



State of Wisconsin
2023 - 2024 LEGISLATURE

LRB-4354/1
FFK:skw

2023 ASSEMBLY BILL 640

November 8, 2023 - Introduced by Representatives DITTRICH, NEDWESKI, RETTINGER, BRANDTJEN, MELOTIK, ROZAR, MURPHY, DONOVAN, O'CONNOR and MICHALSKI, cosponsored by Senators KNODL, NASS and TOMCZYK. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 **AN ACT** *to amend* 115.28 (7) (a) and 118.19 (3) (a); and *to create* 118.198 of the
2 statutes; **relating to:** a license to teach based on working as a paraprofessional
3 in a school district.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill requires the Department of Public Instruction to issue a provisional license to teach to an individual who a) passes a background check, b) worked as a paraprofessional for at least three days per week for at least one school year in a classroom, and c) is recommended for licensure by the principal of the school at which the individual worked as a paraprofessional, the director of teaching and learning for the school district in which the individual worked as a paraprofessional, and the school district administrator of the school district in which the individual worked as a paraprofessional. Under the bill, a provisional license to teach that is issued based on these criteria authorizes the license holder to teach only in the school district that recommended the individual for the license. Additionally, during the first school year during which the license holder teaches under the license, the license holder must be mentored by a teacher who has taught for at least three school years in the school district. Finally, the bill specifies that DPI must issue a lifetime license based on a provisional license issued under the bill if the license holder successfully completes six semesters of teaching experience.

ASSEMBLY BILL 640

For further information see the state fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** 115.28 (7) (a) of the statutes, as affected by 2023 Wisconsin Act 20,
2 is amended to read:

3 115.28 (7) (a) License all teachers for the public schools of the state; make rules
4 establishing standards of attainment and procedures for the examination and
5 licensing of teachers within the limits prescribed in ss. 118.19 (2) and (3), 118.191,
6 118.1915, 118.192, 118.193, 118.194, 118.195, ~~and~~ 118.197, and 118.198; prescribe
7 by rule standards, requirements, and procedures for the approval of teacher
8 preparatory programs leading to licensure, including a requirement that, to be
9 approved by the state superintendent, a teacher preparatory program shall
10 demonstrate that it provides instruction that prepares teachers to teach reading and
11 language arts using science-based early reading instruction, as defined in s. 118.015
12 (1c) (b), and does not provide instruction on teaching reading and language arts that
13 incorporates 3-cueing, as defined in s. 118.015 (1c) (c), and a requirement that,
14 beginning on July 1, 2012, and annually thereafter, each teacher preparatory
15 program located in this state shall submit to the department a list of individuals who
16 have completed the program and who have been recommended by the program for
17 licensure under this subsection, together with each individual's date of program
18 completion, from each term or semester of the program's most recently completed
19 academic year; file in the state superintendent's office all papers relating to state
20 teachers' licenses; and register each such license.

21 **SECTION 2.** 118.19 (3) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

ASSEMBLY BILL 640

1 118.19 (3) (a) No license to teach in any public school may be issued unless the
2 applicant possesses a bachelor's degree including such professional training as the
3 department by rule requires, except as permitted under par. (b) and ss. 115.28 (17)
4 (a), 118.191, 118.1915, 118.192, 118.193, 118.194, ~~and~~, 118.197 and 118.198.
5 Notwithstanding s. 36.11 (16), no teacher preparatory program in this state may be
6 approved by the state superintendent under s. 115.28 (7) (a), unless each student in
7 the program is required to complete student teaching consisting of full days for a full
8 semester following the daily schedule and semester calendar of the cooperating
9 school or the equivalent, as determined by the state superintendent. No license to
10 teach in any public school may be granted to an applicant who completed a
11 professional training program outside this state unless the applicant completed
12 student teaching consisting of full days for a full semester following the daily
13 schedule and semester calendar of the cooperating school or the equivalent, as
14 determined by the state superintendent. The state superintendent may grant
15 exceptions to the student teaching requirements under this paragraph when the
16 midyear calendars of the institution offering the teacher preparatory program and
17 the cooperating school differ from each other and would prevent students from
18 attending classes at the institution in accordance with the institution's calendar.
19 The state superintendent shall promulgate rules to implement this subsection. If for
20 the purpose of granting a license to teach or for approving a teacher preparatory
21 program the state superintendent requires that an institution of higher education
22 be accredited, the state superintendent shall accept accreditation by a regional or
23 national institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. department of
24 education or by a programmatic accrediting organization.

25 **SECTION 3.** 118.198 of the statutes is created to read:

ASSEMBLY BILL 640**SECTION 3**

1 **118.198 License to teach; paraprofessional experience.** (1) In this
2 section:

3 (a) “Employing school district” means a school district that employs an
4 individual as a paraprofessional.

5 (b) “Experienced teacher” means a teacher who has taught for at least 3 school
6 years in an employing school district.

7 **(2)** Notwithstanding s. 118.19 (4m), (6) to (9), (12), and (14), the department
8 shall grant a provisional license to teach for a term of 3 years to an individual who
9 is eligible for licensure under s. 118.19 (4) and (10) and who satisfies all of the
10 following:

11 (a) The individual worked as a paraprofessional in a classroom for at least 3
12 days a week for at least one school year.

13 (b) All of the following recommend the individual for a provisional license to
14 teach by signing the individual’s application for a license under this section:

- 15 1. The principal of the school at which the individual worked under par. (a).
- 16 2. The director of teaching and learning for the employing school district.
- 17 3. The school district administrator of the employing school district or the
18 school district administrator’s designee.

19 **(3)** (a) A provisional license to teach issued under sub. (2) authorizes the license
20 holder to teach only in the employing school district that recommended the license
21 holder under sub. (2) (b).

22 (b) During at least the first school year that the license holder is employed as
23 a teacher by the employing school district, the employing school district shall ensure
24 that the license holder is mentored by an experienced teacher.

