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Bill Analysis

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsor: Sen. Reynolds

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SUMMARY

- Permits a school district to renew its exemption from certain statutory requirements related to every three years, rather than one three-year term only.
- Requires the Department of Workforce and Education to notify districts that are eligible about this exemption.
- Permits school districts to develop and use their own frameworks for teacher evaluation, instead of using a framework developed by the State Board of Education.
- Modifies license or certificate qualifications for senior or lead professional educators, holders of a professional pupil services license, holders of professional administrator or alternative superintendent licenses, and nonteachers employed as teachers.
- Eliminates seniority as a preference when making reductions in nonteaching staff positions.
- Changes certain professional development requirements related to dyslexia training and the coordination of continuing education and professional development.
- Eliminates a requirement that districts enter into supplemental contracts with teachers assigned to teach classes outside the normal school day.
- Permits a school district to apply for a waiver from dyslexia screening requirements if the district proves that a student previously received a dyslexia screening in the prior school year.
- Clarifies that a school district is not required to hold a separate, individual public hearing on a proposed school calendar, but that the calendar may be addressed as part of another public hearing or meeting.
- Removes a number of policies and programs from the laws governing the Department of Workforce and Education and the State Board of Education.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

District exemption from certain statutory requirements

The bill permits a school district to renew an exemption from certain statutory requirements related to teacher licensure and other topics, every three years, as long as the district continues to qualify for the exemption. Current law does not address renewal of the exemption past an initial three-year term. Additionally, the bill requires the Department of Education and Workforce to notify, annually by September 30, each eligible district that the district is in fact eligible and that the exemptions exist.¹

Under law modified by the bill (see "[Removal of obsolete provisions](#)," below), a district that meets certain state report card benchmarks may be exempt from complying with requirements related to teacher qualification and licensing, mentoring under the Ohio Teacher Residency Program, certain classroom size standards, and other requirements. The benchmarks a district must meet to qualify are:²

1. At least an 85% performance index score;
2. An "A" grade for performance indicators (eliminated by the bill);
3. At least a 93% four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate and at least a 95% five-year rate.

Teacher evaluation – alternative framework

The bill adds an alternative framework for a school district board of education to use in teacher evaluation procedures. Current law requires a school district to develop and adopt standards-based teacher evaluation procedures according to a framework developed by the State Board of Education.³ The bill permits a district to select a framework developed or adopted by the district, rather than the State Board framework.⁴

Teacher and other professional qualifications

Senior or lead professional educator

The bill requires an applicant for a senior professional educator license or lead professional educator license to hold at least a bachelor's degree. Current law requires applicants to hold at least a master's degree.⁵

¹ R.C. 3302.151(E).

² R.C. 3302.151(D).

³ R.C. 3319.112.

⁴ R.C. 3311.80 and 3319.111.

⁵ R.C. 3319.22(B).

Professional pupil services license

The bill also provides that an individual who holds at least a bachelor's degree must be issued a professional pupil services license in the area of school counselor or school psychologist, provided the applicant otherwise satisfies criteria for the professional pupil service license and relevant subject areas that are prescribed by the State Board.⁶

Professional administrator license

The bill codifies the requirements for a professional administrator and alternative superintendent licenses, currently set in State Board rule. The bill makes one change from the current rule to reduce the educational attainment requirement from a master's to a bachelor's degree. The bill provides that individuals with at least a bachelor's degree who meet all other criteria prescribed by the State Board in rule for the professional administrator and alternative superintendent licenses.⁷

Employment of other individuals

The bill permits a school district, community school, or STEM school to employ an unlicensed individual as a teacher, provided the individual holds at least a master's degree and has successfully completed an exam prescribed by the State Board for the subject area in which the individual will teach. An individual seeking such employment must apply for and receive a registration from the Department and submit to a criminal records check and enrollment in RAPBACK in the same manner as a licensed teacher. The bill further requires each individual employed in this manner to successfully complete fifteen hours, or the equivalent, of coursework every five years that is approved by the local professional development committee, similar to requirements placed on a licensed teacher.⁸

Nonteaching employee staffing reductions – preferences

The bill eliminates the preference for retaining employees on the basis of seniority when a district must reduce the workforce of nonteaching employees in a school. Under current law, preference is given first to employees under continuing contracts and then by employee seniority. The bill would continue the initial preference for employees under continuing contracts, but eliminates the preference based on seniority unless the district is making a decision between two employees with comparable evaluations.⁹ The bill similarly removes seniority as a preferential factor when evaluating restoration of employees whose service under continuing contracts were suspended under a force reduction plan when a position becomes vacant or is created.

