

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

Amend the bill by striking out all of section 1 and inserting the following:

Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §1055, sub-§10, as amended by PL 2001, c. 588, §17, is further amended to read:

10. Supervise school employees. The superintendent is responsible for the evaluation of all teachers and other employees of the school administrative unit. The superintendent shall evaluate probationary teachers during, but not limited to, their 2nd year of employment. The method of evaluation must be determined by the school board and implemented by the superintendent.

Sec. 2. 20-A MRSA §13201, as amended by PL 1989, c. 285, is further amended to read:

§ 13201. Nomination and election of teachers; teacher contracts

The superintendent shall nominate all teachers, subject to such regulations governing salaries and the qualifications of teachers as the school board ~~shall make~~ makes. Upon the approval of nominations, by the school board, the superintendent may employ teachers so nominated and approved for such terms as the superintendent ~~may deem~~ determines proper, subject to the approval of the school board. The superintendent, subject to the approval of the school board, shall implement a program to support probationary teachers pursuant to section 13015. Prior to May 15th before the expiration of a first ~~or~~, 2nd or 3rd year probationary teacher's contract, the superintendent shall notify the teacher in writing of the superintendent's decision to nominate or not nominate that teacher for another teaching contract. If, after receiving a complaint from a teacher, the commissioner finds that the superintendent has failed to notify a teacher of a decision not to nominate that teacher, the school administrative unit shall pay a forfeiture to the teacher. The amount of that forfeiture ~~shall must~~ be equal to the teacher's per diem salary rate times the number of days between the notification deadline and the date on which notification is made or on which the complaint is filed, whichever occurs first. In case the superintendent of schools and the school board fail to legally elect a teacher, the commissioner ~~shall have~~ has the authority to appoint a substitute teacher who ~~shall serve~~ serves until such election is made.

After a probationary period ~~not to exceed 2 of 3~~ years, subsequent contracts of duly certified teachers ~~shall must~~ be for not less than 25 years. Unless a duly certified teacher receives written notice to the contrary at least 6 months before the terminal date of the contract, the contract ~~shall must~~ be extended automatically for one year and similarly in subsequent years. The right to an extension for a longer period of time through a new contract is specifically reserved to the contracting parties.

Just cause for dismissal or nonrenewal ~~shall be~~ is a negotiable item in accordance with the procedure set forth in Title 26, chapter 9A, for teachers who have served beyond the probationary period.

After a probationary period of 23 years, any teacher, who receives notice in accordance with this section that ~~his or her~~ the teacher's contract is not going to be renewed, may during the 15 days following such notification request a hearing with the school board. The teacher may request reasons. The hearing ~~shall must~~ be private except by mutual consent and except that either or both parties may be represented by counsel. That hearing must be granted within 30 days of the receipt of the teacher's request.

The right to terminate a contract, after due notice of 90 days, is reserved to the school board when

changes in local conditions warrant the elimination of the teaching position for which the contract was made. The order of layoff and recall ~~shall be~~ is a negotiable item in accordance with the procedures set forth in Title 26, chapter 9A, ~~provided that in~~. In any negotiated agreement, the criteria negotiated by the school board and the bargaining agent to establish the order of layoff and recall may include, but ~~shall~~ may not be limited to, seniority.

Sec. 3. Reports. The Department of Education shall review how teacher evaluation systems are used by various school administrative units, both in this State and in other states, to aid hiring, retention and dismissal decisions, as well as how such systems are used to aid professional development and support teachers. The Department of Education shall report its findings to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs by December 30, 2011.

Sec. 4. Application. That section of this Act that amends the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20A, section 13201 applies to newly hired teachers beginning with the 2012-2013 school year.'

SUMMARY

This amendment specifies that superintendents must evaluate probationary teachers in their 2nd year of employment as determined by school board policy. The amendment increases the probationary period of teachers from its current 2-year period to a 3-year period beginning with the 2012-2013 school year. The amendment directs superintendents to support probationary teachers throughout their probationary periods. The amendment also directs the Department of Education to review teacher evaluation systems to determine how they are used to aid hiring, retention and dismissal decisions and professional development. The Department of Education is directed to report its findings to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs by December 30, 2011.