identified to serve as the unit outcomes or institutional standards based on the university's guiding philosophy as well as on Walden's vision and mission at the unit and institutional levels. Walden believes that these critical components of the university distinguish Walden candidates from those who graduate from other institutions.

- Teaching and Lifelong Learning
- Research with Application
- Reflective and Analytic Thought
- Leadership

- Collaboration
- Communication
- Diversity
- Social Change

Professional Education Unit Outcomes

Professional Education Unit (PEU) Outcomes include the eight critical components of the conceptual framework and three additional unit outcomes addressing professional disposition, and the diversity and technology proficiencies.

Walden expects the candidates to successfully demonstrate each of the critical components upon completion of the programs:

1. **Teaching and Lifelong Learning.** Demonstrate current knowledge and skills with the understanding that educators are lifelong learners who continually add to their knowledge and skills.
2. **Research with Application.** Analyze educational issues in light of current research and best practice through Walden University's scholar-practitioner model.
3. **Reflective and Analytic Thought.** Reflect on and analyze educational issues in light of current research to inform best practice in P–12 classrooms.
4. **Leadership.** Demonstrate leadership to build a shared vision for effective teaching and learning that positively impacts all stakeholders within a given educational community.
5. **Collaboration.** Demonstrate collaborative skills that integrate multiple perspectives in order to create ongoing support for the learning environment.
6. **Communication.** Demonstrate skills to communicate effectively and appropriately in a variety of professional and interpersonal contexts.
7. **Diversity.** Act in ways that honor multiple perspectives and affirm the dignity and respect of all individuals internal and external to the learning environment.
8. **Social Change.** Demonstrate the skills and professional dispositions that advocate for social change to make a positive impact where the educator works and lives.

Additional unit outcomes address professional dispositions, and the diversity and technology proficiencies:

9. **Diversity Proficiencies.** Create educational opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners and remove barriers that inhibit learning.
10. **Professional Dispositions:** Build meaningful relationships to improve student learning by effective planning, communication, use of assessment data, and high-caliber delivery of instruction.
11. **Technology Proficiencies:** Design and develop learning environments that integrate various technology tools and applications, connect technology usage to content areas, and embed technology into assessment strategies. See [Appendix A](#) for additional information on Technology Proficiencies.

The Key Players

Endorsement Candidate

Endorsement candidates are students enrolled in the Reading K–12 Endorsement Program at Walden University. They are required to complete Virtual Field Experiences® and 60 hours of clinical experiences across the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

Host Teacher

Host teachers are full-time, licensed teachers who are responsible for supervising the endorsement candidates assigned to them during clinical experiences. They provide opportunities for endorsement candidates to observe their classroom and fulfill their clinical experience course assignments. Host teachers will be asked to complete an evaluation of the candidate’s knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions. They also will verify the number of hours candidates spend in the field. Candidates are responsible for submitting an evaluation and a time sheet in their ePortfolio for each clinical experience course.

Clinical Experience Faculty

Clinical experience faculty members are contributing faculty in The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership who instruct the clinical experience courses, and provide formative and summative feedback on all assignments completed in the candidate’s clinical placements, including major assessments. The clinical faculty members have advanced preparation and are licensed in reading.

Program Director

The program director is a faculty member in The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership at Walden University. The program director is ultimately responsible for tracking endorsement candidates' progress toward identified transition points and their eligibility for institutional recommendation for endorsement. The program director also collaborates with endorsement candidates, instructors, the Office of Field Experience, and the associate dean for educator licensure to resolve problems and concerns.

The Office of Field Experience

The Office of Field Experience (OFE) is comprised of members of The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership staff. The OFE is responsible for collaborating with K–12 partner schools to place candidates in sites that meet the program requirements and monitoring candidates' transition point progress. The OFE also collaborates with endorsement candidates, instructors, clinical experience faculty, program directors, and the associate dean for educator licensure programs to resolve field experience problems and concerns.

The Reading K–12 Endorsement program

The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership is committed to preparing teachers with the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions of exemplary educators who work in diverse settings and utilize the best educational practices based on research and theory.

The college is committed to teachers who seek to become skilled educators and to providing its endorsement candidates developmentally appropriate, student-centered learning experiences that build their knowledge and skills. To that end, candidates begin their Program of Study with a foundational course and are then increasingly challenged as their studies advance as well as in the pedagogy and technology necessary for effective and creative teaching.

The endorsement program in Reading K–12 helps candidates achieve 6 outcomes:

The teacher of reading will

1. Literacy Development: Apply reading and writing developmental stages and processes that impact literacy development in order to support student development.
2. Diverse Literacy Learners: Create a positive and motivating literate environment that contributes to the success of all learners.
3. Literacy Instructional Strategies: Apply a variety of instructional methods and strategies in order to encourage student skill development.
4. Literacy Assessment and Planning: Use assessment strategies to determine student literacy needs and to develop curriculum and instruction to meet those needs.
5. Literacy Reflective Practice and Professional Growth: Demonstrate the ability to reflect on choices, actions, and their needs as professionals.
6. Literacy Leadership and Collaboration: Collaborate with teachers, parents, staff and others to implement literacy-related initiatives and data-driven decision making.

