



104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

HB1119

Introduced 1/9/2025, by Rep. Regan Deering

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

105 ILCS 5/21B-30
105 ILCS 5/21B-40

Amends the Educator Licensure Article of the School Code. Provides that a candidate for a State educator license who is either a former or active first responder or a military service member shall receive a refund for any costs associated with completing a test of content area knowledge or a teacher performance assessment. Provides that no former or active first responder or military service member may be charged an application fee under provisions regarding a Professional Educator License, an Educator License with Stipulations, a Substitute Teaching License, and a Short-Term Substitute Teaching License. Effective July 1, 2025.

LRB104 04495 LNS 14522 b

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 changing Sections
5 21B-30 and 21B-40 as follows:

6 (105 ILCS 5/21B-30)

7 Sec. 21B-30. Educator testing.

8 (a) (Blank).

9 (a-5) In this Section:

10 "Former or active first responder" means a person who
11 either is currently serving or has formerly served as a law
12 enforcement officer, a firefighter, or emergency medical
13 services personnel as defined in Section 3.5 of the Emergency
14 Medical Services (EMS) Systems Act.

15 "Military service member" means a person who is currently
16 a member or who is a retired and honorably discharged member of
17 the Armed Services of the United States, the Reserve Forces of
18 the United States, or the Illinois National Guard.

19 (b) The State Board of Education, in consultation with the
20 State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board, shall design
21 and implement a system of examinations, which shall be
22 required prior to the issuance of educator licenses. These
23 examinations and indicators must be based on national and

1 State professional teaching standards, as determined by the
2 State Board of Education, in consultation with the State
3 Educator Preparation and Licensure Board. The State Board of
4 Education may adopt such rules as may be necessary to
5 implement and administer this Section.

6 (c) (Blank).

7 (c-5) The State Board must adopt rules to implement a
8 paraprofessional competency test. This test would allow an
9 applicant seeking an Educator License with Stipulations with a
10 paraprofessional educator endorsement to obtain the
11 endorsement if he or she passes the test and meets the other
12 requirements of subparagraph (J) of paragraph (2) of Section
13 21B-20 other than the higher education requirements.

14 (d) All applicants seeking a State license shall be
15 required to pass a test of content area knowledge for each area
16 of endorsement for which there is an applicable test. There
17 shall be no exception to this requirement. Subject to
18 appropriation, a candidate who is either a former or active
19 first responder or a military service member shall receive a
20 refund for any costs associated with completing a test of
21 content area knowledge under this subsection (d).

22 (d-5) The State Board shall consult with any applicable
23 vendors within 90 days after July 28, 2023 (the effective date
24 of Public Act 103-402) to develop a plan to transition the test
25 of content area knowledge in the endorsement area of
26 elementary education, grades one through 6, by July 1, 2026 to

1 a content area test that contains testing elements that cover
2 bilingualism, biliteracy, oral language development,
3 foundational literacy skills, and developmentally appropriate
4 higher-order comprehension and on which a valid and reliable
5 language and literacy subscore can be determined. The State
6 Board shall base its rules concerning the passing subscore on
7 the language and literacy portion of the test on the
8 recommended cut-score determined in the formal
9 standard-setting process. Candidates need not achieve a
10 particular subscore in the area of language and literacy. The
11 State Board shall aggregate and publish the number of
12 candidates in each preparation program who take the test and
13 the number who pass the language and literacy portion.

14 (e) (Blank).

15 (f) Beginning on August 4, 2023 (the effective date of
16 Public Act 103-488) through August 31, 2025, no candidate
17 completing a teacher preparation program in this State or
18 candidate subject to Section 21B-35 of this Code is required
19 to pass a teacher performance assessment. Except as otherwise
20 provided in this Article, beginning on September 1, 2015 until
21 August 4, 2023 (the effective date of Public Act 103-488) and
22 beginning again on September 1, 2025, all candidates
23 completing teacher preparation programs in this State and all
24 candidates subject to Section 21B-35 of this Code are required
25 to pass a teacher performance assessment approved by the State
26 Board of Education, in consultation with the State Educator

1 Preparation and Licensure Board. A candidate may not be
2 required to submit test materials by video submission. Subject
3 to appropriation, an individual who holds a Professional
4 Educator License and is employed for a minimum of one school
5 year by a school district designated as Tier 1 under Section
6 18-8.15 may, after application to the State Board, receive
7 from the State Board a refund for any costs associated with
8 completing the teacher performance assessment under this
9 subsection. Subject to appropriation, a candidate who is
10 either a former or active first responder or a military
11 service member shall receive a refund for any costs associated
12 with completing a teacher performance assessment under this
13 subsection (f).

