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SENATE BILL NO. 549

Offered January 24, 2000

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 22.1-294, 22.1-295, 22.1-299.2, and 22.1-303 of the Code of Virginia, relating to teacher quality improvement.

Patrons—Bolling, Hanger, Hawkins, Martin, Miller, K.G., Norment, Schrock, Stosch and Williams

Referred to Committee on Education and Health

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 22.1-294, 22.1-295, 22.1-299.2, and 22.1-303 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 22.1-294. Probationary terms of service for principals, assistant principals and supervisors; evaluation; reassigning principal, assistant principal or supervisor to teaching position.

A. A person employed as a principal, assistant principal or supervisor, including a person who has previously achieved continuing contract status as a teacher, shall serve three years in such position in the same school division before acquiring continuing contract status as principal, assistant principal or supervisor.

B. Each local school board shall adopt for use by the division superintendent clearly defined criteria for a performance evaluation process for principals, assistant principals, and supervisors that includes, among other things, an assessment of such administrators' skills and knowledge; student academic progress and school gains in student learning; *effective evaluation of teacher performance as set forth in subsection C of § 22.1-295*; and effectiveness in addressing school safety and enforcing student discipline. The division superintendent shall implement such performance evaluation process in making employment recommendations to the school board pursuant to § 22.1-293.

C. Continuing contract status acquired by a principal, assistant principal or supervisor shall not be construed (i) as prohibiting a school board from reassigning such principal, assistant principal or supervisor to a teaching position if notice of reassignment is given by the school board by April 15 of any year or (ii) as entitling any such principal, assistant principal or supervisor to the salary paid him as principal, assistant principal or supervisor in the case of any such reassignment to a teaching position.

D. No such salary reduction and reassignment, however, shall be made without first providing such principal, assistant principal or supervisor with written notice of the reason for such reduction and reassignment and an opportunity to present his or her position at an informal meeting with the division superintendent, the division superintendent's designee or the school board. The principal, assistant principal or supervisor shall elect whether such meeting shall be with the division superintendent, the division superintendent's designee or the school board. The school board, division superintendent or the division superintendent's designee shall determine what processes are to be followed at the meeting. The decision to reassign and reduce salary shall be at the sole discretion of the school board.

The intent of this section is to provide an opportunity for a principal, assistant principal or supervisor to discuss the reasons for such salary reduction and reassignment with the division superintendent, his designee or the school board, and the provisions of this section are meant to be procedural only. Nothing contained herein shall be taken to require cause, as defined in § 22.1-307, for the salary reduction and reassignment of a principal, assistant principal or supervisor.

E. As used in this section, "supervisor" means a person who holds a supervisory position as specified in the regulations of the Board of Education and who is required to hold a license as prescribed by the Board of Education.

§ 22.1-295. Employment of teachers.

A. The teachers in the public schools of a school division shall be employed and placed in appropriate schools by the school board upon recommendation of the division superintendent. In placing teachers, school boards shall fill positions with licensed instructional personnel qualified in the relevant subject areas.

B. School boards shall adopt employment policies and practices designed to promote the employment and retention of the highest quality instructional personnel and to effectively serve the educational needs of students. Such policies shall include, but need not be limited to, incentives for excellence in teaching, including financial support for teachers attending professional development seminars or those seeking and obtaining national certification. School boards shall develop a procedure for use by division superintendents and principals in evaluating instructional personnel that is appropriate to the tasks performed and addresses, among other things, student academic progress and the skills and knowledge of instructional personnel, including, but not limited to, instructional methodology, classroom

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60 management, and subject matter knowledge.

61 *C. School boards shall also develop a procedure to be used by division superintendents and*
62 *principals in the evaluation of instructional personnel that is appropriate to the tasks performed by such*
63 *instructional personnel and addresses, but is not limited to, student academic progress and the skills*
64 *and knowledge of the instructional personnel. In the assessment of the skills and knowledge of the*
65 *instructional personnel, the procedures shall include, but need not be limited to, instructional*
66 *methodology, classroom management, and knowledge of subject matter.*

67 § 22.1-299.2. National Teacher Certification Incentive Reward Program and Fund.

68 A. From such funds as may be appropriated for such purpose and from such gifts, donations, grants,
69 bequests, and other funds as may be received on its behalf, there is hereby established the National
70 Teacher Certification Incentive Reward Program (the "Program"), to be administered by the Board of
71 Education, and a special nonreverting fund within the state treasury known as the National Teacher
72 Certification Incentive Reward Program Fund (the "Fund"). The Fund shall be established on the books
73 of the Comptroller, and any moneys remaining in the Fund at the end of the biennium shall not revert to
74 the general fund but shall remain in the Fund. Interest earned on such funds shall remain in the Fund
75 and be credited to it.