Notes on Teacher Endorsement

The Minnesota Board of Teaching, not Walden University, grants teaching endorsements. Successfully completing one of Walden University's state-approved endorsement programs may make candidates eligible for the Minnesota teaching endorsement.

Walden University is approved by the Minnesota Board of Teaching to offer teacher endorsement programs that lead to Minnesota endorsement. Candidates in this program must already hold a valid teaching license.

The curriculum is designed around state and national standards that reflect the learning and assessment opportunities that candidates will need to earn this endorsement. To meet standards for national accreditation, The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership must provide evidence that candidates in the Reading K–12 endorsement program demonstrate the required content and specialization knowledge in their field of specialization.

For individuals seeking a comparable teaching endorsement in a state other than Minnesota, Walden's enrollment advisors can provide guidelines and other information about endorsement. It remains the individual's responsibility to understand and comply with the out-of-state endorsement requirements

for the state in which he or she seeks to be endorsed, as requirements vary by state. Walden University makes no representation or guarantees that successful completion of any program or coursework will permit candidates to obtain license endorsements in their home state.

In all states, there are policies regarding out-of-state procedures that must be followed when someone is eligible for or has received an endorsement through an out-of-state institution with a state-approved program, such as the Minnesota Board of Teaching-approved programs at Walden University. Some states require that an individual obtain the out-of-state endorsement first. Other states do not require the actual endorsement, just proof of completion of a state-approved program. Other states require only the completion of a state-specified teacher's exam or only certain coursework to meet the qualifications for the endorsement. Candidates seeking an endorsement in a state other than Minnesota are responsible for understanding and complying with the out-of-state licensure requirements. For individuals who must first obtain the Minnesota endorsement, their current teaching license must be deemed equivalent to a Minnesota license before the Minnesota endorsement will be granted.

For more information, candidates should contact their Walden University enrollment advisor, who can provide information on endorsement requirements. Candidates are responsible for ensuring they understand and comply with the most up-to-date endorsement information for their state.

For Candidates in Alabama and in Washington state

- Prospective Alabama candidates should contact the Teacher Education and Certification Division of the Alabama State Department of Education at 1-334-242-9935 or www.alsde.edu to verify that these programs qualify for teacher certification, endorsement, and/or salary benefits.
- Prospective Washington state candidates are advised to contact the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction at 1-360-725-6320 or prof.educ@k12.wa.us to determine whether Walden's programs in the field of education are approved for teacher certification or endorsements in Washington state. Additionally, teachers are advised to contact their individual school district as to whether this program may qualify for salary advancement.

Section 1: Program Information

Academic and Professional Standards

High academic standards are important to professional success. The skills learned in the course of academic pursuit will be the same skills necessary for success in the workplace: the ability to communicate effectively, the ability to analyze a situation objectively, and the discipline of study.

The Minnesota State Board of Education and Board of Teaching have a set of standards that clearly define what a teacher needs to know. The Minnesota Standards for Teachers of Reading K–12 are addressed in Walden’s courses. These standards include the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions needed to be an effective teacher. Endorsement candidates will demonstrate mastery of these standards through coursework and major assessments.

The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership faculty members are here to help candidates meet those standards. They will keep a watchful eye on candidates’ academic progress. Through teaching, advising, and tutoring, they will assist candidates in developing the skills, knowledge, and professional dispositions necessary for academic and professional success. Further, Walden University has an array of supportive student services. Candidates can refer to the [Walden University Student Handbook](#) and the [Walden University Web site](#) for more information about these services. Also, [Section 3](#) of this guidebook provides a description of specific student services.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

In addition to meeting the professional standards set by the Minnesota State Board of Education and Board of Teaching, candidates also are responsible for meeting the satisfactory academic progress standards set by Walden University. The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership faculty will monitor candidates’ academic progress on a regular basis to make sure they are making progress toward program requirements and degree completion. Candidates will be expected to maintain a 2.75 GPA throughout the program, as described in the transition points. (Additional information on transition points is available below.) Endorsement candidates enrolled in the M.S. in Education option must obtain a 3.0 prior to beginning the M.S. in Education courses.

Walden believes that endorsement candidates must take responsibility for their own academic experience, including knowing the standards, regulations, rules, and processes of both Walden University and The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership. In addition to reading this *Reading K–12 Endorsement Program Candidate Guidebook*, candidates should thoroughly read the [Walden University Catalog](#) and the Walden University Student Handbook.

