

AN ACT concerning education.

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

Section 5. The School Code is amended by adding Section 24-8.2 as follows:

(105 ILCS 5/24-8.2 new)

Sec. 24-8.2. Continuing education coursework used for salary increases.

(a) In this Section:

"Continuing education coursework" means any graduate-level, degree-eligible credit course taught by an instructor of record and completed by a licensed classroom teacher for the purpose of salary advancement or other compensation-related advancement under a collective bargaining agreement, school district employment contract, school board policy, or salary schedule. "Continuing education coursework" includes professional development sequences that are taken or completed and are approved by the State Board of Education or an industry-recognized credential, including a credential for career and technical educators.

"Graduate-level, degree-eligible credit" means academic credit documented on an official academic transcript through a regionally accredited institution of higher education that may

be applied toward a master's degree, education specialist degree, or doctoral degree.

"Instructor of record" means an individual assigned the responsibility for academic oversight of a continuing education course, including instruction, evaluation and feedback of participant work, and the assignment of grades, who:

(1) is a credentialed educator holding a master's degree or higher and is academically qualified to teach the continuing education course, with demonstrated experience in the content area or areas of the continuing education course;

(2) provides substantive instructional support to a participating licensed classroom teacher throughout the period of continuing education course enrollment; and

(3) evaluates participant work and provides individualized, written feedback aligned to continuing education course objectives.

"Licensed classroom teacher" means an individual holding a valid and current Professional Educator License under Section 21B-20. "Licensed classroom teacher" does not include any individual who is an administrator or is not covered by a collective bargaining agreement pertaining to teachers.

(b) This Section applies only to licensed classroom teachers who have the ability, under the terms of a collective bargaining agreement, employment contract, school board

policy, or salary schedule, to achieve salary advancement through continuing education coursework.

(c) Beginning with continuing education coursework completed on or after July 1, 2026, a school district, special education cooperative, or other public educational employer may provide salary advancement to licensed classroom teachers for the completion of continuing education coursework. The school district, special education cooperative, or other public educational employer may recognize continuing education coursework for purposes of salary advancement only if the continuing education coursework:

(1) is graduate-level, degree-eligible credit offered through a regionally accredited institution of higher education and documented on an official academic transcript; and

(2) includes an instructor of record.

(d) Nothing in this Section requires a school district, special education cooperative, or other public educational employer to create a salary schedule or salary advancement pathway if one does not otherwise exist.

(e) Nothing in this Section precludes the parties to a collectively bargained agreement from negotiating salary advancement or other compensation-related advancements under the collectively bargained agreement for other negotiated actions or activities by a licensed classroom teacher not set forth in this Section.

(f) Implementation of this Section, including standards for documentation, transcript verification, institutional accreditation, salary advancement, and compliance monitoring, shall be determined by each school district, special education cooperative, or other public educational employer.

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law.