14 (f-5) The Teacher Performance Assessment Task Force is
15 created to evaluate potential performance-based and objective
16 teacher performance assessment systems for implementation
17 across all educator preparation programs in this State, with
18 the intention of ensuring consistency across programs and
19 supporting a thoughtful and well-rounded licensure system.
20 Members appointed to the Task Force must reflect the racial,
21 ethnic, and geographic diversity of this State. The Task Force
22 shall consist of all of the following members:

23 (1) One member of the Senate, appointed by the
24 President of the Senate.

25 (2) One member of the Senate, appointed by the
26 Minority Leader of the Senate.

1 (3) One member of the House of Representatives,
2 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

3 (4) One member of the House of Representatives,
4 appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of
5 Representatives.

6 (5) One member who represents a statewide professional
7 teachers' organization, appointed by the State
8 Superintendent of Education.

9 (6) One member who represents a different statewide
10 professional teachers' organization, appointed by the
11 State Superintendent of Education.

12 (7) One member from a statewide organization
13 representing school principals, appointed by the State
14 Superintendent of Education.

15 (8) One member from a statewide organization
16 representing regional superintendents of schools,
17 appointed by the State Superintendent of Education.

18 (9) One member from a statewide organization
19 representing school administrators, appointed by the State
20 Superintendent of Education.

21 (10) One member representing a school district
22 organized under Article 34 of this Code, appointed by the
23 State Superintendent of Education.

24 (11) One member of an association representing rural
25 and small schools, appointed by the State Superintendent
26 of Education.

1 (12) One member representing a suburban school
2 district, appointed by the State Superintendent of
3 Education.

4 (13) One member from a statewide organization
5 representing school districts in the southern suburbs of
6 the City of Chicago, appointed by the State Superintendent
7 of Education.

8 (14) One member from a statewide organization
9 representing large unit school districts, appointed by the
10 State Superintendent of Education.

11 (15) One member from a statewide organization
12 representing school districts in the collar counties of
13 the City of Chicago, appointed by the State Superintendent
14 of Education.

15 (16) Three members, each representing a different
16 public university in this State and each a current member
17 of the faculty of an approved educator preparation
18 program, appointed by the State Superintendent of
19 Education.

20 (17) Three members, each representing a different
21 4-year nonpublic university or college in this State and
22 each a current member of the faculty of an approved
23 educator preparation program, appointed by the State
24 Superintendent of Education.

25 (18) One member of the Board of Higher Education,
26 appointed by the State Superintendent of Education.

1 (19) One member representing a statewide policy
2 organization advocating on behalf of multilingual students
3 and families, appointed by the State Superintendent of
4 Education.

5 (20) One member representing a statewide organization
6 focused on research-based education policy to support a
7 school system that prepares all students for college, a
8 career, and democratic citizenship, appointed by the State
9 Superintendent of Education.

10 (21) Two members representing an early childhood
11 advocacy organization, appointed by the State
12 Superintendent of Education.

13 (22) One member representing a statewide organization
14 that partners with educator preparation programs and
15 school districts to support the growth and development of
16 preservice teachers, appointed by the State Superintendent
17 of Education.

18 (23) One member representing a statewide organization
19 that advocates for educational equity and racial justice
20 in schools, appointed by the State Superintendent of
21 Education.

22 (24) One member representing a statewide organization
23 that represents school boards, appointed by the State
24 Superintendent of Education.