For candidates who are experiencing extenuating circumstances or simply need time off from their program, Walden offers a total of 180 days (about 6 months) worth of leave of absence (LOA) time per year. Candidates should contact an academic advisor for assistance if they are interested in taking a leave of absence from their program. For more information on leave of absence, refer to the [Walden University Student Handbook](#).

Description of Program

Please Note: Walden University reserves the right to make program changes as needed to ensure the highest quality program.

Program Design and Structure

The Reading K–12 Endorsement program is an accelerated, intensive program with online coursework and concurrent clinical experiences. Courses are offered in a prescribed sequence with completion expected in two and a half semesters. Courses are 8 weeks in length. There are five 3-credit courses and four 1-credit clinical experience courses. The first 3-credit course is taken singly and the remaining four are taken concurrently with the 1-credit clinical experience courses.

Candidates can elect to complete two additional semesters to earn a M.S. in Education with a specialization in Reading and Literacy with a Reading K–12 Endorsement. Each semester consists of two 8-week courses, taken singly.

Note: Time to completion may vary by student, depending on individual progress. For a personalized estimate of their time to completion, candidates should call their enrollment advisor at 1-866-492-5336. Exact semester sequence may vary, depending on start date.

Master of Science in Education

Candidates may elect to complete two additional semesters to earn an M.S. in Education degree with a specialization in Reading and Literacy with a Reading K–12 Endorsement. The courses are taken after the candidate completes the endorsement courses and passes all transition point requirements. The courses are 8 weeks in length and are taken singly. They are offered during each semester of the year.

Clinical Experiences

Clinical experience is an integral part of the Reading K–12 Endorsement program at Walden University. The clinical experiences are opportunities for candidates to apply course concepts and standards in real environments that allow for increasing levels of responsibility. The clinical experiences are designed to provide the opportunity to connect theory to practice and prepare the candidate for daily responsibilities as a reading teacher. Candidates are guided throughout all clinical experiences by both a host teacher and a member of Walden’s faculty licensed in reading and professionally prepared. Candidates complete and are assessed on an extensive major assessment in each clinical experience that is the application of their concurrent coursework. The four clinical experience major assessments, along with the other transition point requirements, comprise the candidates’ ePortfolio.

Types of Clinical Experiences

Clinical experiences in the Reading K–12 Endorsement take place in two ways: Virtual Field Experiences[®] (VFE[®]) and Clinical Experiences.

VFE[®]

The **Virtual Field Experience[®] (VFE[®])** is an organized, purposeful, and thought-provoking experience that allows Walden candidates to see best practices demonstrated by teachers across the United States in a variety of classrooms at multiple levels of learning and with a rich diversity of K–12 students. The VFEs[®] are classroom-focused, interactive, and relate to the course learning objectives, standards, and skills for effective teaching. Candidates in each course in the program are provided with 3–5 hours of specially designed VFEs[®]. Candidates view and write about the lessons, and then they comment and critique the lessons based on best practices. The VFEs[®] provide candidates with excellent early and ongoing opportunities to see teachers in action and learn from real-world situations.

The **Clinical Experience (CE)** takes place during four 1-credit clinical experience courses—EDUC 6716, EDUC 6717, EDUC 6718, and EDUC 6719. The clinical experience course standards are aligned with the same reading standards as the content courses that are taken concurrently. During each of the four 1-credit clinical experience courses, candidates must complete 15 hours for a total of 60 hours of clinical experience. Candidates must complete one clinical experience course (15 hours) at each of the following levels: elementary, middle, high school, and a level of their choosing. The hours must be completed in K–12 classrooms or a similar educational setting that meet criteria established by Walden University.

In the concurrent online content courses, candidates learn the theory through learning resources (readings and videos), discussions with colleagues, and applications of their knowledge via assignments. In their clinical experience placements, candidates take the knowledge from the coursework and implement it in the classroom, under the guidance of in-school host teachers and Walden faculty members. In each clinical experience online classroom, candidates have an 8-week series of directed discussions where they share experiences; gain insight; and give and receive feedback from each other as they implement their learning and complete their ePortfolio major assessment. The clinical experience online course is supervised by Walden clinical faculty members (both licensed and professionally prepared in reading) who guide discussions and provide formative and summative feedback on ePortfolio major assessments.

<i>Level</i>	<i>Description of Clinical Experience</i>	<i>No. of Hours</i>
1	Virtual Field Experience [®] (VFE [®]) — VFE [®] assignments in each of the five courses	15
2	Clinical Experience—15 hours in each of four courses	60
Total Hours		75

Placement Process

Placement for clinical experience refers to the process of locating and securing a site or school, classroom, and host teacher that meet the requirements for clinical experiences. The Office of Field Experience at Walden University is responsible for finding and approving all clinical experience placement sites for endorsement candidates. To fulfill this responsibility, the Office of Field Experience

collaborates with districts across the United States to place endorsement candidates in their placement sites to complete the clinical experiences.

