

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2013 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1398
Ways and Means

(Delegate Afzali, *et al.*)

Education - Charter Schools - Principals and Teachers - Resident Certification

This bill authorizes a public charter school to employ a principal who has a resident principal certificate (RPC) and a teacher who has a resident teacher certificate (RTC), without approval from the local board of education. The public charter school must ensure that the individual that is hired has met the requirements for an RPC or an RTC, as specified in State Board of Education regulations.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2013.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: The bill will remove an administrative responsibility from local boards of education in counties with charter schools; administrative costs will be marginally reduced for affected school systems.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The local board of education is the primary public chartering authority for charter schools; the State Board of Education is a secondary public chartering authority when acting in its appeal review capacity or as the public chartering authority for a restructured school. Public charter school employees remain public school employees of the local board of education in which the charter school is located. Professional staff members of a public charter school must hold the appropriate Maryland certification.

Resident Teacher Certificate

The RTC is issued for two school years and may not be renewed. An applicant for an RTC must generally meet the following requirements:

- hold a bachelor or higher degree;
- obtain a qualifying score on a test approved by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) in basic skills or a comparable State-approved test;
- obtain a qualifying score on an MSDE-approved content area test or a comparable state-approved content test; and
- present official documentation from the local superintendent of schools of completion of specified standards-based pre-employment training.

The local superintendent must file a written request with the State Superintendent of Schools for the issuance of the RTC after the applicant has met these requirements. Instead of meeting the above requirements, an applicant may present official verification from the local superintendent of schools of a valid alternative certificate issued pursuant to an out-of-state program that Maryland accepts under the Interstate Certification Compact.

Resident Principal Certificate

An applicant for the RPC must be recommended for a certificate by the local superintendent of schools. The RPC qualifies the applicant to serve as school principal for two years at a specific school and is not transferable to another school. The RPC is renewable for an additional two-year period based upon satisfactory performance. After four years as a resident principal, the holder of the RPC must qualify for an Administrator II certification. An applicant for the RPC must:

- have a minimum of a masters degree or its equivalent;
- have specified professional experience, which has been verified by the local superintendent of schools; and
- be appointed by a local board of education or the State Board of Education.

For the initial issuance of the RPC, the local board of education upon the advice of the local superintendent of schools, or the State Board of Education upon the advice of the State Superintendent must have (1) publicly announced the search for a specific school principalship which will be open to candidates who qualify for either a traditional certificate or an RPC, and (2) defined written qualification which must include specified elements.

Background: Currently there are 52 public charter schools, serving over 16,000 students, operating in seven local school systems: Baltimore City (38), and Anne Arundel (2), Baltimore (1), Frederick (2), Montgomery (1), Prince George's (7), and St. Mary's (1) counties. Four additional public charter schools are scheduled to begin operations in Maryland by August of 2014.

Maryland Approved Alternative Preparation Programs (MAAPPs) are tailored to meet the staffing needs of Maryland school districts, while providing the convenience necessary to attract experienced, diverse individuals to the classroom. The RTC is a two-year nonrenewable teaching certificate in Maryland that carries Highly Qualified status. Only candidates in MAAPPs are eligible for an RTC. The RTC must be requested by the partnering local school system. The RPC provides an alternative pathway for professionals from other fields to enter the principalship, with the recommendation of a local superintendent.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 11, 2013
ncs/rhh

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