

1 H.697

2 Introduced by Representative Turner of Milton

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Education; teachers; licensing; contracts; reduction in force;
6 seniority; state retirement system

7 Statement of purpose: This bill proposes to raise the standards for licensing
8 new teachers. It also would require a school district to make decisions
9 regarding contract renewal and reductions in force based on performance
10 evaluations, student achievement, and other factors unrelated to an educator's
11 relative level of seniority. Finally, it would prohibit a new teacher who is
12 offered employment as a teacher in a Vermont public school on or after July 1,
13 2013 from joining the state teachers' retirement system.

14 An act relating to teacher quality, teacher assessments, and the state
15 teachers' retirement system of Vermont

16 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

17 Sec. 1. 16 V.S.A. § 1696(a) is amended to read:

18 (a) Qualifications of applicants.

19 (1) An applicant shall submit to the commissioner evidence satisfactory
20 to the commissioner that the applicant either has completed all requirements of

1 an approved educator preparation program or has otherwise acquired the
2 knowledge and skills required for a license through coursework and
3 experiences apart from an approved educator preparation program.

4 (2) A license shall not be granted to an applicant absent proof that, for
5 all relevant postsecondary degrees, the applicant attained a cumulative grade
6 point average of 3.0 or was ranked in the top one-half of the students earning a
7 degree in the same field from that postsecondary institution in the same year.

8 (3) A license shall not be granted to an applicant seeking an
9 endorsement to teach at the secondary level unless the applicant has a master's
10 or other graduate-level degree in the subject matter for which he or she is
11 seeking the endorsement.

12 (4) A license granted to an applicant for initial licensure who has not
13 completed at least 30 hours of graduate-level coursework at a regionally or
14 nationally accredited postsecondary institution at the time of application shall
15 be a provisional license. The holder of a provisional license shall have five
16 years after its issuance in which to remove the provisional nature of the license
17 by completing at least 30 hours of coursework at the graduate level.

18 Sec. 2. 16 V.S.A. § 2005 is amended to read:

19 § 2005. WRITTEN AGREEMENT

20 The negotiations councils for the school board and the teachers' or
21 administrators' organization shall enter into a written agreement or agreements

1 incorporating therein matters agreed to in negotiation. Notwithstanding any
2 other provision of law, no negotiated agreement shall rely upon an educator's
3 relative seniority as the sole or primary basis for determinations regarding
4 contract renewal or regarding a reduction in force, but shall provide that such
5 determinations be based upon performance evaluations, student achievement,
6 and other factors specified in the contract.

7 Sec. 3. 16 V.S.A. § 1933(a) is amended to read:

8 (a) Membership in the system shall be a condition of employment for all
9 teachers who were first hired for employment in a Vermont public school prior
10 to July 1, 2013. A teacher who has not previously been employed as a public
11 school teacher in the state and who is offered and accepts a contract of
12 employment as a public school teacher on or after July 1, 2013 is ineligible for
13 membership in the system. No person shall join the system as a group A
14 member. No person shall join the system as a group B member after June 30,
15 1990. No service shall be included in the creditable service of any member
16 unless the member was a member at the time the service was performed or is
17 entitled to credit under section 1936 or 1944 of this title.

18 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE; IMPLEMENTATION

19 (a) This act shall take effect on passage.

20 (b) Sec. 1 of this act shall apply to all applications for an initial license
21 submitted on or after July 1, 2012.

1 (c) On or before July 1, 2012, the Vermont standards boards for
2 professional educators shall make all necessary changes to its rules in order to
3 conform to Sec. 2 of this act.

4 (d) Sec. 2 of this act shall apply to all contracts between educators and
5 either a school district or a supervisory union for which negotiations begin on
6 or after July 1, 2012.