Preferred Placement Form

Endorsement candidates are responsible for researching and identifying their preferred school districts or organizations in their geographical region, and listing their preferred school districts or organizations on the *Preferred Placement* form. In doing so, candidates are encouraged to think about during which course they would like to complete each of the levels of clinical experience (elementary, middle, high school, and level of their choosing). Candidates are also encouraged to think about when certain programs in their area will be offered, particularly during the summer months. For example, if a candidate knows that only an elementary program will be offered during the summer months, the candidate should note this on his or her form to ensure the candidate meets the required placement levels throughout the program.

Each endorsement candidate is responsible for completing a *Preferred Placement* form during EDUC 6631. The *Preferred Placement* form is located in the ePortfolio. Failure to complete the *Preferred Placement* form by the deadline will result in the cancellation of future courses, and will delay a candidate's placement. Once the form is submitted and a placement is secured, the hold will be removed and the candidate will be registered for the next offering of EDUC 6632 and EDUC 6716.

The Office of Field Experience will attempt to place each endorsement candidate in a district or organization listed on the candidate's *Preferred Placement* form. Once a candidate is placed, the Office of Field Experience will notify the endorsement candidate of the placement by sending an e-mail to the candidate's Walden e-mail address. Notifications for each of the clinical experience placements will occur prior to the start of the respective courses.

All e-mail communication between the Office of Field Experience and endorsement candidates will take place via the Walden e-mail server, as per university policy.

When endorsement candidates are notified of an impending placement, the Office of Field Experience will inform the candidate of any documents the placement site may require. For example, if a candidate is required to complete a criminal history or sexual offender background check, provide proof of immunizations, provide proof of TB clearance, or meet any other requirement, the candidate must fulfill the requirements immediately to ensure placement. Failure to fulfill the placement site's requirements

before the experience is scheduled to begin will result in a delayed placement and may require the candidate to postpone registration in the accompanying course(s) until the next offering.

Important note: Walden University does not guarantee endorsement candidates will be placed in a district or organization listed as preferred on the *Preferred Placement* form. Additionally, once placed, the Office of Field Experience reserves the right to change a candidate's placement site and/or host teacher as needed. Walden University must approve all placements.

Professional Liability Insurance

Many school districts require teachers working in United States schools to carry professional liability insurance. Walden University requires all candidates to purchase and show proof of professional liability insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000. Candidates are responsible for completing the *Professional Liability Insurance Verification* form (located in the candidate's ePortfolio) during EDUC 6631, the first course in the program. Failure to complete the *Professional Liability Insurance Verification* form by the deadline will result in the cancellation of future courses and will delay a candidate's placement.

Walden University suggests that candidates research professional organizations that may offer discounted professional liability coverage as a benefit to its student members. Following is a list of professional organizations that offer liability insurance, as well as other membership benefits candidates may want to consider:

- International Reading Association: www.reading.org
- The Association of American Educators (AAE): www.aaeteachers.org/insurance.shtml

Note: Failure to complete the *Professional Liability Insurance Verification* form and provide appropriate documentation will result in the cancellation of future courses and will delay a candidate's placement. Once the form is submitted and a placement is secured, the hold will be removed and the candidate will be registered for the next offering of EDUC 6632 and EDUC 6716.

Diversity of Clinical Experiences

Diversity in clinical experiences is highly valued. Candidates will be placed in sites that meet diversity criteria in their state in race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, first language, and learning exceptionalities. At the minimum, candidates will be placed in one site classified as diverse.

Endorsement candidates are also exposed to a wide range of diverse classroom settings through the VFE® in each course.

Criminal, Sex Offender, and Other Background Checks

Although The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership does not require a background and sex offender check, it is critical that candidates know the implications of having a criminal history in the state of Minnesota. For specific information and recommended actions steps, candidates must review the *Guidelines for Criminal Background Checks for Program Participants* document that was provided during the admission process. Each prospective candidate is required to submit a signed acknowledgment form stating that he or she has received information about criminal background checks.

Because each site may have specific requirements of “observers” or “volunteers” regarding criminal, sex offender, and other background checks, it is important that a candidate discuss this issue with the site as soon as the Office of Field Experience notifies him or her of an impending placement.

Placement Requirements

The following rules must be followed related to clinical experience placement sites:

- No student in the classroom can be a direct relative of an endorsement candidate (including by marriage).
- No person employed by the school can be a direct relative of an endorsement candidate (including by marriage).

Please remember that the Office of Field Experience gives the final approval for all clinical experience placements.

Proof of Immunization and TB Clearance

Because each site may vary in its requirements of observers and volunteers regarding proof of immunizations and tuberculosis (TB) clearance, it is important that candidates discuss this with their impending placement site. Some placement sites may require proof of recent TB clearance and immunization to specified diseases.

