



Ohio Legislative Service Commission

Bill Analysis

Hannah K. Wann

Am. S.B. 81

129th General Assembly
(As Passed by the Senate)

Sens. Cates, Lehner, Seitz, LaRose, Jones, Beagle, Obhof, Faber, Hite, Bacon, Daniels, Manning, Niehaus, Schaffer, Wagoner, Widener

BILL SUMMARY

- Directs the State Board of Education to issue a resident educator license to an applicant who is assigned by Teach for America to teach in Ohio and meets certain minimum qualifications.
 - Requires Teach for America to enter into an agreement with one or more public or private Ohio institutions of higher education to enable participants to complete an optional master's degree.
 - Directs the State Board to issue a resident educator license to an applicant who has completed at least two years of teaching in another state as a participant in the Teach for America program and to credit that person with completion of two years of the four-year Ohio Teacher Residency Program.
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CONTENT AND OPERATION

Teach for America educator licensure

Teach for America in Ohio

The bill directs the State Board of Education to issue a resident educator license to an applicant who is assigned to teach in Ohio as a participant in the Teach for America program. To qualify for a license, applicants must (1) have a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher education, (2) have maintained a cumulative undergraduate grade point average of at least 2.5 out of 4.0, or its equivalent, (3) have passed a State Board-prescribed subject area examination (Praxis II), and (4) have

successfully completed the summer training institute operated by Teach for America.¹ This effectively allows Teach for America to operate in the state by allowing their participants to teach in school districts and community ("charter") schools.

Further, the bill requires Teach for America license holders, like all other resident educator and alternative resident educator license holders, to participate in the Ohio Teacher Residency Program (see below).² Upon completion of the residency program and four years of teaching in the state, Teach for America members, presumably, could be eligible for the next level of teacher licensure, an initial professional educator license (see below).

Finally, in order to place teachers in the state, the bill requires Teach for America to enter into an agreement with one or more accredited four-year public or private institutions of higher education in Ohio to provide optional training for Teach for America participants to complete a master's degree or an equivalent amount of coursework. But a Teach for America participant is not required to complete a master's degree as a condition of holding a resident educator license under the bill.³

Teach for America alumni who taught in other states

The bill also directs the State Board of Education to issue a resident educator license to an applicant who has completed at least two years of teaching in another state as a participant in the Teach for America program. These participants must be credited for completion of two of the four years required under the Ohio Teacher Residency Program.⁴ In other words, if a person taught for two years in another state through Teach for America, that person could come to this state and receive a resident educator license and two years' credit for the four-year residency program.

Background

Teach for America

Teach for America recruits recent college graduates to teach for two years in urban and rural public schools. Prior to being placed in a classroom, participants complete a five-week summer training seminar that covers such topics as instructional planning and delivery, classroom management and culture, learning theory, and

¹ R.C. 3319.227(A).

² R.C. 3319.223.

³ R.C. 3319.227(D).

⁴ R.C. 3319.227(C).

literacy development. They also receive ongoing professional development during their teaching commitment.⁵

Educator licensing in Ohio

Educator licensing in Ohio is a tiered structure, starting with the recently mandated **resident** educator license for entry-level teachers. Applicants for this license must be graduates of an approved teacher preparation program, have passed state licensure exams, and, for teachers who wish to teach grades K-6, have completed 12 semester hours in the teaching of reading.⁶ Holders of this license must participate in the four-year Ohio Teacher Residency Program as well. A resident educator license is valid for four years and is not renewable.

The next license is a five-year, renewable **professional** educator license, for which applicants who received a resident educator license after 2010 must have completed the Ohio Teacher Residency Program. A master's degree is no longer required for a professional educator license.

A teacher may choose to remain at the professional license level, or seek more advanced licensure. The next level is the **senior** professional educator license, holders of which must hold a master's degree, have nine years of teaching experience, and have completed a master teacher portfolio. The highest level is the **lead** professional educator license. Holders of this five-year, renewable license must hold a master's degree, have nine years of teaching experience, and either (1) have earned a Teacher Leader endorsement from the Department of Education and completed the master teacher portfolio or (2) hold active certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.⁷

Ohio Teacher Residency Program

Recently required by H.B. 1 of the 128th General Assembly (the main operating budget for the 2010-2011 biennium), the Ohio Teacher Residency Program is a four-year program for entry-level classroom teachers. Individuals who hold the new entry-level resident educator license, or an alternative resident educator license, issued under H.B. 1's new licensure provisions, must participate in the program. The program is to be established jointly by the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Chancellor of the Board of Regents and operational in the 2011-2012 school year when the first recipients

⁵ www.teachforamerica.org.

⁶ R.C. 3319.24 (not in the bill); Ohio Administrative Code (O.A.C.) 3301-24-18.

⁷ R.C. 3319.22; O.A.C. 3301-24-16 and 3301-24-17.

of the new licenses will begin teaching. Successful completion of the program is a requirement for individuals holding those licenses to qualify for a professional educator license. The residency program must include (1) mentoring by teachers who hold a lead professional educator license, (2) counseling to ensure that participants receive needed professional development, and (3) measures of appropriate progression through the program.⁸

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	02-16-11
Reported, S. Education	03-15-11
Passed Senate (25-8)	03-22-11

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⁸ R.C. 3319.223.

