



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AMENDMENT MEMO

2015 Senate Bill 32	Senate Amendment 1
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2015 SENATE BILL 32

Senate Bill 32 is a Joint Legislative Council bill relating to the Student Achievement Guarantee Program (SAGE). SAGE is a state categorical aid program that provides funding to schools for low-income students in primary grades (K-3) if the school maintains small class sizes of 18 students to one classroom teacher or 30 students to two classroom teachers, and also meets other statutory requirements. Under SAGE, participating schools are subject to contracts with the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and receive funding for each eligible, low-income student in a K-3 grade level that meets the 18:1 or 30:2 classroom ratio and other requirements. SAGE contracts are for five years and may be renewed for additional five-year terms. SAGE is subject to a required annual evaluation.

The bill creates a program under a new section of the statutes, s. 118.44, *Achievement gap reduction*. The new program is similar to SAGE and incorporates many existing aspects of the program. However, the new program differs from SAGE in the following key aspects:

- The new program allows a school to meet its obligations under the contract by using one of three strategies, or a combination of these strategies: (1) one-to-one tutoring provided by a licensed teacher; (2) instructional coaching for teachers provided by a licensed teacher; or (3) maintaining 18:1 or 30:2 classroom ratios and providing professional development on small group instruction. Unlike SAGE, the new program does not condition funding on maintaining an 18:1 or 30:2 ratio in every classroom in all participating grade levels.
- The new program requires a participating school to create performance goals, including reduction of the achievement gap between low-income students in that

school and students in the same grade and subject statewide. SAGE does not require schools to set performance goals.

- The new program requires school board review of implementation and progress toward achieving performance objectives in each participating school every semester. SAGE does not require schools to review achievement of performance objectives with the school board.
- The new program is funded by a sum sufficient appropriation at a specified per-pupil level (\$2,027). SAGE is currently funded by a sum certain appropriation that is prorated among eligible, low-income students.

The bill prohibits DPI from entering into any new SAGE contracts or renewing any existing SAGE contracts. Under the bill, school districts that currently participate in SAGE are eligible to sign contracts under the new program after their current SAGE contracts expire.

SENATE AMENDMENT 1

Senate Amendment 1 makes funding changes to the newly-created program under Senate Bill 32. The amendment makes the funding sum certain, prorates the funding among all eligible, low-income students, and reduces the funding for annual evaluation of the program. Senate Amendment 1 also allows for one-year extensions of existing SAGE contracts.

Funding Changes

Senate Amendment 1 changes the new program from a sum sufficient appropriation to a sum certain appropriation. Under the bill, schools participating in the new program would be guaranteed \$2,027 per eligible student. Amendment 1 provides that the new program is funded based on a specified, appropriated amount (like the current SAGE program) and does not guarantee a per pupil amount.

Senate Amendment 1 also creates a formula for prorating the appropriated amount among all students eligible for funding. The amendment provides that the current funding method for SAGE will remain in place through the 2015-16 school year, but applies a slightly different funding method to SAGE beginning in 2016-17. The amendment also applies this funding method to the newly created program and prorates funding among students in both programs. The new program created in Senate Bill 32 will eventually replace SAGE. However, because SAGE contracts are for five years, there will be a period during which some schools are operating under SAGE and other schools are operating under the new program. The funding for SAGE and the new program comes from the same appropriation. Because SAGE and the new program will coexist for several years, the funding is prorated among all low-income students in both programs.

In addition, Senate Amendment 1 reduces the funding earmarked for annual evaluation of the new program. The bill requires that DPI arrange for an annual evaluation of the new program and requires that \$250,000 be dedicated for that purpose (the same amount provided

for evaluation of SAGE under current law). Senate Amendment 1 reduces the amount dedicated to evaluation to \$125,000 per year.

One-Year SAGE Contract Extensions

Senate Amendment 1 allows DPI to offer a one-year extension on existing SAGE contracts set to expire at the end of the current 2014-15 school year. The amendment allows DPI and a school board that signed or renewed a SAGE contract in the 2010-11 school year (a five-year SAGE contract set to expire shortly) to agree to extend the contract for one year under existing terms. The Joint Legislative Council originally introduced the one-year extension of SAGE contracts as Senate Bill 31, a separate piece of legislation.

BILL HISTORY

Senate Amendment 1 was offered by Senator Olsen on April 7, 2015. The Senate Committee on Education adopted the amendment on a vote of Ayes, 6; Noes, 1, by a paper ballot vote held on April 23, 2015. The committee then recommended passage of the bill, as amended, on a paper ballot vote of Ayes, 6; Noes, 1.

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