Professionalism

Candidates are expected to exhibit professional behavior throughout their endorsement program and clinical experiences.

- Endorsement candidates are reminded to maintain a professional attitude with respect to confidential information about children and with respect to relationships and practices with colleagues. Endorsement candidates are expected to report to their placement site each week.
- Endorsement candidates are expected to create a schedule with their host teacher, and notify their host teacher if a conflict arises and prevents them from meeting at a scheduled time.
- Endorsement candidates are required to present themselves in accordance with the Code of Ethics for Minnesota Teachers ([Rule 8700.7500, subpart 2](#)) during each visit and correspondence with a placement site. The [Code of Ethics](#) is listed below.
- Professional dispositions, or attitudes, are very important elements in determining a person's fitness to teach. Host teachers will evaluate an endorsement candidate's professional dispositions toward children and teaching at the end of each clinical experience. In addition, anyone who interacts with the endorsement candidate at any point may file a *Professional Disposition Concern Form* with the director of the Office of Field Experience, should conduct be egregious enough to warrant it. The eight professional dispositions for which endorsement candidates are assessed are listed in this section of the guidebook. The assessment of professional dispositions is further explained on the *Professional Disposition Concern Form*.

Code of Ethics

All Walden University endorsement candidates are expected to abide by the following Code of Ethics for Minnesota Teachers ([Rule 8700.7500, Subpart 2](#)) while at their placement sites. The standards of professional conduct include the following:

- A. A teacher shall provide professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner.
- B. A teacher shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to health and safety.
- C. In accordance with state and federal laws, a teacher shall disclose confidential information about individuals only when a compelling professional purpose is served or when required by law.

- D. A teacher shall take reasonable disciplinary action in exercising the authority to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning.
- E. A teacher shall not use professional relationships with students, parents, and colleagues to private advantage.
- F. A teacher shall delegate authority for teaching responsibilities only to licensed personnel.
- G. A teacher shall not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter.
- H. A teacher shall not knowingly falsify or misrepresent records or facts relating to that teacher's own qualifications or to other teachers' qualifications.
- I. A teacher shall not knowingly make false or malicious statements about students or colleagues.
- J. A teacher shall accept a contract for a teaching position that requires licensing only if properly or provisionally licensed for that position.

Professional Dispositions

A professional disposition is not so much about what a candidate does, but about how he or she does it. For example, being adept with technology (or not adept with it) is not a professional disposition, but a skill (or lack thereof). On the other hand, a professional disposition involves a candidate's attitude toward tackling a new skill, such as learning and using technology and being open to its benefits in the classroom and with the children in his or her care.

Walden University's Riley College of Education and Leadership is committed to recommending only those candidates for teaching who display the professional dispositions expected of a quality educator, someone who can and will make a positive difference in the lives of children and within the collaborative culture of an effective school. Therefore, assessment of candidate professional dispositions is one of the key assessments used by the college to determine a candidate's eligibility for institutional recommendation for Minnesota licensure. (See the transition points section in this guidebook.) The college's Reading K–12 Endorsement program have identified several professional dispositions that align with Walden's goals, as well as with the standards published by the state of Minnesota and national organizations.

Professional Portfolio

An important component of candidate preparation is the completion of a professional portfolio. Candidates will construct their portfolios throughout the program. Portfolios will demonstrate a candidate's mastery of the Minnesota reading standards as well as the standards set forth by the International Reading Association.

Because the professional portfolio is electronic (and thus is referred to as the *ePortfolio*), candidates can access it any time via the Academics tab on their myWalden page. A complete list of major assessments can be found in the ePortfolio.

The ePortfolio is built throughout the program, with one major assessment added in each of the clinical experience courses (four in total). Major assessments are evaluated according to rubrics that set forth clear standards-based performance criteria. The Assessment Packet with all major assessments and rubrics can be found in the General Information tab of the ePortfolio.

Section 2: Reading K–12 Endorsement Information

Transition Points

Transition points are specific times during the program when candidates must meet specific program and state of Minnesota requirements to be recommended for endorsement. The Reading K–12 endorsement program has three transition points. Candidates in the endorsement program with an option of M.S. in Education have four transition points. The requirements for each transition point ensure that candidates' education and teaching knowledge, skills, and performance are of high caliber.

Candidates must keep in mind that it is their responsibility to manage their own progress through each of the transition points. The transition point elements are located in the candidate's ePortfolio. They are encouraged to contact the Academic Advising Team at any point for help and support. More information about the transition points is available when candidates are accepted into the program.

Important note: The following requirements are organized by transition point and are cumulative in effect. That is, candidates must complete *all* requirements in one transition point *before* they are eligible to move on to the next transition point.