25 (25) One member who has, within the last 5 years,
26 served as a cooperating teacher, appointed by the State

1 Superintendent of Education.

2 Members of the Task Force shall serve without
3 compensation. The Task Force shall first meet at the call of
4 the State Superintendent of Education, and each subsequent
5 meeting shall be called by the chairperson of the Task Force,
6 who shall be designated by the State Superintendent of
7 Education. The State Board of Education shall provide
8 administrative and other support to the Task Force.

9 On or before October 31, 2024, the Task Force shall report
10 on its work, including recommendations on a teacher
11 performance assessment system in this State, to the State
12 Board of Education and the General Assembly. The Task Force is
13 dissolved upon submission of this report.

14 (g) The content area knowledge test and the teacher
15 performance assessment shall be the tests that from time to
16 time are designated by the State Board of Education, in
17 consultation with the State Educator Preparation and Licensure
18 Board, and may be tests prepared by an educational testing
19 organization or tests designed by the State Board of
20 Education, in consultation with the State Educator Preparation
21 and Licensure Board. The test of content area knowledge shall
22 assess content knowledge in a specific subject field. The
23 tests must be designed to be racially neutral to ensure that no
24 person taking the tests is discriminated against on the basis
25 of race, color, national origin, or other factors unrelated to
26 the person's ability to perform as a licensed employee. The

1 score required to pass the tests shall be fixed by the State
2 Board of Education, in consultation with the State Educator
3 Preparation and Licensure Board. The State Board of
4 Education's rules for scoring the content area knowledge test
5 may include scoring and retaking of each test section
6 separately and independently. The tests shall be administered
7 not fewer than 3 times a year at such time and place as may be
8 designated by the State Board of Education, in consultation
9 with the State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board.

10 The State Board shall implement a test or tests to assess
11 the speaking, reading, writing, and grammar skills of
12 applicants for an endorsement or a license issued under
13 subdivision (G) of paragraph (2) of Section 21B-20 of this
14 Code in the English language and in the language of the
15 transitional bilingual education program requested by the
16 applicant.

17 (h) Except as provided in Section 34-6 of this Code, the
18 provisions of this Section shall apply equally in any school
19 district subject to Article 34 of this Code.

20 (i) The rules developed to implement and enforce the
21 testing requirements under this Section shall include, without
22 limitation, provisions governing test selection, test
23 validation, and determination of a passing score,
24 administration of the tests, frequency of administration,
25 applicant fees, frequency of applicants taking the tests, the
26 years for which a score is valid, and appropriate special

1 accommodations. The State Board of Education shall develop
2 such rules as may be needed to ensure uniformity from year to
3 year in the level of difficulty for each form of an assessment.
4 (Source: P.A. 102-301, eff. 8-26-21; 103-402, eff. 7-28-23;
5 103-488, eff. 8-4-23; 103-605, eff. 7-1-24; 103-780, eff.
6 8-2-24; 103-811, eff. 8-9-24; 103-846, eff. 8-9-24.)

7 (105 ILCS 5/21B-40)

8 Sec. 21B-40. Fees.

9 (a) Beginning with the start of the new licensure system
10 established pursuant to this Article, the following fees shall
11 be charged to applicants:

12 (1) A \$100 application fee for a Professional Educator
13 License or an Educator License with Stipulations.

14 (1.5) A \$50 application fee for a Substitute Teaching
15 License. If the application for a Substitute Teaching
16 License is made and granted after July 1, 2017, the
17 licensee may apply for a refund of the application fee
18 within 18 months of issuance of the new license and shall
19 be issued that refund by the State Board of Education if
20 the licensee provides evidence to the State Board of
21 Education that the licensee has taught pursuant to the
22 Substitute Teaching License at least 10 full school days
23 within one year of issuance.

24 (1.7) A \$25 application fee for a Short-Term
25 Substitute Teaching License. The Short-Term Substitute

1 Teaching License must be registered in at least one region
2 in this State, but does not require a registration fee.
3 The licensee may apply for a refund of the application fee
4 within 18 months of issuance of the new license and shall
5 be issued that refund by the State Board of Education if
6 the licensee provides evidence to the State Board of
7 Education that the licensee has taught pursuant to the
8 Short-Term Substitute Teaching License at least 10 full
9 school days within one year of issuance. The application
10 fee for a Short-Term Substitute Teaching License shall be
11 waived when the Governor has declared a disaster due to a
12 public health emergency pursuant to Section 7 of the
13 Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act.

