

HB3346



103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2023 and 2024

HB3346

Introduced 2/17/2023, by Rep. Sharon Chung

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

105 ILCS 5/2-3.196 new

Amends the School Code. Provides that the State Board of Education shall develop a grant program to support the educator licensure of paraprofessionals with bachelor's degrees. Provides that the State Board shall distribute grants to qualified school districts. Provides that the school districts shall distribute funds to paraprofessionals. Sets forth requirements for school districts to qualify. Sets forth requirements for paraprofessionals to qualify. Sets forth requirements for the grant application, selection of paraprofessionals, restrictions of funds, priority to award grant assistance, program evaluation, and rulemaking.

LRB103 30078 RJT 56502 b

A BILL FOR

1 AN ACT concerning education.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The School Code is amended by adding Section
5 2-3.196 as follows:

6 (105 ILCS 5/2-3.196 new)

7 Sec. 2-3.196. Paraprofessional to educator grant program.

8 (a) The State Board of Education shall develop a grant
9 program to support the educator licensure of paraprofessionals
10 with bachelor's degrees. This program shall use federal funds
11 from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief
12 program.

13 (b) The State Board shall distribute funds to qualified
14 school districts for the school districts to distribute. To
15 qualify, a school district shall:

16 (1) commit to the continued employment of qualified
17 paraprofessionals engaging in the program;

18 (2) commit to employing the qualified
19 paraprofessionals as full-time teachers once they have
20 received a professional educator license in exchange for a
21 commitment from the qualified paraprofessional to work as
22 a full-time teacher in the district for a minimum of 4
23 years unless there is no vacant teaching position for the

1 paraprofessional; and

2 (3) commit to ensuring that awardee paraprofessionals
3 were provided with mentoring for their first 2 years of
4 teaching with a professional educator license.

5 (c) For a paraprofessional to qualify, the
6 paraprofessional:

7 (1) must hold a bachelor's degree from a regionally
8 accredited college or university;

9 (2) have a paraprofessional license, substitute
10 teaching license, or short-term substitute teaching
11 license registered with the Illinois Educator Licensure
12 Information System;

13 (3) must be currently working in a State public school
14 district; and

15 (4) commit to working in the district for 4 years
16 after earning their professional educator license, but
17 paraprofessionals may work in a different district if
18 there is no teaching position that they are qualified for
19 available in the school district which the
20 paraprofessional received funds from.

21 (d) All applications for grants under this Section shall
22 be made to the State Board. The form of application and the
23 information required to be set forth in the application shall
24 be determined by the State Board, and the State Board shall
25 require school districts to submit with their applications
26 such supporting documents as the State Board deems necessary.

1 School districts shall also include in the grant application
2 current efforts to recruit paraprofessionals into the school
3 district to backfill the positions vacated by
4 paraprofessionals when they become teachers, how the school
5 district would use the funds, how many candidates the school
6 district plans to serve, if the school district plans to
7 restrict the program to certain subject areas or grade levels,
8 and how the school district will incorporate the initiative
9 into any existing high school pathways.

10 (e) School districts may limit the type of license a
11 paraprofessional may pursue to areas of high need within the
12 district. The school district shall be responsible for
13 selecting paraprofessionals from their school district to
14 participate in the program.

15 (f) The school district shall choose how to award the
16 funds to the paraprofessional to cover costs associated with
17 education, training, and other costs for a professional
18 educator license.

19 (g) In awarding grant assistance, the State Board may make
20 grant funds available in the following order based on the
21 school's Tier as determined by Section 18-8.15 of this Code:

22 (1) Tier 1 schools;

23 (2) Tier 2 schools;

24 (3) Tier 3 schools; and

25 (4) Tier 4 schools.

26 Within each Tier of school, the State Board may prioritize

1 districts with the highest 3-year average teacher vacancy
2 rates.

3 (h) The State Board shall evaluate this program to
4 determine future educator investments.

5 (i) The State Board may adopt any rules to implement this
6 Section.