Transition Point One: Admission to the Reading K–12 Endorsement Program

Endorsement candidates can expect to complete the components of Transition Point One during the admission process.

1. Candidates must possess a current Minnesota teaching license, or the equivalent from another U.S. state.
2. Admission requires a bachelor's degree from a U.S. school accredited by one of the six regional accrediting associations recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or from an appropriately accredited non-U.S. institution, in a discipline or field related to the program/specialization for which application is made. **Note:** Educational Credential Evaluators, Inc. (ECE, <http://www.ece.org/>) must evaluate a degree awarded from a non-U.S. institution as equivalent to a bachelor's degree awarded by a U.S. institution.

- If a potential candidate holds a bachelor’s degree from an institution that is not regionally accredited but is accredited by a professional/specialized or national accrediting organization recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA, <http://www.chea.org/>) or holds a bachelor’s degree from a non-U.S. institution, in addition to Walden’s Reading K–12 endorsement program, the candidate must complete a master’s degree before Walden can recommend the candidate for endorsement. It is Walden’s policy, consistent with the policy of most states, that all U.S.-licensed educators must complete a degree, either at the bachelor’s or master’s level, from an institution that is regionally accredited by one of the six associations recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. The North Central Higher Learning Commission regionally accredits Walden University.

3. A cumulative GPA of 2.3, or its equivalent, must be reflected on the transcript that verifies the awarding of the candidate’s bachelor’s degree.

- If a potential candidate has a cumulative GPA of 2.0–2.29, the candidate is eligible for conditional admission. The candidate must meet all requirements of Transition Point 2 before he or she can continue in the program.

4. If a candidate graduated from a non-U.S. institution, the candidate’s proficiency in English must be verified by a TOEFL score or waiver option. (Details available in the table below.*)

5. A candidate must complete a goal statement (1–2 pages) that describes why he or she wants to become a Reading K–12 teacher.

6. Admission requires that candidates complete all application materials, including a signed acknowledgment of background check guidelines, as well as immunization and TB guidelines.

*English Language Proficiency Requirements

<p>The language of instruction at Walden is English; therefore, academic success depends upon a candidate’s ability to converse in, write, and understand English. Candidates must possess an associate’s degree or higher from an institution in one of the following countries:</p>		
• Australia	• England	• Philippines
• Belize	• Guyana	• Scotland
• British Caribbean	• Ireland	• United States
• British West Indies	• Liberia	• Wales
• Canada (except Quebec)	• New Zealand	
<p>If a candidates does not meet the above requirement, he or she must submit official English proficiency scores (no more than 2 years old) reflecting at least the minimum required scores</p>		

on one of the tests as outlined below:

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

- Paper-based—at least 550
- Computer-based—at least 213
- Internet-based—at least 79

Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB)

- Paper-based—at least 82

Academic Modules of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

- Overall band score—6.5

Graduates from universities in countries not listed above, where course instruction and evaluation were conducted in English and for which university verification is available (through the *International Handbook of Universities*, published and edited by IAU/UNESCO, 2012), may request that this requirement be waived. Additional information may be requested from the registrar's office to verify that the instruction was conducted in English.

Transition Point Two

Candidates can expect to complete the components of Transition Point Two during the first semester of the program

Transition Point Three

Candidates can expect to complete the components of Transition Point Three during the second semester and first half of the third semester of the program. Candidates enrolled in the Reading K–12 endorsement program only (non-M.S. in Education option) can expect to complete the program, while candidates enrolled in the endorsement program with an M.S. in Education option can expect to move into Transition Point 4.

Transition Point Four

Candidates enrolled in the M.S. in Education (M.S.Ed.) program option can expect to complete the components of Transition Point Four upon completing all of the program requirements.

Minnesota Board of Teaching Required Endorsement Tests

Required Endorsement Exam: Minnesota Teacher Licensure Exam

The Minnesota Board of Teaching requires candidates to take and pass the Minnesota Teacher Licensure exam(s)(MTLE) relevant to the licensure area. The exam(s) are aligned to the Minnesota standards, which may not have been included in the licensure program.

Candidates in the Reading K–12 endorsement program are required to take the MTLE Content Area Test, Reading K–12 Core Skills (Birth to Age 21) exam for a Minnesota endorsement in Reading K–12.

Required Test for Minnesota Endorsement

<i>Minnesota Teacher Licensure Exam</i>	<i>Minnesota Qualifying Score</i>	<i>Important Notes</i>
(Content Area Test) Reading K–12 Core Skills (Birth to Age 21)	240 (reported as scaled score)	Candidates must take and pass the MTLE Content Area Test, Reading K–12 Core Skills (Birth to Age 21) exam prior to being recommended for endorsement in Minnesota.

