

**256.21 Sabbatical program.**

1. If the general assembly appropriates money for grants to provide sabbaticals for teachers, a sabbatical program shall be established as provided in this section.

a. A teacher with at least seven years of teaching experience in this state may submit an application for a sabbatical to the department of education not later than November 1 of the preceding school year.

b. A teacher's application shall include a plan for the use of the period of the sabbatical, including but not limited to additional education, use of a fellowship, conducting of research, writing relating to a particular subject area, or other activities relating to an enhancement of teaching skills. The teacher's plan must be accompanied by the written approval of the superintendent of the school district and a statement by the superintendent describing the benefits of the sabbatical to the school district.

2. The state board of education shall adopt rules under chapter 17A relating to submission of sabbatical plans and criteria for awarding the sabbaticals, including both the benefit to the teacher and the benefit to the school district. Sabbaticals shall be awarded by the department not later than January 1 of the preceding school year.

a. A sabbatical grant to a teacher shall be equal to the annual salary specified in a teacher's contract pursuant to the salary schedule adopted by the board of directors or negotiated under chapter 20 plus the cost to the district of the fringe benefits of the teacher. The grant shall be paid to the school district, and the district shall continue to pay the teacher's regular compensation as well as the cost to the district of the substitute teacher. Teachers and boards of school districts are encouraged to seek funding from other sources to pay the costs of sabbaticals for teachers. Grant moneys are miscellaneous income for purposes of chapter 257.

b. A sabbatical approved by the department may be for any period of time not exceeding one year.

c. A teacher granted a sabbatical under this section shall agree either to return to the school district granting the leave for a period of not less than two years or to repay to the department of education the amount of the sabbatical grant received during the leave.

3. Notwithstanding section 8.33, if moneys are appropriated by the general assembly for the sabbatical program for a fiscal year, the moneys shall not revert at the end of that fiscal year but shall carry over and may be expended during the next fiscal year.

4. This section does not preclude a school district from providing a sabbatical program for its teachers separate from the sabbatical program provided under this section.

87 Acts, ch 224, §32; 89 Acts, ch 135, §53; 2009 Acts, ch 68, §1