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# Wisconsin Legislative Council

## AMENDMENT MEMO

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### 2023 Senate Bill 608

### Senate Substitute Amendment 2

## 2023 SENATE BILL 608

2023 Senate Bill 608 creates a provisional teaching license for individuals who worked as classroom paraprofessionals for at least three days per week for at least one school year. To receive the license, an individual must receive recommendations from the principal of the school where the individual worked, the director of teaching and learning, and the school district administrator. The bill requires that an experienced teacher, meaning one who has taught for at least three school years, must mentor the individual during the first school year the individual is employed as a teacher.

The provisional license allows an individual to teach within the school district that recommended the individual for licensure. The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) must issue a lifetime license to an individual who obtains a provision license under the bill and successfully completes six semesters of teaching.

## SENATE SUBSTITUTE AMENDMENT 2

Senate Substitute Amendment 2 creates additional requirements related to teacher mentoring, imposes additional qualifications on paraprofessionals seeking the teaching license, and changes and clarifies the type of license an individual may obtain under the bill.

The amendment requires that the experienced teacher who provides mentoring to the license holder must have been regularly employed in the employing school district for at least three school years. The mentoring teacher must also hold a Tier II, III, or IV teaching license from DPI and must have previously mentored a first-year or newly employed teacher. The school district is required to provide paid release time to the mentoring teacher to observe the license holder and provide feedback.

Additionally, the amendment requires that an individual must have worked as a paraprofessional for at least three consecutive school years, rather than one. To be eligible for the teaching license, an individual must also have either: (1) earned at least 60 credits from an institution of higher education or technical college; or (2) have earned an associate degree. Further, the individual must be enrolled in a teacher preparatory program. Under the amendment, the applicant must still receive recommendations from the principal of the school where the individual works as well as the school district administrator, but does not need a recommendation from the director of teaching and learning. An applicant may not have previously held a license to teach based on experience as a paraprofessional.

The amendment also requires the applicant submit their application for licensure by September 1 of the school year in which the license is to be issued. Additionally, under the amendment, the employing

school district must ensure the license holder receives early literacy professional development before the license holder teaches a grade from kindergarten to third.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, the amendment changes the type of teaching license from a provisional license to a nonrenewable Tier I license to teach for a term of five years. The amendment also removes the pathway to lifetime licensure that is provided under the bill. The amendment prohibits DPI from issuing a license based on experience as a paraprofessional in several teaching areas related to special education and American Indian studies. Under the amendment, this license may expire before its term ends if the employing school district notifies DPI or DPI determines that the license holder either: (1) is no longer employed in the employing school district; or (2) is no longer enrolled in a teacher preparatory program.

## **BILL HISTORY**

Senate Substitute Amendment 2 was offered by Senator Knodl on February 15, 2024. On February 20, 2024, the Senate voted to adopt the amendment on a voice vote and voted to pass the bill, as amended, on a vote of Ayes, 21; Noes, 11.

For a full history of the bill, visit the Legislature's [bill history page](#).

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<sup>1</sup> The amendment specifies that the professional development be the type required of other K-3 teachers, principals, and reading specialists described in 2023 Wisconsin Act 20.