



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

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Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #663

Grants for Master Educators and National Teacher Certification Reestimate (DPI -- Administrative and Other Funding)

Bill Agency

[LFB 2007-09 Budget Summary: Page 476-477, #11, #12, #13, and #14]

CURRENT LAW

DPI is required to award a grant to any person who does all of the following: (a) is certified by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS); (b) is licensed as a teacher by the State Superintendent or employed as a teacher in a private school; and (c) is employed as a teacher in this state. The grant must equal the costs of obtaining certification, not to exceed \$2,000, in the school year in which the person meets the criteria. In addition, the grant recipient receives \$2,500 in each of the nine school years following the school year in which he or she received the initial grant, if the person does all of the following: (a) maintains NBPTS certification; (b) maintains state license or employment in a private school; and (c) remains employed as a teacher in this state. In 2006-07, \$945,000 GPR is budgeted for the program, which is paid from a sum sufficient appropriation established for this purpose.

GOVERNOR

Reestimate funding by \$75,600 GPR in 2007-08 and \$264,000 GPR in 2008-09 over annual base level funding of \$945,000 GPR for grants to teachers who are certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

Provide \$194,500 GPR in 2007-08 and \$329,100 GPR in 2008-09 and expand the national teacher certification program to provide grants to persons receiving master educator licenses under Chapter PI 34 of the Administrative Code. Grant amounts would be equal to those awarded under current law, up to \$2,000 in the first year and \$2,500 annually thereafter for

nine years. This provision would first apply to persons who were licensed by DPI as master educators on July 1, 2005.

Provide \$62,500 GPR annually in order to provide higher grant awards to certain educators under the national teacher certification program and the proposed master educator program, as well as an additional \$4,800 GPR annually to pay for Medicare and Social Security. Provide that continuing nationally certified or master educators would receive \$5,000 annually, rather than \$2,500, if employed in schools in which at least 60% of the pupils enrolled are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

Modify current law eligibility requirements for national teacher certification grants so that the program would apply to persons who are employed in a position that requires a license issued by the State Superintendent or that would require such a license if the position were in a public school, including persons employed as administrators. Under current law, the person must be licensed and employed as a teacher.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Created in 1987, the NBPTS is an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization governed by a 63-member board of directors. The mission of the NBPTS is to: (a) establish rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do; (b) develop and operate a national, voluntary system to assess and certify teachers who meet these standards; and (c) advance related educational reforms for the purpose of improving student learning in American schools.

2. The state's national teacher certification grant program was created by 1997 Act 237. NBPTS subsidizes a portion of the \$2,000 candidate fee, which results in an average initial state grant of \$1,200. Continuing grants of \$2,500 are then provided annually for the next nine years. In 2006-07, 73 new teachers were certified, and 329 were receiving continuing grants.

Grants for Master Educators

3. Effective July 1, 2004, the state system for school personnel certification was changed under Chapter PI 34 of the Administrative Code. An individual may obtain certification by NBPTS as an optional route to obtain state certification at the master educator level, the highest available certification under PI 34. Alternatively, an individual may follow a state process to receive a master educator license under PI 34 in subject areas not currently offered under the NBPTS. These areas include the following: (a) administration: superintendent, school business administrator, director of instruction, principal, local vocational education coordinator, director of special education and pupil services, library media supervisor, instructional technology coordinator, and reading specialist; (b) pupil services: school nurse, school counselor, school psychologist, and school social worker; and (c) teaching and supplemental: adaptive physical education, assistive technology, adaptive education, speech and language pathology, computer science, dance, psychology, and theater. DPI indicates that eventually, the state process will offer master educator

licenses in the subject areas granted through the NBPTS as well.

4. The state requirements to obtain a master educator license include: (a) documentation of a related master's degree; (b) five years of professional experience in education; (c) evidence of improved pupil learning; and (d) an assessment process. The assessment includes examination and observation by a team of three educators who have similar responsibilities to the candidate's, and who have been trained by DPI. PI 34 requires that the state assessment process be comparable to the NBPTS process. A master educator license has a 10-year duration, compared to a five-year duration for a professional educator license, and up to five years for an initial educator license, which are the other two levels of certification available under PI 34.

5. DPI indicates that the master educator licensing process is at least as rigorous as that of NBPTS, with the added requirement that the applicant hold a master's degree. Currently, no additional compensation is available for recipients of master educator licenses, unless contracts in individual school districts provide them. As such, DPI has requested and the Governor recommended that the state grant available to educators who are certified by NBPTS should likewise be available to educators who receive master educator licenses through the state process. Without a comparable grant, one could argue that there is a reduced incentive to pursue the master educator license through the state, rather than through the NBPTS.

