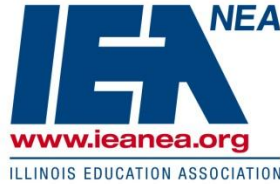




A Union of Professionals



ACCOUNTABILITY FOR ALL

A NEW WAY FORWARD FOR ILLINOIS STUDENTS

All Illinois students deserve to attend great public schools and graduate prepared to succeed in life. Great teachers, support personnel, and school leaders are critical for student learning and achievement.

However, teachers and school level leaders cannot do it alone.

All adults in the system – state officials, school board members, superintendents, central office administrators, building-level leaders, teachers, and support personnel – have important roles to play. Hiring, mentoring, evaluating, providing meaningful professional development and retaining effective personnel are key to the success of any student, classroom, or school.

The *Accountability for All* legislation is an important step forward to guaranteeing that schools, districts, and the state share responsibility for student success.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

BEST PRACTICE CLEARINGHOUSE

Currently, the State Board of Education identifies high-performing schools based on a number of criteria. This online clearinghouse of information would take this one step further by identifying the best practices of campuses and school districts regarding instruction, public school finance, resource allocation and business practices. This information provided through the online clearinghouse would be specific, actionable information relating to the best practices of high-performing and highly efficient school districts and schools rather than general guidelines relating to school district operation. **This provision would help distribute successful practices across the state providing much needed information to Illinois' 869 school districts.**

Subject to appropriation – implemented July 2012

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The research is clear on the positive effect of professional development: It is the single most important factor in improving performance for all educators. However, all professional development experiences are not equal. Many school districts do not have the resources to provide the high-quality, research-based, job-embedded professional development necessary and, consequently, leave the important aspect of ongoing learning of their employees to other entities. These entities often provide one-time, “drive by” experiences that simply do not work. **This provision requires all districts to work with their parents, staff and exclusive bargaining agent to include a comprehensive section on professional development in revised district and school improvement plans.**

Appropriation: \$150.00 per full-time certified teacher and administrator

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER TRAINING

Currently, school board members are not required to participate in any training. **This provision would require that all school board members engage in four hours of leadership training and professional development on the following topics: education and labor law, financial oversight and accountability, and fiduciary responsibilities.** This is consistent with expectations of other elected officials and considering the enormity of the responsibilities we place on school board members and their impact on students, this is an important piece of the accountability picture.

The 2011 STUDENT REPORT CARD TASK FORCE

This provision empowers a multi-stakeholder task force to work with the State Board of Education to review the current requirements for information included in the report card required by this section and make recommendations for comprehensive changes to the report card and the information included in it.

A SECOND CREDENTIAL FOR PRINCIPALS BASED ON PERFORMANCE

This provision would require principals to acquire a second certificate after a minimum of two years of successful experience in a full-time principal position in an Illinois public school district as attested by the employing school board. “Successful” means having received 2 annual overall performance evaluation ratings of “proficient” or “excellent.”

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION – FOCUS ON IMPROVEMENT

A critical part of a principal’s job is to help all teachers improve their performance through effective and meaningful professional development and when necessary improvement plans. This provision requires principals to report the data on the number of teachers who have received performance evaluation ratings of unsatisfactory or needs improvement whose subsequent evaluations were better.

SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATES

This allows for The State Board of Education to create rules defining incompetency and shall determine, in consultation with the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council established if and how multiple overall unsatisfactory PERA performance evaluations shall effect certification.

NEW TEACHER INDUCTION AND MENTORING

Illinois has made great strides in providing high quality new teacher mentoring and induction. New teacher induction and mentoring programs, when they include rigorous training for mentors, classroom observations of new teachers, and focused feedback on instruction, accelerate the progress of new teachers which results in higher learning outcomes for students. **This provision codifies the best practices and funds these vital programs.**

STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS

Together with student and community groups, we have identified some of the most egregious problems that impede student learning in the most challenging schools. **This legislative language would hold districts accountable to ensure that every student has a qualified teacher in every classroom on day one of each school year, that all schools provide art, music, history and foreign language classes to all students, and require districts to document the amount of instructional time devoted to standardized testing to be included on the report card.**

FILLING NEW AND VACANT POSITIONS

Filling new and vacant positions will be done by the superintendent and principal according to the policies and procedures jointly developed by the district and exclusive bargaining agent. Such procedures shall require that certifications and qualifications be given the greatest weight. **This assures that students will continue to receive teachers who have the necessary qualifications and certifications. In addition, performance evaluation ratings will be given significant but no more than equal weight to any other remaining criteria.** If a principal or superintendent opts to fill a new or vacant position with a teacher who has less length of continuing service than other candidates, the specific reasons for selecting that teacher must be provided in writing. This proposal precludes the cost of any teacher's salary and benefits being a factor in considering placements.

Implementation date after completion of the PERA Research Study

OBTAINING TENURE

Illinois currently awards tenure based on 4 consecutive school terms of service. **This provision will allow overall PERA evaluations to be the factor in determining tenure for teachers. The teacher must have received overall annual evaluations of "proficient" or "excellent" service in 3 school terms (including the last school term). It also allows for a teacher who has three consecutive proficient or excellent PERA overall evaluations to receive tenure in three years. For teachers who have achieved tenure in another district, two years of proficient or excellent PERA evaluations will earn tenure. If a teacher received a "proficient" evaluation but was non-renewed, the district would have to provide written reasons for the nonrenewal. If a teacher received an "excellent" evaluation, the district would have to renew the teacher.**

Implementation date after completion of the PERA Research Study

REDUCTIONS IN FORCE

During times when reductions in force are necessary it will be done according to the policies and procedures jointly developed by the district and exclusive bargaining agent. Such procedures shall require that certifications and qualifications be given the greatest weight. **This assures that students will continue to receive teachers who have the necessary qualifications and certifications. In addition, performance evaluation ratings will be given significant but no more than equal weight to any other remaining criteria. This proposal precludes the cost of any teacher's salary and benefits becoming a factor in considering reductions in force.**

Implementation date after completion of the PERA Research Study

DISMISSAL OF TENURED TEACHERS FOR PERFORMANCE

This proposal significantly streamlines the dismissal process for tenured teachers. Timelines for holding a hearing would be greatly shortened, with the hearing having to be finished by no later than 120 days after the hearing officer was selected. To promote an objective assessment of their cases, the parties would have to share with each other the evidence they would use at hearing, no later than 15 days prior to the beginning of the hearing. At a hearing, each party would be limited to no more than 4 days to present its case. **This provision would resolve the dismissal faster, force the parties to more realistically assess and present their cases and cut down on the costs of the dismissal process.**

EVALUATION OF DISTRICT LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS

This provision ensures that district level administrators will be evaluated according to the same standards adopted through the Performance Evaluation Reform Act, including that all evaluators of district level administrators pass a pre-certification assessment prior to evaluating.

TEACHING AND LEARNING CONDITIONS SURVEY

Research has shown that the conditions and culture in a building can either enhance or hinder the achievement of students. **This provision ensures that an instrument to provide feedback to principals on the instructional environment within a school, shall be developed by the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council and administered annually under the direction of the school board and governing board of joint agreements. Furthermore, results of the evaluation will be shared with the school's employees and the parents of its students.**