



## WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

**2011 Wisconsin Act 166**  
[2011 Senate Bill 461]

**Education Reform**

2011 Wisconsin Act 166 makes various changes to the statutes relating to education reform. For a more thorough description of Act 166, please see Information Memorandum 2012-07, *Education Reform Legislation: 2011 Wisconsin Act 166* (April 16, 2012).

### **Read to Lead**

The Act creates the Read to Lead Development Council in the Office of the Governor. The council consists of the Governor, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, four legislators, and the members representing various groups appointed by the Governor and serving at his or her pleasure. The members of the Read to Lead Development Council appointed by the Governor must be appointed for three-year terms. The Act provides that the initial members of the council will serve staggered terms.

The Act creates the Read to Lead Development Fund for grants to support literacy and early childhood development programs. The fund consists of all gifts, grants, bequests, and other contributions made to the fund. The Read to Lead Development Council must make recommendations to the Governor and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction regarding recipients of grants. The amount of each grant awarded is determined jointly by the Governor and the State Superintendent.

### **Teacher Preparation Programs**

The Act requires the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to work in consultation with the Governor's office, the University of Wisconsin System, chairpersons and ranking members of the Senate and Assembly education committees, and the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities to determine how the performance of individuals who have recently completed teacher education programs will be used to evaluate the teacher education programs, including by defining "recent graduate" and identifying measures of performance and measures to assess an individual's performance.

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This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature's Web site at: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/>.

The Act requires each teacher education program located in this state to, beginning on July 1, 2012, and annually thereafter, provide DPI with a list of individuals who have completed the program, and their dates of program completion, from each term or semester of the program's most recently completed academic year. The Act requires DPI to include this information about graduates of teacher education programs in the statewide student information system.

The Act also requires DPI to develop a system through which information about teacher performance and the evaluation of teacher education programs will be made available to the public. The Act requires DPI, beginning in the 2013-14 school year, to report for each teacher education program the rate of passage on first attempt of recent graduates of the program on examinations administered for licensure as a teacher and as an alternative education program teacher, and any other information recommended by DPI in consultation with the entities above, on the system developed as required in the Act. Beginning in the 2013-14 school year, each teacher education program must prominently display this information on the program's web site and provide this information to persons receiving admissions information to the program.

### **Educator Effectiveness**

The Act requires DPI to develop an educator effectiveness evaluation system (state system) and to develop, by rule, an equivalency process aligned with the state system (equivalency process) to assist school districts in the evaluation of the performance of teachers and principals in the district.

Under the state system, 50% of the total evaluation score assigned to a teacher or principal must be based on measures of student performance, and 50% of the total evaluation score must be based upon the extent to which the teacher's or principal's practice meets standards established under the 2011 Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium or under the 2008 Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Educational Leadership Policy Standards, respectively. The equivalency process must be based upon the same interstate standards as the state system and must evaluate a teacher with reference to the following four domains: (a) planning and preparation; (b) the classroom environment; (c) instruction; and (d) professional responsibilities and development.

The Act specifies that teachers and principals evaluated under both the state system and the equivalency process must be placed in one of multiple performance categories. Each school district and independent charter school must begin evaluating teachers and principals using either the state system or the equivalency process in the 2014-15 school year.

### **Assessments of Reading Readiness**

The Act requires each school board and each independent charter school annually to assess all pupils enrolled in kindergarten for reading readiness beginning in the 2012-13 school year. The Act specifies that the school board or charter school must use the appropriate, valid, and reliable assessment of literacy fundamentals selected by DPI and requires DPI to ensure that the assessment evaluates whether a pupil possesses phonemic awareness and letter sound knowledge. The school board or charter school must provide a pupil whose assessment indicates that he or she is at risk of reading difficulty with interventions or remedial reading services that are scientifically based.

The Act specifies that, if a pupil is enrolled in a special education program, the school board or independent charter school must accommodate that pupil as provided in the pupil's IEP when taking the reading assessment.

The Act requires a school board or independent charter school to report the results of a pupil's reading assessment to the pupil's parent or guardian.

**Teacher Licensure**

The Act prohibits DPI from issuing an initial teaching license that authorizes the holder to teach in grades kindergarten to five, in special education, as a reading teacher or as a reading specialist, unless the applicant has passed an examination identical to the Foundations of Reading test administered in 2012 as part of the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure. DPI must set the passing cut score on the examination at a level no lower than the level recommended by the developer of the test, based on Wisconsin state standards. This provision first applies to applications for licenses received by DPI on January 1, 2014.

The Act provides that any teacher who passes the examination must notify DPI in order to have a notation added to the teacher's license indicating that he or she passed the examination.

***Effective date:*** Act 166 takes effect on April 17, 2012.

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April 16, 2012

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