6. The Governor's proposal would also allow several new classes of school employees to receive the grants. Whereas under current law only those employed as teachers are eligible, the proposal would add administrators and pupil services employees. One could argue that all professionals working in schools impact the quality of student education, whether through leadership, instruction, or support services. On the other hand, it could also be argued that teachers have the most direct contact with pupils and therefore the greatest impact on student learning. The Committee could consider whether, as a matter of policy, the state should encourage all licensed employees to pursue advanced certification, or whether it should target teachers.

7. For the 2007-09 biennium, it is estimated that 50 master educators would be newly-certified in each year, receiving initial average grants of \$1,200 (\$60,000 annually). In addition, under the bill it was assumed that 50 continuing master educators, certified in 2005-06 and 2006-07, would be eligible to receive \$2,500 grants in each year of the 2007-09 biennium (\$125,000 in 2007-08 and \$250,000 in 2008-09). DPI is required, due to recent IRS findings, to pay Medicare and Social Security taxes (\$9,500 in 2007-08 and \$19,100 in 2008-09) on behalf of continuing grant recipients under the current law NBPTS program. Additional funding provided under the bill for this purpose was \$194,500 in 2007-08 and \$329,100 in 2008-09.

8. However, of the initial applicants for master educator licenses, only 13 such licenses were granted. Under the bill, those master educators would be retroactively eligible for initial grants attributable to the 2006-07 school year, in addition to continuing grants in the 2007-08 and 2008-09 school years. It is assumed the 13 retroactive grants would be paid from the appropriation in 2007-08. Therefore, funding necessary for the master educator provision is an estimated \$110,600 in 2007-08 and \$229,500 in 2008-09. Of the 13 master educators certified, there were two

superintendents, four principals, and seven teachers.

High Poverty Grants

9. Under the bill, continuing national board certified teachers or master educators would receive \$5,000 annually, rather than \$2,500 as under current law, if employed in schools in which at least 60% of the pupils enrolled are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. According to free and reduced-price lunch data for 2005-06, there were approximately 287 schools in 41 school districts that would have met the 60% low-income threshold in that year.

10. Proponents of the proposal argue that schools with challenging environments, including high-poverty and low-performing schools, have difficulty recruiting and retaining highly qualified, experienced teachers. Incentive grants, some have argued, would help attract more nationally-certified teachers and master educators to struggling schools in Wisconsin.

11. A 2004 study of six states indicates that high-poverty, high-minority, and lower-performing schools are all less likely on average to employ national board certified teachers (NBCTs). The survey of 18,800 nationally-certified teachers found that in five of the six states, NBCTs were underrepresented in schools with 75% or more students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch. The largest gap was in Mississippi, where 18% of NBCTs worked in high-poverty schools, while 34% of all teachers in that state did so. NBCTs were underrepresented, compared to all state teachers, by six percentage points in Florida, by 5% in North Carolina, by 4% in Ohio, and by 8% in South Carolina. Similar discrepancies were found in these five states in the proportions of nationally-certified teachers employed in high-minority schools and in schools with below-average test scores.

12. These trends can be seen in Wisconsin, as well. For example, pupils eligible for free and reduced-price lunch composed 30% of statewide enrollment in 2005-06. Teachers with at least five years of experience in the profession made up 81.2% of Wisconsin public school teachers in that year. In Milwaukee Public Schools, on the other hand, the percentage of pupils eligible for free and reduced-price lunch was 73.4% in 2005-06. The percentage of teachers with at least five years of experience was 68.3% on average across MPS.

13. According to the study, the exception to the trend was California, which awards a bonus of \$20,000 over four years to NBCTs working in schools with below-average test scores. In California 36% of NBCTs worked in high-poverty schools, compared with 27% of all teachers in the state. Similarly, 58% of nationally-certified teachers worked in high-minority schools, compared to 45% of all teachers, and 40% of NBCTs worked in low-performing schools, whereas 33% of all state teachers did so. As in Wisconsin, 32 states provide salary supplements to any teacher earning national board certification. However, outside California, targeted programs linking them with low-performing schools are rare, according to the study.

14. On the other hand, a number of different factors have been identified that might explain the relative lack of nationally-certified teachers in high poverty schools. Among other

factors, working conditions, school culture, district policies on teacher transfers, and community and parent circumstances might influence an individual teacher's choice of school. In addition, support programs for candidates might also encourage current teachers in a given district or area to pursue National Board certification. Currently, Alverno College offers a National Board certification pre-candidate program, co-sponsored by DPI, for teachers in the metropolitan Milwaukee area.

