

1 AN ACT concerning education.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The School Code is amended by adding Section
5 24-8.2 as follows:

6 (105 ILCS 5/24-8.2 new)

7 Sec. 24-8.2. Continuing education coursework used for
8 salary increases.

9 (a) In this Section:

10 "Continuing education coursework" means any graduate-level
11 course completed by a licensed classroom teacher or
12 administrator for the purpose of salary advancement or other
13 compensation-related advancement under a collective bargaining
14 agreement, district employment contract, school board policy,
15 or salary schedule. "Continuing education coursework" includes
16 coursework taken for purposes of obtaining subsequent
17 endorsements, as long as the coursework meets all of the
18 requirements set forth in subsection (c), including that the
19 classroom teacher or administrator earns a letter grade, the
20 coursework includes an instructor of record meeting the
21 requirements of this Section, and the coursework awards
22 graduate-level, degree-eligible credit.

23 "Graduate-level, degree-eligible credit" means academic

1 credit documented on an official academic transcript through a
2 regionally accredited institution of higher education that may
3 be applied toward a master's degree, education specialist
4 degree, or doctoral degree.

5 "Instructor of record" means an individual assigned
6 responsibility for academic oversight of a course, including
7 instruction, evaluation and feedback of participant work, and
8 the assignment of grades.

9 "Licensed classroom teacher" means an individual holding a
10 valid and current Professional Educator License pursuant to
11 Section 21B-20 of this Code.

12 (b) This Section applies only to classroom teachers and
13 administrators who have the ability to achieve salary
14 advancement through graduate-level continuing education under
15 the terms of a collective bargaining agreement, employment
16 contract, school board policy, or salary schedule.

17 (c) Beginning with continuing education coursework
18 completed on or after July 1, 2026, a school district, special
19 education cooperative, or other public educational employer
20 that provides for salary advancement for classroom teachers
21 and administrators based on the completion of graduate-level,
22 continuing education credit may recognize continuing education
23 coursework for purposes of salary advancement only if the
24 continuing education coursework meets all of the following
25 requirements:

26 (1) The continuing education coursework is

1 graduate-level, degree-eligible credit offered through a
2 regionally accredited institution of higher education and
3 documented on an official academic transcript.

4 (2) The continuing education coursework results in a
5 letter grade issued by the institution of higher
6 education. Coursework graded solely on a pass or fail,
7 satisfactory or unsatisfactory, or completion basis is not
8 eligible.

9 (3) The continuing education coursework includes an
10 instructor of record who:

11 (A) is a credentialed educator holding a master's
12 degree or higher and is academically qualified to
13 teach the continuing education course, with
14 demonstrated experience in the content area or areas
15 of the continuing education course;

16 (B) provides substantive instructional support to
17 the participating classroom teacher or administrator
18 throughout the period of continuing education course
19 enrollment; and

20 (C) evaluates participant work and provides
21 individualized, written feedback aligned to continuing
22 education course objectives.

23 (d) Nothing in this Section impairs the ability of the
24 parties to a collective bargaining agreement to negotiate
25 salary schedules or compensation structures, as long as any
26 continuing education coursework recognized for salary

1 advancement complies with the requirements of this Section
2 beginning with collective bargaining agreements entered into,
3 modified, extended, or renewed on or after the effective date
4 of this amendatory Act of the 104th General Assembly.

5 Nothing in this Section requires a school district,
6 special education cooperative, or other public educational
7 employer to create a salary schedule or salary advancement
8 pathway where one does not otherwise exist.

9 (e) Implementation of this Section, including standards
10 for documentation, transcript verification, institutional
11 accreditation, salary advancement, and compliance monitoring,
12 shall be determined by each school district, special education
13 cooperative, or other public educational employer.

14 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
15 becoming law.