



An Act to provide a retirement enhancement opportunity for certain members of the Massachusetts Teachers Retirement System

MTA Legislative Agenda, 2021-2022

Lead Sponsors: Sen. John Velis (D-Westfield) | Rep. Carol Doherty (D-Taunton)

This bill would create an opportunity for eligible MTRS members to retire early with the purchase of years of service and/or age.

This legislation will provide teachers who are currently eligible to retire with the opportunity to purchase service and/or age in order to retire before the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year. The legislation was designed to ensure that vacancies created by this act are backfilled with qualified teachers and that this transition does not create unnecessary turnover during the school year. In addition, the bill's purchase-of-service provisions ensure that it will not negatively impact the financial security of the state's pension system.

Eligibility:

- Must be a member of the MTRS (Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System)
- Must be currently eligible to retire:
 - 55 or older with 10 years or more of service
 - 20 years of service
 - 60 or older with 10 years or more of service (if hired on or after April 2, 2012)

Purchase of Service/Age:

- Eligible MTRS members could purchase up to 5 years of service or up to 5 years of age, or a combination of the two not to exceed a total of 10 years.
- Cost of purchasing service and age will be determined by an analysis from the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission. The plan will be in compliance with IRS rules.

Mandatory Backfill Provision:

- This bill requires a vote of the local legislative body (school committee and municipal governing body) agreeing to backfill vacancies with a plan to do so.
- Districts that fail to meet the backfill obligations will be required to pay the cost of the service and age purchased (deducted from Chapter 70).

Retirement Windows:

- Summer of 2021 (June 30 to Aug. 31)
- Summer of 2022 (June 30 to Aug. 31)

Important Note: Teachers defined by the CDC as being at high risk for serious illness from COVID-19 would be eligible to retire under this act after the local authority has adopted the act but before Aug. 31, 2022, or the cancellation of the governor's state of emergency, whichever is later.

For more information, please go to massteacher.org/legislation