License Information

Part of the application process is a verification of completion of a state-approved program. If candidates have met all transition requirements and passed the required licensure exam, then Walden University will recommend them for an endorsement. Candidates should send or email the form to the address below. We will verify completion, sign the form, and return it to candidates to include in their application packets.

In order to apply for endorsement, candidates should:

1. Go to the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) Web site (<http://education.state.mn.us>).
2. At the top of the page, under “Educator Excellence”, click on “Licensing.”
3. Near the bottom of the Licensing page, find the section for “Forms for Processes Not Yet Available Online” and then the “Application to Add a Field to an Existing Minnesota License.”
4. Send the second page of this form to Walden’s certification officer via email or fax at educlicensure@WaldenU.edu or 303-586-6220. The form will be return to applicants to be submitted to the Minnesota Department of Education with any accompanying material.

Candidates will need to follow the directions on the Web site and the form and submit materials in a single packet. This is each candidate’s responsibility for obtaining endorsement.

Certification Officer

Walden University

educlicensure@WaldenU.edu

Fax: 1-303-586-6220

Applying for Licensure in States Other Than Minnesota

If a candidate is applying for an endorsement in a state other than Minnesota, he or she should review the state’s licensure application process and requirements thoroughly. There are a couple of specific things for which to look. In some states, there is a separate process and/or application for individuals completing an out-of-state program. A candidate may also be required to obtain the out-of-state license before applying to their state (termed license-in-hand states). Lastly, it is important to review the testing requirements for licensure. The state could require a higher qualifying score or a completely different test than required by Walden’s program.

Regardless, the candidate likely will need Walden to complete an institutional recommendation form or a similar document attesting to the fact s/he completed a state-approved program provided by that institution. The candidate should send these requests (via email for fax) to Walden’s certification officer.

Certification Officer

Walden University

educlicensure@WaldenU.edu

Fax: 1-303-586-6220

Section 3: Other Information Important to Candidate Success

Academic Grievances

If a candidate has an academic grievance, he or she should refer to the Student Appeals and Grievances section of the *Walden University Student Handbook* for specific directions (www.WaldenU.edu/catalog).

Background Checks

Background checks are investigations into one or more of the following: employment history, criminal records, driving records, education records, drug test results, and sex offender lists. Prospective employers usually will require these types of checks before hiring a candidate to work with children.

Why Do Candidates Need to Know About Background Checks?

Certain background checks are important to know about because candidates are choosing to enter a profession—teaching—that has many regulations governing the people who come into contact with children. Depending upon the state, district, school, site, and/or child care facility, different background checks are required, and they may be performed in different manners. Background checks are primarily required of people who are to become employees; however, sometimes background checks are required of any person who will come into contact with children, including volunteers or those who may be on site for clinical experiences.

Thus, endorsement candidates need to know about background checks for three specific reasons:

1. They will come into contact with children during required clinical experiences during certain content courses.
2. They will come into contact with children during clinical experience courses.
3. They will likely seek employment as a teacher or other educator or on-site school personnel once they have obtained endorsement.

Although The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership will not *require* candidates to obtain certain background checks, it does strongly recommend that they do so, because clinical experience placement sites might require it.

Which Background Checks Are Most Important for Candidate Awareness?

The most commonly required background checks are criminal history (including illegal substances and alcohol) and sex offender list checks. However, again, the specific requirements vary state to state and even district to district.

What Should Candidates Know About Criminal Histories?

Any conviction, even one for which the candidate has successfully completed probation, is part of his or her criminal history. This includes convictions for drug and alcohol offenses and any misdemeanor offenses. Certain exceptions may apply, such as sealed records or records that have been expunged.

How Does a Candidate’s Criminal History or Sex Offender History Affect Teacher Licensure in Minnesota?

It is important to understand that teacher licensure in the state of Minnesota (or any state, for that matter) is partly dependent upon the candidate’s character, which includes, but is not limited to, criminal history and sex offender history. The state needs to feel absolutely sure that not only is a candidate qualified, but that he or she also has a good character to work with children.

When applying for a Minnesota endorsement, applicants are required by the Minnesota Department of Education to submit fingerprints (so that a fingerprint-based background check can be completed). Fingerprints must be submitted using a

“Completed and signed Minnesota Department of Education fingerprint card. Minnesota state law requires that all candidates applying for initial licensure in this state be fingerprinted for a national criminal background check. The fingerprinting must be done at a law enforcement agency in black on a card supplied by the Educator Licensing and Teacher Quality Office. You may be charged a separate fee for this service. Provide all required personal information, but do not make other marks or highlighting on the card. Do not bend or fold the card. This background check is for state use only.”

(See the Application for Minnesota Education License for complete directions as well as the fee for the background check.)