76 The State Treasurer shall manage the Fund, subject to the authority of the Board of Education to
77 provide for its disbursement. The Fund shall be disbursed to award incentive grants to public school
78 teachers obtaining national certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards a
79 nationally recognized certification program approved by the Board of Education.

80 To the extent funds are available in the Fund, teachers who obtain national certification shall receive
81 an initial state-funded award of \$5,000 and a subsequent award of \$2,500 each year for the life of the
82 certificate. Such awards shall continue to be paid upon renewal of the certificate. The Board shall
83 establish procedures for determining amounts of awards if the moneys in the Fund are not sufficient to
84 award each eligible teacher the appropriate award amount.

85 B. The Board may issue guidelines governing the Program as it deems necessary and appropriate.

86 § 22.1-303. Probationary terms of service for teachers.

87 A. A probationary term of service for three years in the same school division shall be required before
88 a teacher is issued a continuing contract. *However, local school boards may adopt procedures for the*
89 *establishment of a continuing contract employment process that requires teachers to submit applications*
90 *for continuing contract status and that provides a probationary period of not less than three and no*
91 *more than five years, to be determined by the local school board. Applications for such continuing*
92 *contract status may be made upon completion of at least one year of the initial probationary term of*
93 *service, if the process establishes a three-year probationary period, and upon completion of at least*
94 *three years of service, if the process establishes a longer probationary period. Local school boards may*
95 *determine the number of times an applicant may submit an application. Such procedures shall apply to*
96 *teachers who are hired as probationary teachers in an academic year after July 1, 2000. This option*
97 *shall be available to teachers licensed through either traditional or alternative licensure routes.*

98 B. The Board of Education, with input from the public, shall develop guidelines for the local school
99 board procedures authorized by subsection A, including, but not limited to, (i) selection, training, and
100 use of continuing contract review committees, the membership of which shall include at least the
101 principal of the school where the applicant is employed, teachers, parents of students enrolled in the
102 school in which the applicant is employed, and citizens from the local community; (ii) procedures
103 whereby such committees shall review continuing contract status applications and make
104 recommendations to the principal and division superintendent regarding applicants; (iii) application
105 materials that shall include evidence of pupil academic performance and may also include other data
106 and materials to assist the continuing contract review committee in the application review process and
107 the school board in making an employment determination, e.g., professional credentials, employment
108 evaluations, classroom observations, lesson plans and examinations, and the applicant's demonstrated
109 mastery of the relevant Standards of Learning; and (iv) procedures for applicants to obtain assistance
110 from other education professionals in the preparation of application materials. The Board's guidelines
111 shall not be regulations pursuant to the Administrative Process Act (§ 9-6.14:1.1 et seq.).

112 C. School boards shall provide each probationary teacher except probationary teachers who have
113 prior successful teaching experience, as determined by the local school board in a school division, a
114 mentor teacher, as described by Board guidelines developed pursuant to § 22.1-305.1, during the first
115 year of the probationary period, to assist such probationary teacher in achieving excellence in
116 instruction. During the probationary period, such probationary teacher shall be evaluated annually based
117 upon the evaluation procedures developed by the employing school board for use by the division
118 superintendent and principals in evaluating instructional personnel as required by § 22.1-295 B. The
119 division superintendent shall consider such evaluations, among other things, in making any
120 recommendations to the school board regarding the nonrenewal of such probationary teacher's contract
121 as provided in § 22.1-305.

122 If the teacher's performance evaluation during the probationary period is not satisfactory, the school
123 board shall not reemploy the teacher; however, nothing contained in this subsection shall be construed to
124 require cause, as defined in § 22.1-307, for the nonrenewal of the contract of a teacher who has not
125 achieved continuing contract status.

126 *BD.* Once a continuing contract status has been attained in a school division in the Commonwealth,
127 another probationary period need not be served in any other school division unless such probationary
128 period, not to exceed one year, is made a part of the contract of employment. Further, when a teacher
129 has attained continuing contract status in a school division in the Commonwealth, and separates from
130 and returns to teaching service in a school division in Virginia by the beginning of the third year, such
131 teacher shall be required to serve a probationary period not to exceed one year, if made a part of the
132 contract for employment.

133 *EE.* For the purpose of calculating the three years of service required to attain continuing contract
134 status, at least 160 contractual teaching days during the school year shall be deemed the equivalent of
135 one year in the first year of service by a teacher.