

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 412 (Senator Pugh, *et al.*)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Ways and Means

Teacher Certification - Career Professionals

This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to establish teacher certification for career professionals in specialized fields. MSDE must adopt regulations to implement the bill.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: MSDE can establish teacher certification for career professionals in specialized fields using existing resources.

Local Effect: Local school systems may be able to hire more career professionals in specialized fields as teachers.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Teachers, specialists, and administrators in Maryland public schools and in approved schools operated by State agencies must hold a valid certificate appropriate to the field of employment. Certain nonpublic school personnel employed in special education facilities must also hold a valid certificate appropriate to the field of employment.

Certification may be obtained in one of the following ways:

- completing a college or university State-approved educator preparation program;
- holding a valid, out-of-state professional certificate and submitting verification of three years of full-time satisfactory professional experience;

- meeting transcript analysis requirements; or
- completing a Resident Teacher Certification (RTC) program.

RTC is Maryland's alternative route to teacher certification in Maryland. An RTC applicant must (1) have a bachelor's degree with a concentration in an area appropriate for the teaching assignment; (2) have earned grades of B or better in the major area of study; (3) present qualifying scores on teacher certification tests; and (4) have completed a minimum of 135 clock hours of study in a resident teacher program developed according to MSDE guidelines. Additional clock hours of study, the completion of a residency with supervision by a supervising teacher or mentor, and satisfactory teaching performance qualify a resident teacher for a standard professional certificate. The State does not provide any funding or incentives specifically for individuals seeking RTC.

In addition, a local school system may request MSDE grant an individual a Conditional Teacher Certificate if the system is unable to fill a position with a qualified person who holds a professional certification.

Regular professional certificates are valid for five years, while RTC and Conditional Teacher Certificates are only valid for two years and cannot be renewed.

Background: MSDE reports that the teacher certification described in the bill would allow local school systems to employ career professionals in specialized fields. For example, a professional violinist employed by a professional orchestra would be able to obtain teacher certification to teach violin at an arts magnet school.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; Baltimore City; Allegany, Harford, and Talbot counties; Department of Legislative Services

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Analysis by: Caroline L. Boice

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510

