



## 104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

**HB4792**

by Rep. Laura Faver Dias

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

105 ILCS 5/21B-70

Amends the Educator Licensure Article of the School Code. In a provision regarding the Illinois Teaching Excellence Program, changes the definition of "hard-to-staff school" to mean a public school that either (i) is identified as hard-to-staff based on data reported on its school report card or (ii) does not have a school report card but serves a student population in which 30% or more of the student enrollment is considered low-income as determined by the State Board of Education using available enrollment or funding data, and provides that the State Board may not deny a National Board certified teacher a retention bonus solely because the public school at which the teacher is employed does not have a school report card.

LRB104 18989 LNS 32434 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 Section  
5 21B-70 as follows:

6 (105 ILCS 5/21B-70)

7 Sec. 21B-70. Illinois Teaching Excellence Program.

8 (a) As used in this Section:

9 "Diverse candidate" means a candidate who identifies with  
10 any of the ethnicities reported on the Illinois Report Card  
11 other than White.

12 "Hard-to-staff school" means a public school that either  
13 (i) is identified as hard-to-staff based on data reported on  
14 the school report card under Section 10-17a of this Code or  
15 (ii) does not have a school report card under Section 10-17a of  
16 this Code but serves a student population in which ~~no less than~~  
17 30% or more of the student enrollment is considered low-income  
18 as determined by the State Board of Education using available  
19 enrollment or funding data ~~reported by the report card under~~  
20 ~~Section 10-17a of this Code.~~

21 "National Board certified teacher candidate cohort  
22 facilitator" means a National Board certified teacher who  
23 collaborates to advance the goal of supporting all other

1 candidate cohorts other than diverse candidate cohorts through  
2 the Illinois National Board for Professional Teaching  
3 Standards Comprehensive Support System.

4 "National Board certified teacher diverse candidate cohort  
5 facilitator" means a National Board certified teacher who  
6 collaborates to advance the goal of supporting racially and  
7 ethnically diverse candidates through the Illinois National  
8 Board for Professional Teaching Standards Comprehensive  
9 Support System.

10 "National Board certified teacher diverse liaison" means  
11 an individual or entity that supports the National Board  
12 certified teacher leading a diverse candidate cohort.

13 "National Board certified teacher liaison" means an  
14 individual or entity that supports the National Board  
15 certified teacher leading candidate cohorts other than diverse  
16 candidate cohorts.

17 "National Board certified teacher rural or remote or  
18 distant candidate cohort facilitator" means a National Board  
19 certified teacher who collaborates to advance the goal of  
20 supporting rural or remote candidates through the Illinois  
21 National Board for Professional Teaching Standards  
22 Comprehensive Support System.

23 "National Board certified teacher rural or remote or  
24 distant liaison" means an individual or entity that supports  
25 the National Board certified teacher leading a rural or remote  
26 candidate cohort.

1 "Qualified educator" means a teacher or school counselor  
2 currently employed in a school district who is in the process  
3 of obtaining certification through the National Board for  
4 Professional Teaching Standards or who has completed  
5 certification and holds a current Professional Educator  
6 License with a National Board for Professional Teaching  
7 Standards designation or a retired teacher or school counselor  
8 who holds a Professional Educator License with a National  
9 Board for Professional Teaching Standards designation.

10 "Rural or remote" or "rural or remote or distant" means  
11 local codes 32, 33, 41, 42, and 43 of the New Urban-Centric  
12 Locale Codes, as defined by the National Center for Education  
13 Statistics.

14 "Tier 1" has the meaning given to that term under Section  
15 18-8.15.

16 "Tier 2" has the meaning given to that term under Section  
17 18-8.15.

18 (b) Any funds appropriated for the Illinois Teaching  
19 Excellence Program must be used to provide monetary assistance  
20 and incentives for qualified educators who are employed by or  
21 retired from school districts and who have or are in the  
22 process of obtaining licensure through the National Board for  
23 Professional Teaching Standards. The goal of the program is to  
24 improve instruction and student performance.

25 The State Board of Education shall allocate an amount as  
26 annually appropriated by the General Assembly for the Illinois

1 Teaching Excellence Program for (i) application or re-take  
2 fees for each qualified educator seeking to complete  
3 certification through the National Board for Professional  
4 Teaching Standards, to be paid directly to the National Board  
5 for Professional Teaching Standards, and (ii) incentives under  
6 paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of subsection (c) for each  
7 qualified educator, to be distributed to the respective school  
8 district, and incentives under paragraph (5) of subsection  
9 (c), to be distributed to the respective school district or  
10 directly to the qualified educator. The school district shall  
11 distribute this payment to each eligible teacher or school  
12 counselor as a single payment.

