



Senate Fiscal Agency
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BILL ANALYSIS



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Senate Bill 491 (Substitute S-3 as passed by the Senate)
Sponsor: Senator Phil Pavlov
Committee: Education

Date Completed: 8-24-16

RATIONALE

The Revised School Code allows the board of a local or intermediate school district to engage noncertificated teachers to teach courses in certain subjects designated by the Code or by the State Board of Education, provided the teachers meet certain requirements. The Code also requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to establish an interim certification process that allows individuals to teach while earning a teaching certificate. Reportedly, school districts are facing a shortage of qualified teachers to teach certain subjects. To address this issue, it has been suggested that the qualifications for teaching as a noncertificated teacher and obtaining and holding an interim teacher certificate should be broadened.

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Revised School Code to do the following:

- **Allow the board of a school district or intermediate school district (ISD) to engage a noncertificated, nonendorsed teacher to teach a course in writing, journalism, or health sciences, or a course in a discipline designated as a critical shortage discipline, in addition to the courses that such a teacher currently may be hired to teach.**
- **Specify that an individual's service as a full-time instructor in a field of specialization at the college level would be considered occupational experience in that field (one of the conditions for teaching as a noncertificated teacher).**
- **Allow a noncertificated teacher to teach in a field of specialization if he or she had, in the previous seven years, at least five years of occupational experience, rather than a major or a graduate degree, in that field, for certain subjects, or met other requirements to teach a foreign language.**
- **Require an alternative teaching program, for an interim teaching certificate, to include training in classroom management.**
- **Eliminate the grade point average requirement for those holding a master's or doctorate degree, for an interim teaching certificate.**
- **Exempt certain career and technical education instructors from the requirement to have a bachelor's degree in order to receive an interim teaching certificate; and require the Department of Education to determine which career and technical education certification areas would not require a bachelor's degree.**
- **Require a person with an interim teaching certificate to have a planned program leading to teacher certification on file with the employing school district, his or her teaching preparation institution, and the Department, in order to teach in a public school.**
- **Allow an individual seeking an interim teaching certificate to have more than one subject matter endorsement if he or she had more than one graduate degree, or had a bachelor's degree with more than one major, and met other requirements.**
- **Specify that an interim teaching certificate would be valid until the next June 30 occurring at least seven years from the date it was issued.**
- **Require the Department, for a career and technical education instructor, to determine how noncertificated instructors placed on an annual occupational**

authorization could expedite the process to become fully certified to teach in a career and technical education program.

The bill would take effect 90 days after its enactment.

Noncertificated Teacher, List of Courses

The Code allows the board of a school district or ISD to engage a full- or part-time noncertificated, nonendorsed teacher to teach a course in computer science, a foreign language, mathematics, biology, chemistry, engineering, physics, or robotics, or in another subject area determined and designated by the State Board of Education to be appropriate in grades 9-12. The bill would include on that list a course in writing, journalism, or health sciences, and a course in a discipline included on the listing of critical shortage disciplines compiled and updated by the Superintendent of Public Instruction under the Public School Employees Retirement Act.

Noncertificated Teacher, Requirements to Teach

The Code allows a noncertificated, nonendorsed teacher to teach a course noted above if he or she possesses a bachelor's degree from an accredited postsecondary institution and has a major or a graduate degree in the field of specialization in which he or she will teach. If the teacher desires to teach for more than one year, he or she also must have passed the basic skills examination and a subject area examination, if a subject area examination exists, in the field of specialization in which he or she will teach. (The bill would refer to the professional readiness examination or a successor basic skills examination as determined by the Department of Education, instead of a basic skills examination.)

In addition, except for individuals engaged to teach a foreign language, a noncertificated teacher must have at least two years of occupational experience in the field in which he or she will teach within the five-year period immediately before the date of hire. Under the bill, serving as a full-time instructor in a field of specialization at the college or university level would be considered occupational experience in that field of specialization.

Also, under the bill, instead of having a major or a graduate degree in the field of specialization in which he or she will teach, a teacher could meet one of the following:

- For teaching engineering or mathematics, in the seven-year period immediately before the date of hire, had at least five years of occupational experience in the field of engineering.
- For teaching science, in the seven-year period immediately before the date of hire, had at least five years of occupational experience in a science discipline.
- For teaching biology or health sciences, in the seven-year period immediately before the date of hire, had at least five years of occupational experience in a health discipline.
- For teaching a foreign language, except as provided for Hebrew, was a native speaker of that language and had resided for at least 15 years in a nation that had that language as an official language.
- For teaching Hebrew, a) had passed the professional readiness examination or a successor basic skills examination as determined by the Department, and b) had passed any applicable subject area examination or, if there were none, met other requirements established by the school district or ISD.