⁶ R.C. 3319.22(J).

⁷ R.C. 3319.273.

⁸ R.C. 3319.225.

⁹ R.C. 3319.172.

Professional development

Dyslexia professional development

The bill clarifies that a district or school may determine the number of hours that a teacher employed by the district or school must complete to satisfy professional development requirements regarding instruction of students with dyslexia.¹⁰ Under continuing law, the Ohio Dyslexia Committee prescribes instruction in training that teachers must complete in identifying characteristics of dyslexia and understanding the pedagogy for instructing students with dyslexia. Instruction must be between six and 18 clock hours.

Professional development for educator license renewal

The bill specifically permits a professional development committee to grant as credit towards continuing education requirements a professional development training required by statute to an individual seeking to renew any educator license.¹¹ Continuing education credit is limited to one completed professional development course per licensure renewal period. In order to qualify for continuing education credit, the bill requires that a professional development course be completed during the time in which an individual holds a valid educator license. Under current law, school districts and chartered nonpublic schools must establish local professional development committees to establish standards for completion of professional development courses and training for educator licensure renewal.

Teaching contracts for classes outside typical school day

The bill modifies a contracting requirement related to districts offering classes for high school credit outside the normal school day. Under current law, a district offering such classes is required to enter into a supplemental contract with a teacher assigned to teach the classes. The bill makes this permissive – the district is no longer required to enter into a supplemental contract for teachers assigned classes outside the normal school day.¹²

Dyslexia screening

The bill permits a school district to apply to the Department for a waiver from dyslexia screening requirements. The waiver would apply only if the district provides evidence that a student previously received a dyslexia screening in the prior school year. Continuing law requires all students in grades kindergarten through three to be evaluated in the 2023-2024 school year.¹³

¹⁰ R.C. 3319.077.

¹¹ R.C. 3319.22(F).

¹² R.C. 3319.0811.

¹³ R.C. 3323.251.

Public hearing regarding school calendars

The bill clarifies that a current law requirement requiring each school district to hold a public hearing within 30 days before adopting a school calendar. The bill provides that the hearing can be part of another public hearing or board meeting; it does not need to be a separate, individual hearing.¹⁴

Removal of obsolete provisions

The bill eliminates several provisions of the law governing the Department of Education and Workforce, the State Board of Education, and schools more generally as follows:

Provision	Citation (R.C.)
An obsolete requirement that the Department publish a report regarding victims of student violence.	3301.0714(B)(1)(o)
The requirement that the Department provide copies of reports to school districts and the public profiling each school building in the district and a public notice requirement related to these reports.	3301.0714(H)
A Department requirement to establish and report on academic goals for various areas of achievement.	3301.0717
A requirement that the Department encourage, seek out, and publicize innovative and exemplary school-parent and school-business partnerships.	3301.131
An exemplary parental involvement grant program, administered by the Department.	3301.134
An annual reporting requirement from leaders of each seminary, academy, parochial, or private school.	3301.14
Requirements related to supporting school districts with programs for children of migrant agricultural laborers.	3301.30
An obsolete exemption from certain statutory requirements if the district received an "A" grade for the performance indicators performance measurement on the district's most recent state report card.	3302.151(D)(2)
The Governor's Effective and Efficient Schools Recognition Program, which recognized the top 10% of schools based on factors such as student and fiscal performance.	3302.22
An obsolete requirement that the Department establish a process for a school district	3312.02

¹⁴ R.C. 3313.48.

Provision	Citation (R.C.)
to transfer from one of sixteen educational regional service systems to another.	
A requirement that each school district and other public school adopt a resolution addressing college and career readiness and financial literacy in its curriculum for seventh and eighth grade.	3313.6015
A requirement that the Department establish a committee to develop report card models for community schools and for using that committee-developed model for community school report cards.	3314.012
Obsolete standards that trigger the closing of poorly performing community schools.	3314.35
The Telecommunication Education Fund, used to finance technology grants to state-chartered elementary and secondary schools.	3317.50
The Distance Learning Fund, used to finance technology grants to eligible schools to establish distance learning.	3317.51
A requirement that the Teacher Quality Partnership conduct a study on the relationship of teacher performance on educator licensure assessments.	3319.234
A grant program for teachers who hold certificates or licenses issued by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards.	3319.55
A requirement that the Department study and share with school districts promising practices in Ohio and throughout the country for teachers with certain professional licensure.	3319.56
A grant program used by the Department to assist school districts with certain innovations.	3319.57

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	10-03-23