

Legislative Analysis



SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT SALARY CAP & EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

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House Bill 4671

Sponsor: Rep. Kurt Heise

Committee: Education

Complete to 10-18-11

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 4671 AS INTRODUCED 5-24-11

House Bill 4671 would cap the salaries of public school superintendents at the salary level of the state superintendent of public instruction, and to specify that no educational attainment beyond a master's degree would be necessary in order to earn a school administrator's certificate at the central office level. The bill amends the Revised School Code (MCL 380.1536). A more detailed description of the bill follows.

Salary Cap

Under the bill, the board of a school district or intermediate school district would be prohibited from employing a superintendent at a salary that exceeded the salary of the superintendent of public instruction. If an existing employment contract provided for a higher salary, then the salary cap would not apply until after the expiration of that contract. In addition, the bill would require the State Board of Education to post the salary of the state school superintendent on its website, and promptly update that posting, if the salary changed.

Administrator's Certificate/Qualifications

Now under the law, a school administrator is not required to have a school administrator's certificate in order to be employed by a school district, charter school, intermediate district, or non-public school. However, the law does require that the State Board of Education develop a school administrator's certificate and set educational and professional experience requirements for that certificate. For example, currently a school administrator's certificate is valid for five years, is renewed upon completion of "renewal units" determined by the state superintendent, and can recognize alternative pathways to earning the certificate if the alternative program meets criteria that are approved and published by the state board as "school administrator program preparation standards." House Bill 4671 would retain these requirements but modify them. Specifically, and under the bill, the educational and professional experience requirements for a school administrator's certificate at the central office level would have to meet *all* of the following:

- Not require any educational attainment beyond a master's degree;
- Allow issuance without regard to the type or subject area of the individual's master's degree;
- Allow issuance to an individual who earned a professional degree or other degree that the state board determined to be equivalent to a master's degree;

- Not limit professional experience requirements to experience in K-12 education, and allow issuance with appropriate experience in business or another profession.

Finally, now under the law, the Department of Education is required to consult and work with appropriate professional organizations, primarily organizations representing superintendents and building-level administrators, in developing the administrator certification standards. House Bill 4671 would retain this requirement, and also require the department to ensure that the current standards are revised as necessary, in order to comply with this proposed new section of the code.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill would have no fiscal impact on the state and an indeterminate impact on local school districts and intermediate school districts. Data on superintendent salaries is not currently compiled statewide for districts or intermediate districts. For districts or intermediate districts whose superintendents currently have salaries exceeding \$184,000, which was the salary of the Superintendent of Public Instruction in FY 2010-11, the bill would create savings when current contracts expire.

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