15. DPI identified 20 nationally-certified teachers who were working in schools that met the 60% threshold in 2005-06. In addition, of those newly-certified in 2006-07, six teachers were working in schools that would have met the poverty threshold, based on 2005-06 data. Therefore, approximately 26 nationally-certified teachers could be eligible for the proposed higher grant amounts in each year of the biennium, assuming they continue to meet the criteria. Further, DPI estimated that five master educators would be eligible in each year for these grants, should they become eligible for the program under the master educator proposal outlined above.

16. Based on these estimates, a total of 31 teachers would have been eligible for high poverty grants, if the proposal had been in effect in 2006-07. If these 31 teachers would receive the proposed \$2,500 high poverty grants, expenditures would equal an estimated \$83,400 annually, including Medicare and Social Security taxes, for this provision.

National Teacher Certification Reestimate

17. For the current law program, \$757,500 GPR was budgeted for this purpose in 2005-06, and DPI expended \$731,800 from the appropriation. For 2006-07, \$945,000 GPR is budgeted for this purpose, and payments are estimated at \$910,000. There were 329 teachers receiving continuing grants in 2006-07, and 73 teachers who are newly-certified.

18. If all 402 currently participating teachers qualify for grants in 2007-08, continuing grants will total \$1,005,000. It is estimated that 472 continuing grants will be awarded in 2008-09, totaling \$1,180,000. In addition, Medicare and Social Security taxes on behalf of continuing teachers under this program are estimated to be \$76,900 for 2007-08 and \$90,300 in 2008-09. DPI estimates there will be 70 newly-certified NBPTS teachers in 2007-08 and in 2008-09, receiving average initial grants of \$1,200, for a total of \$84,000 annually. Based on these estimates, expenditures would equal \$220,900 in 2007-08 and \$409,300 in 2008-09 above base level funding of \$945,000 for the current law program. As a change to the bill, this reestimate would increase funding by \$145,300 annually.

ALTERNATIVES TO BILL

A. Grants for Master Educators

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation to provide \$194,500 in 2007-08 and \$329,100 in 2008-09 and authorize DPI to expand the national teacher certification program to provide grants to persons receiving master educator licenses under P134, including teachers, pupil services professionals, and administrators.

ALT A1	Change to Bill Funding	Change to Base Funding
GPR	\$0	\$523,600

2. Approve the Governor's recommendation to expand the program, but reestimate funding for this provision by -\$83,900 in 2007-08 and -\$99,600 in 2008-09 for a total of \$110,600 in 2007-08 and \$229,500 in 2008-09.

ALT A2	Change to Bill Funding	Change to Base Funding
GPR	-\$183,500	\$340,100

3. Reduce funding by -\$137,300 in 2007-08 and -\$213,000 in 2008-09 and authorize DPI to expand the program only to teachers receiving master educator certification, including the seven teachers receiving such certification in 2006-07, for total funding of \$57,200 in 2007-08 and \$116,100 in 2008-09.

ALT A3	Change to Bill Funding	Change to Base Funding
GPR	-\$350,300	\$173,300

4. Delete provision.

ALT A4	Change to Bill Funding	Change to Base Funding
GPR	-\$523,600	\$0

B. High Poverty Grants

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation to provide \$67,300 annually for additional grants to nationally-certified teachers working in high poverty schools.

ALT B1	Change to Bill Funding	Change to Base Funding
GPR	\$0	\$134,600

2. Approve the Governor's recommendation and reestimate necessary funding for additional grants by \$16,100 annually to account for more recent estimates of eligible teachers working in high poverty schools.

ALT B2	Change to Bill Funding	Change to Base Funding
GPR	\$32,200	\$166,800

3. Delete provision.

ALT B3	Change to Bill Funding	Change to Base Funding
GPR	-\$134,600	\$0

C. National Teacher Certification Reestimate

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation to provide \$75,600 in 2007-08 and \$264,000 in 2008-09 above base level funding of \$945,000 for national certification grants under current law.

ALT C1	Change to Bill Funding	Change to Base Funding
GPR	\$0	\$339,600

2. Increase funding by \$145,300 in 2007-08 and \$145,300 in 2008-09 as a reestimate of the costs of the program under current law.

ALT C2	Change to Bill Funding	Change to Base Funding
GPR	\$290,600	\$630,200

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