



Senate Education Committee

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BILL SUMMARY

Senate Bill 871, Printer's No. 955

Prime Sponsor: Brubaker

A. SYNOPSIS:

Senate Bill 871 would place a two-year moratorium on Act 48 continuing professional education requirements. The bill would also direct the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee (LB&FC) to conduct a study of Act 48 continuing education requirements.

B. BILL ANALYSIS:

Pursuant to Act 48 of 1999, each school district is required to form a committee to develop a three-year professional education plan for the professional educators of that district. A professional educator (i.e., an individual holding a Pennsylvania teacher, educational specialist or administrative certification) must complete at least 180 hours of continuing professional education programs, activities, learning experiences or collegiate study every five years in order to maintain an active certificate. The Department of Education is also required to annually provide a minimum of 40 hours of continuing professional education courses at no charge to professional educators.

Senate Bill 871 would suspend the committee requirement to develop the three-year professional education plan until June 30, 2013. The bill would also suspend the 180-hour continuing education requirement and the Department's training requirement until June 30, 2013.

On July 1, 2013, each professional educator shall have the same number of hours of continuing professional education credits and the same amount of time in which to complete those hours as existed for the educator at the time the moratorium was imposed. Any continuing professional education credits earned by an educator during the suspension period shall be credited toward their continuing education credits.

During this moratorium, LB&FC shall conduct a study of the costs and benefits of the continuing professional education program.

The bill shall take effect in 60 days.

C. SUMMARY OF RELEVANT EXISTING LAW:

The bill amends Sections 1205.1 (relating to continuing professional development) and 1205.2 (relating to program of continuing professional education) of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L. 30, No. 14), known as the Public School Code of 1949.