13 The State Board of Education's annual budget must set out  
14 by separate line item the appropriation for the program.  
15 Unless otherwise provided by appropriation, qualified  
16 educators are eligible for monetary assistance and incentives  
17 outlined in subsections (c) and (d) of this Section.

18 (c) When there are adequate funds available, monetary  
19 assistance and incentives shall include the following:

20 (1) A maximum of \$2,000 toward the application or  
21 re-take fee for teachers or school counselors in a Tier 1  
22 school district who apply on a first-come, first-serve  
23 basis for National Board certification.

24 (2) A maximum of \$2,000 toward the application or  
25 re-take fee for teachers or school counselors in a school  
26 district other than a Tier 1 school district who apply on a

1 first-come, first-serve basis for National Board  
2 certification.

3 (3) A maximum of \$1,000 toward the National Board for  
4 Professional Teaching Standards' renewal application fee.

5 (4) (Blank).

6 (5) An annual incentive of no more than \$2,250  
7 prorated at \$50 per hour, which shall be paid to each  
8 qualified educator currently employed in a school district  
9 who holds both a National Board for Professional Teaching  
10 Standards designation and a current corresponding  
11 certificate issued by the National Board for Professional  
12 Teaching Standards and who agrees, in writing, to provide  
13 up to 45 hours of mentoring or National Board for  
14 Professional Teaching Standards professional development  
15 or both during the school year to classroom teachers or  
16 school counselors, as applicable. Funds must be disbursed  
17 on a first-come, first-serve basis, with priority given to  
18 Tier 1 school districts. Mentoring shall include, either  
19 singly or in combination, the following:

20 (A) National Board for Professional Teaching  
21 Standards certification candidates.

22 (B) National Board for Professional Teaching  
23 Standards re-take candidates.

24 (C) National Board for Professional Teaching  
25 Standards renewal candidates.

26 (D) (Blank).

1 Funds may also be used for professional development  
2 training provided by the National Board Resource Center.

3 Funds may also be used for instructional leadership  
4 training for qualified educators interested in supporting  
5 implementation of the Illinois Learning Standards or teaching  
6 and learning priorities of the State Board of Education or  
7 both.

8 (d) In addition to the monetary assistance and incentives  
9 provided under subsection (c), if adequate funds are  
10 available, incentives shall include the following incentives  
11 for the program in rural or remote schools or school districts  
12 or for programs working with diverse candidates or for  
13 retention bonuses for hard-to-staff schools, to be distributed  
14 to the respective school district or directly to the qualified  
15 educator or entity:

16 (1) A one-time incentive of \$3,000 payable to National  
17 Board certified teachers teaching in Tier 1 or Tier 2  
18 rural or remote school districts or rural or remote  
19 schools in Tier 1 or Tier 2 school districts, with  
20 priority given to teachers teaching in Tier 1 rural or  
21 remote school districts or rural or remote schools in Tier  
22 1 school districts.

23 (2) An annual incentive of \$3,200 for National Board  
24 certified teacher rural or remote or distant candidate  
25 cohort facilitators, diverse candidate cohort  
26 facilitators, and candidate cohort facilitators. Priority

1 shall be given to rural or remote candidate cohort  
2 facilitators and diverse candidate cohort facilitators.

3 (3) An annual incentive of \$2,500 for National Board  
4 certified teacher rural or remote or distant liaisons,  
5 diverse liaisons, and liaisons. Priority shall be given to  
6 rural or remote liaisons and diverse liaisons.

7 (4) An annual retention bonus of \$4,000 per year for 2  
8 consecutive years shall be awarded to National Board  
9 certified teachers employed in hard-to-staff schools.  
10 Funds must be disbursed on a first-come, first-served  
11 basis.

12 (e) The State Board of Education may not deny a National  
13 Board certified teacher a retention bonus under this Section  
14 solely because the public school at which the teacher is  
15 employed does not have a school report card under Section  
16 10-17a of this Code.

17 (Source: P.A. 103-122, eff. 6-30-23; 103-207, eff. 1-1-24;  
18 103-605, eff. 7-1-24.)