

HB 2463 -- Teacher Continuing Contracts

Sponsor: Dieckhaus

This bill changes the laws regarding teacher contracts and establishes the Teacher Continuing Contract Act which will apply to teachers in all school districts, including St. Louis City, beginning July 1, 2011. In its main provisions, the bill:

- (1) Replaces the current standards of teacher evaluation with the Teacher Advancement Program standards in the framework for teaching rubric as developed by Charlotte Danielson;
- (2) Specifies that the current Teacher Tenure Act will remain in effect until June 30, 2011;
- (3) Specifies that a contract between a school district and a teacher will be known as a continuing contract and will continue in effect for up to three years;
- (4) Sets the number of years to reach permanent teacher status at four;
- (5) Allows elements other than years of service and highest degree held to be added to salary schedules including, but not limited to, additional certification areas, certification in high-need subjects, mentoring, and demonstrated ability to improve student performance;
- (6) Adds unsatisfactory performance to the list of reasons for which a permanent teacher may be terminated and requires teacher evaluations to be considered in determining professional competence;
- (7) Requires 15 days between the issuance of a notice of termination hearing and the hearing;
- (8) Allows appeals of school board termination decisions to the circuit court of the county where the employing school district's office is located;
- (9) Requires teachers to be evaluated regularly and twice in the final year of a continuing contract, with a scale of 88 based on the required teaching standards, and limits scores in the top two quartiles to no more than 60% of a building's teachers; and
- (10) Sets the length of a continuing contract based on the quartile scores, with the top quartile receiving three-year contracts, the second quartile receiving two-year contracts, and the lowest two quartiles receiving one-year contracts.

Many provisions of the current teacher tenure law will remain the same in the new act, including but not limited to:

- (1) Modifications of continuing contracts;
- (2) Leaves of absence, except that a leave of absence due to teacher reduction may be granted for two years rather than three years;
- (3) Termination of probationary teachers;
- (4) Board member civil liability for charges against teachers;
and
- (5) Teacher participation in school board election campaigns.