Applicants are also required to complete and submit a signed *Conduct Review Statement*. This statement consists of the following questions:

1. Have you ever been convicted of a crime? (DWIs and DUIs are to be included; petty misdemeanors are not.)
2. Have you ever been referred to a pre-trial diversion program after being arrested?
3. Have you ever been acquitted or found not guilty of a criminal offense involving sexual conduct, homicide, assault, or any other crime including violence?
4. Are any criminal charges currently pending against you in Minnesota or any other state?
5. Have you ever had an education or other occupational license revoked, suspended, or denied in Minnesota or in any other state?
6. Have you ever voluntarily surrendered an education or other occupational license?
7. Is disciplinary action against your teaching, administrative, or other occupational license currently pending in another state?
8. Have you ever resigned from or otherwise left any employment after allegations of misconduct were made against you or when an investigation into those allegations was pending?
9. Have you or a school district in which you were employed ever been a party to a civil settlement, award, or agreement of any kind that involved an allegation that involved your sexual conduct?

If a candidate marks “Yes” to anything on the *Conduct Review Statement*, he or she may be denied a teaching license. More information is available at the Minnesota Board of Teaching website:

http://education.state.mn.us/mde/Teacher_Support/Board_of_Teaching/index.html

Important note: If, for *any* reason (whether intentionally or by accident), a candidate misrepresents his or her criminal history in the conduct review portion of the license application, certification will be revoked. Thus, when self-disclosing criminal history or sex offender history, candidates should mark “Yes” if they are unsure about marking “Yes” or “No.”

If the candidate does not fully disclose, the lack of disclosure—an apparent attempt to hide facts about his or her past—will reveal an untruthful part of his or her character that is even more troublesome to the state. This is true even if the crime hidden would not otherwise have kept the candidate from becoming a Minnesota licensed teacher.

What Does The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership Recommend Candidates Do Regarding Criminal Background Checks?

The Riley College of Education and Leadership highly recommends that all endorsement candidates understand their own criminal and sex offender history, and also recommends the following actions:

1. So that there are no delays in being able to complete clinical experiences, candidates should complete any background checks required by their placement site(s) immediately if the Office of Field Experience advises a background check(s) is necessary.
2. If a candidate is considering any employment that involves working with children, regardless of state or setting, he or she should complete a name-based and fingerprint-based criminal history check and complete a national sex offender registry check well in advance of applying for the endorsement.

Credit for Prior Coursework and Experience

Coursework: Walden University recognizes that a variety of prior learning experiences are attendant to serving an adult population of candidates who come with diverse academic and experiential backgrounds. Because of the standards-focused course of study required in Walden University’s Reading Endorsement program, a transfer of credit option is not available for candidates. Each course carefully builds on the learning and assignments of the ones that come before. The clinical experience courses and major assessments provide the main opportunity to apply what is learned in the coursework. In many ways, Walden offers a spiral curriculum. Assignments and opportunities for reflection are revisited, added to, and developmentally enriched as candidates apply and implement increasingly complex and comprehensive knowledge and materials for inclusion in their ePortfolio.

Clinical Experience Courses: Some candidates will come to Walden with prior teaching experiences in literacy education. However, due to the intertwined nature of the specialization coursework, the concurrent clinical experience course and accompanying major assessment, all candidates will be

required to take all courses. Clinical experience courses and major assessments are carefully designed to complement the concurrent coursework, providing opportunities to apply the knowledge gained.

Teaching Experience

Clinical experiences cannot be waived in full or in part, regardless of prior or current teaching experience. Candidates should remember that they are expected to develop and refine their teaching skills through a variety of diverse clinical experiences at different age, grade, and content levels; therefore, they will not be able to complete all of their clinical experiences in the current work setting. In addition, the experiences must span the scope of the license.

Supporting Student Services

The Office of Disability Services The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership at Walden University will not discriminate on the basis of disability and is committed to providing all qualified students with disabilities equal access to its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973,

In postsecondary education, it is the student's responsibility to self-identify disability status and register with Disability Services prior to requesting accommodations.

To register with Disability Services, submit documentation of disability along with Walden University's Accommodation Request form to Disability Services to: disability@waldenu.edu. The process and form are available at: http://ecampus.waldenu.edu/c/Student_Faculty/StudentFaculty_436.htm

Candidates with disabilities requesting accommodations to access Field Experiences such as Practica and Internships should register with Disability Services prior to registering for those field experiences and clarify their specific accommodation needs. In most cases, field experience sites have their own systems for ensuring equal access for employees/interns with disabilities. Walden's Disability Services office will help address any gaps in those systems.

Career Services Center

The Career Services Center offers resources and advice to help endorsement candidates navigate their career paths. Taking a proactive approach to developing and managing a career is an important part of lifelong learning. Whether an endorsement candidate is looking to change jobs or enhance a current

professional role, the Center encourages goal-setting, professional network building, and active stewardship of career progress from the very start of an academic program. For more information or to schedule a counseling appointment, endorsement candidates should go to <http://careercenter.waldenu.edu>.