14 (2) A \$150 application fee for individuals who have
15 not been entitled by an Illinois-approved educator
16 preparation program at an Illinois institution of higher
17 education and are seeking any of the licenses set forth in
18 subdivision (1) of this subsection (a).

19 (3) A \$50 application fee for each endorsement or
20 approval.

21 (4) A \$10 per year registration fee for the course of
22 the validity cycle to register the license, which shall be
23 paid to the regional office of education having
24 supervision and control over the school in which the
25 individual holding the license is to be employed. If the
26 individual holding the license is not yet employed, then

1 the license may be registered in any county in this State.
2 The registration fee must be paid in its entirety the
3 first time the individual registers the license for a
4 particular validity period in a single region. No
5 additional fee may be charged for that validity period
6 should the individual subsequently register the license in
7 additional regions. An individual must register the
8 license (i) immediately after initial issuance of the
9 license and (ii) at the beginning of each renewal cycle if
10 the individual has satisfied the renewal requirements
11 required under this Code.

12 Beginning on July 1, 2017, at the beginning of each
13 renewal cycle, individuals who hold a Substitute Teaching
14 License may apply for a reimbursement of the registration
15 fee within 18 months of renewal and shall be issued that
16 reimbursement by the State Board of Education from funds
17 appropriated for that purpose if the licensee provides
18 evidence to the State Board of Education that the licensee
19 has taught pursuant to the Substitute Teaching License at
20 least 10 full school days within one year of renewal.

21 (5) The license renewal fee for an Educator License
22 with Stipulations with a paraprofessional educator
23 endorsement is \$25.

24 (a-5) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this Section, no
25 former or active first responder or military service member,
26 as defined in Section 21B-30 of this Code, may be charged an

1 application fee under subdivisions (1) through (3) of
2 subsection (a) of this Section.

3 (b) All application fees paid pursuant to subdivisions (1)
4 through (3) of subsection (a) of this Section shall be
5 deposited into the Teacher Certificate Fee Revolving Fund and
6 shall be used, subject to appropriation, by the State Board of
7 Education to provide the technology and human resources
8 necessary for the timely and efficient processing of
9 applications and for the renewal of licenses. Funds available
10 from the Teacher Certificate Fee Revolving Fund may also be
11 used by the State Board of Education to support the
12 recruitment and retention of educators, to support educator
13 preparation programs as they seek national accreditation, and
14 to provide professional development aligned with the
15 requirements set forth in Section 21B-45 of this Code. A
16 majority of the funds in the Teacher Certificate Fee Revolving
17 Fund must be dedicated to the timely and efficient processing
18 of applications and for the renewal of licenses. The Teacher
19 Certificate Fee Revolving Fund is not subject to
20 administrative charge transfers, authorized under Section 8h
21 of the State Finance Act, from the Teacher Certificate Fee
22 Revolving Fund into any other fund of this State, and moneys in
23 the Teacher Certificate Fee Revolving Fund shall not revert
24 back to the General Revenue Fund at any time.

25 The regional superintendent of schools shall deposit the
26 registration fees paid pursuant to subdivision (4) of

1 subsection (a) of this Section into the institute fund
2 established pursuant to Section 3-11 of this Code.

3 (c) The State Board of Education and each regional office
4 of education are authorized to charge a service or convenience
5 fee for the use of credit cards for the payment of license
6 fees. This service or convenience fee shall not exceed the
7 amount required by the credit card processing company or
8 vendor that has entered into a contract with the State Board or
9 regional office of education for this purpose, and the fee
10 must be paid to that company or vendor.

11 (d) If, at the time a certificate issued under Article 21
12 of this Code is exchanged for a license issued under this
13 Article, a person has paid registration fees for any years of
14 the validity period of the certificate and these years have
15 not expired when the certificate is exchanged, then those fees
16 must be applied to the registration of the new license.

17 (Source: P.A. 101-81, eff. 7-12-19; 101-570, eff. 8-23-19;
18 102-867, eff. 5-13-22.)

19 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1,
20 2025.