



## **H.B. 203**

124th General Assembly  
(As Introduced)

**Reps. Rhine, Cirelli, Carano, Ogg, Allen, Sykes, Oakar, Key, Distel, Sferra, Boccieri, Jones, Barrett, Seaver, Britton, Flannery, Ford, Redfern, Sulzer**

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### **BILL SUMMARY**

- Creates the Master's Degree Teacher Reimbursement Program under the Ohio Board of Regents, through which teachers who obtain a master's degree to qualify for a professional teacher's license can be reimbursed a portion of the cost of the degree.
- Provides that to be eligible for the program, a teacher must hold a valid provisional license to teach in Ohio initially issued after July 1, 2002, and must have completed at least eight years of classroom teaching in the state after that date.
- Provides that the reimbursement amount is based on 75% of the average cost per credit hour of obtaining a master's degree from a state university for each year for which the teacher completes credit hours toward the degree.

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### **CONTENT AND OPERATION**

The bill creates the Master's Degree Teacher Reimbursement Program under the Ohio Board of Regents. To be eligible for the program, a teacher must hold a valid provisional license to teach in Ohio initially issued after July 1, 2002, and must have completed at least eight years of classroom teaching in the state after that date, with each year consisting of at least 120 days of employment. The eight years of teaching can be with more than one school district or community school.

Before receiving reimbursement, a teacher first must obtain a master's degree required for the teacher to qualify for a professional teacher's license. The degree must be from an Ohio public or private nonprofit university that has been

approved by the State Board of Education to provide master's degrees to teachers. The program does not reimburse a teacher for the full amount he or she spends obtaining the degree. Instead, reimbursement is based on the average cost per credit hour of obtaining a master's degree from a state university for each year for which the teacher completes credit hours toward the degree. The Board of Regents is required to annually determine this average cost, and to make the information available to all teachers who are eligible for reimbursement under the program.<sup>1</sup>

The amount of a teacher's reimbursement payment is determined in two steps. First, the teacher's cost for each year in which the teacher completed credit hours toward the master's degree is calculated by multiplying the number of credit hours completed in the year by the average cost per credit hour that year as determined by the Board of Regents. Second, the amount of reimbursement is found by multiplying 75% by the sum of the annual costs.

The bill requires the Board of Regents to adopt rules in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act concerning reimbursing teachers under the program. The rules are to include provisions requiring teachers in the program to maintain a record of each course successfully completed that is required for the master's degree, and to submit evidence of course completion to the Board. Additionally, the rules must ensure that a teacher receives reimbursement only for courses that were necessary for obtaining the master's degree. The bill specifies that there is to be no requirement for a teacher to make progress in obtaining the degree at any particular rate of completion.

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## HISTORY

ACTION	DATE	JOURNAL ENTRY
Introduced	04-05-01	p. 297

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<sup>1</sup> All of the state's public universities are to be considered when determining the average cost per credit hour of obtaining a master's degree, namely the University of Akron, Bowling Green State University, Central State University, the University of Cincinnati, Cleveland State University, Kent State University, Miami University, Ohio University, Ohio State University, Shawnee State University, the University of Toledo, Wright State University, and Youngstown State University.