Interim Teaching Certificate & Certification Process

Section 1531i of the Code requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to establish a process for an individual to earn an interim teaching certificate that qualifies him or her to teach in public schools and to earn a Michigan teaching certificate. The process must provide that the Superintendent will grant an interim teaching certificate to an individual who, among other things, is a participant in an alternative teaching program that is approved by the Superintendent. To be approved, the program provider must demonstrate that it provides an intensive training program in teaching that constitutes the equivalent of at least 12 credit hours and includes training in all of

the following: a) child development or child psychology, b) family and community relationships, c) diverse learnings, d) instructional strategies, and e) a form of field-based experience in a classroom setting. Under the bill, the program also would have to include training in classroom management.

To be granted an interim teaching certificate, an individual also must hold a bachelor's, master's, doctorate, or professional degree from a regionally accredited college or university with a GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale or the equivalent on another scale. Under the bill, an individual, except for a career and technical education instructor, would have to hold a bachelor's or professional degree with a GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, or hold a master's or doctorate degree from a regionally accredited college or university. The Department would have to determine which career and technical education certification areas would not require a bachelor's degree.

If an individual seeking an interim teaching certificate had more than one master's, doctorate, or professional degree, or had a bachelor's degree with more than one major, and if he or she met the other requirements of Section 1531i, then the individual would be eligible for a subject area endorsement, if available, in each of the subject areas in which he or she held a master's, doctorate, or professional degree or had earned a major.

Currently, an individual who possesses an interim teaching certificate may teach in a public school in the same manner as an individual who holds a Michigan teaching certificate if the following are met: a) while the individual is teaching under an interim teaching certificate, the school district or public school academy in which he or she is teaching provides intensive observation and coaching as specified by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and b) the individual is making satisfactory progress toward meeting the requirements for being awarded a Michigan teaching certificate. The bill also would require an individual to have a planned program leading to teacher certification on file with the employing school district or ISD, his or her teacher preparation institution, and the Department.

For a career and technical education instructor, the Department would have to determine how noncertificated instructors who were placed on an annual occupational authorization could expedite the process to become fully certified to teach in a career and technical education program. The Department would have to allow those individuals to take reduced course work, through the current authorization process, to be eligible to receive an interim occupational certificate. The Department would have to determine which career and technical education programs were eligible for the alternative certification process and the course work required to earn the certification.

The Code requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to promulgate rules that he or she considers necessary to implement Section 1531i. Under the bill, notwithstanding any rule to the contrary, an interim teaching certificate issued under this section would be valid until the next June 30 occurring at least seven years after the date it was issued.

MCL 380.1233b & 380.1531i

ARGUMENTS

(Please note: The arguments contained in this analysis originate from sources outside the Senate Fiscal Agency. The Senate Fiscal Agency neither supports nor opposes legislation.)

Supporting Argument

Many Michigan school districts are facing a shortage of qualified teachers for a variety of educational programs. The bill would allow schools to get more noncertificated teachers into the classroom if they had passed the basic test for teacher certification and, if applicable, a subject area exam, and were otherwise qualified to teach a given subject. The bill also could relieve the teacher shortage by revising some of the criteria for individuals to earn an interim teaching certificate, and requiring an expedited process for career and technical instructors.

Opposing Argument

The provision allowing noncertificated teachers to teach specific subjects typically is used when there is a need for teachers in critical shortage disciplines; however, according to the Michigan

State University College of Education, there is not a shortage in the additional subjects listed in the bill. Allowing noncertificated teachers to teach in those fields when there is no shortage of teachers would be inconsistent with current practice.

Legislative Analyst: Jeff Mann

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill could reduce costs to the State and would have no fiscal impact on local government in the near term. The proposed changes would reduce the criteria and procedures for noncertificated, nonendorsed individuals to be able to teach in school districts and for individuals to obtain interim teaching certificates. This could result in less administrative cost to the Department of Education in issuing teaching certificates and interim teaching certificates. Initially, local schools would see no impact, because labor costs would likely be similar to the current costs since schools will need to pay salaries that meet labor supply and demand in order to fill open teaching positions. If the bill resulted in a significant increase in the supply of teachers as a result of the issuance of more interim certificates, or the eligibility of more noncertificated individuals to teach, then there could be reduced costs to filling open positions. If this increase did occur, it would be only in the long term.

Fiscal Analyst: Cory Savino

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.