



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

One East Main, Suite 301 • Madison, WI 53703 • (608) 266-3847 • Fax: (608) 267-6873
Email: fiscal.bureau@legis.wisconsin.gov • Website: <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/lfb>

May 21, 2013

Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #541

Requirements for Master Educators (DPI -- Administrative and Other Funding)

[LFB 2013-15 Budget Summary: Page 393, #11]

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) or is licensed by DPI as a master educator; (b) is licensed as a teacher by the State Superintendent or is employed as a teacher in a private school located in this state; and (c) is employed as a teacher in this state. The grant is equal to 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 or master educator certification; (b) maintains state licensure or employment in a private school; and (c) remains employed as a teacher in this state. The amount of the continuing grant is doubled to \$5,000 in any school year in which the recipient is employed in a school in which at least 60% of the pupils enrolled are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

In 2012-13, \$2,440,600 GPR is budgeted for the program, which is paid from a sum sufficient appropriation established for this purpose.

GOVERNOR

Require that, for a person licensed by DPI as a master educator under PI 34, the person also receive a rating of "effective" or "highly effective" under the applicable educator effectiveness system in order to receive an initial grant for the costs of having attained the highest level of licensure. Require the person to maintain that rating to receive the nine years of follow-on grants. Provide that this requirement would first apply to persons first receiving an

initial grant in the 2014-15 school year.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Created in 1987, the NBPTS is an independent, nonprofit 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 prerequisites for National Board certification include holding a bachelor's degree, completing three full years of teaching or school counseling, and possessing a valid state teaching license or, if teaching where a license is not required, having taught in schools recognized and approved to operate by the state. To obtain National Board certification, a candidate must complete two major components: a portfolio of classroom practice, and a content knowledge computer-based assessment. The portfolio must include samples of student work, video recordings of instruction, and documentation of a teacher's work outside the classroom that has contributed to student learning. The assessment requires candidates to demonstrate knowledge of developmentally appropriate content and pedagogy necessary to teach across the age range and ability level of the certificate area in which they have applied. Certificates are available in broad academic subject areas including: art, career and technical education, English as a new language, language arts, exceptional needs (special education), health, library media, literacy/reading, mathematics, music, physical education, school counseling, science, social studies/history, and world languages.

3. 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 \$1,800. Continuing grants of \$2,500 are then provided annually for the next nine years.

4. 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, including school psychologist and school social worker. DPI indicates that eventually, the state process will offer master educator licenses in the subject areas granted through the NBPTS as well.

5. 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. Chapter 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.

6. Under 2007 Act 20, the program was expanded to include teachers receiving master educator licenses under Chapter PI 34 of the Administrative Code, which is thought to be at least as rigorous as the national certification, with the added requirement of a master's degree. In addition, under Act 20, nationally certified teachers and master educators may qualify for higher grant awards, if employed in schools in which at least 60% of the pupils enrolled are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Grants for teachers in high poverty schools are \$5,000 annually, rather \$2,500.

7. Beginning in 2014-15, each school board and independent "2r" charter school must evaluate their teachers and principals. Under current law, the evaluation system framework must base 50% of the total evaluation score for each teacher and principal on measures of student performance, including state assessments. The other 50% of the total score must be based upon one of the following: (a) for a teacher, the extent to which the teacher's practice meets the core teaching standards adopted by the 2011 Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium; and (b) for a principal, the extent to which the principal's practice meets the 2008 Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Educational Leadership Policy Standards. A teacher or principal so evaluated must be placed in one of multiple performance categories. DPI has requested funding to license an educator effectiveness evaluation system for use by districts, which is addressed in another issue paper.

8. Before the master educator license qualified for annual grants under the state program, it was argued that without a comparable grant, there would be a reduced incentive to pursue the master educator license through the state, rather than through the NBPTS. Similarly, one could argue that, if only master educators are required to be assessed by the educator effectiveness system in order to qualify for a grant, there could be a reduced incentive to pursue the license through the state, rather than through the NBPTS. Therefore, it might be desirable to require both types of license holders to be rated as "effective" or "highly effective" in order to receive grants under the program. Because all teachers must be evaluated under the new system, master or National Board certified teachers will receive ratings under the system. Receiving at least an "effective" rating would be expected for accomplished, veteran educators.

9. The language of the bill is unclear regarding whether a license-holder would be disqualified from receiving one year's grant, or all remaining years' grants, if in one year the teacher received a rating lower than "effective." It might be desirable to specify that, for each year a teacher is not rated at least "effective" under the educator evaluation system, the teacher would lose one year of grant money. The teacher would then have the opportunity and incentive to improve his or her practice and, if successful, earn a grant in the following year.

10. On the other hand, one could argue that the requirement that an educator be rated "effective" or "highly effective" under the state's new evaluation system is redundant. National Board certification is currently the most prestigious designation available to teachers, and has been awarded to only 100,000 practitioners in 25 years. (Currently, there are approximately 3.7 million teachers employed in public and private schools across the country.) The process to earn National Board certification, and the comparable process to become a master educator in Wisconsin, are intended to identify exemplary teachers, and therefore more rigorous than a standard evaluation designed to determine whether teachers are competent practitioners and have a positive impact on

student learning. Therefore, it could be argued that an added requirement for an "effective" rating is unnecessary.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation.
2. Modify the Governor's recommendation by one or more of the following:
 - a. Require that, in addition to persons licensed by DPI as master educators, persons receiving national teacher certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards would be required to receive a rating of "effective" or "highly effective" under the applicable educator effectiveness system in order to receive initial or follow-on grants for those attaining these licenses;
 - b. Specify that a master educator or national teacher license holder who receives a rating lower than "effective" would not be eligible for a grant until the license holder receives a rating of "effective" or better on a subsequent evaluation. Provide that a license-holder who received an "effective" or "highly effective" rating in a subsequent year could again receive a grant beginning in that year.
3. Delete provision.

Prepared by: Layla Merrifield